



# YOUTH EXPERIENCING UNSTABLE OR TEMPORARY HOUSING SITUATIONS

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of how facility administrators can support students who are experiencing hardships surrounding unstable or temporary housing situations.<sup>1</sup>



A student is considered to be in a temporary living situation if he or she lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. It includes children and youth who are:

- sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason;
- living in a motel/hotel, trailer park or camping ground, due to lack of alternative, adequate housing;
- living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned building, substandard housing, bus or train station, or similar setting;
- abandoned in hospitals;
- migratory children living in one of the above settings;
- youth not in the custody of a parent/guardian (unaccompanied youth) of any age, in one of the above settings.

## Students living temporary housing situations have rights to:

- Immediate School enrollment even if they lack health, immunization or school records, proof of guardianship, or proof of residence. "Enrollment" means enrolled into the school, attending classes and participating fully in school activities.
  - o Enroll in:
    - § the school they attended when permanently housed or the school in which they was last enrolled (school of origin).
    - § in preschool.
- Remain enrolled in his/her selected school for as long as they remains in a temporary living situation or, if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.
- Participate in tutoring services beyond those provided to all students; school related activities; and/or receive other support services.
- Receive free school meals, fee waivers, free uniforms, and low-cost or free medical referrals.
- Access to transportation services



## COMMITMENT

The City of Chicago is committed to empowering the city's youth with an educational environment primed with dignity and respect. This pledge aims to safeguard the educational rights of students in a temporary living situation, youth, and youth not living with a parent or guardian, as it applies to all services, programs, and activities.

<sup>1</sup>DISCLAIMER: The Chicago Department of Public Health (CDPH) does not legally bind any academic institution to these rights or services. CDPH also does not maintain any financial obligation to these institutions.

CPS District Schools, charter schools, selective enrollment schools, magnet schools, and all other CPS programs and any educational agency that is recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education are obligated by law to address specific needs under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.). The McKinney-Vento Act does not apply to schools that are entirely privately funded. Therefore, private schools are not required to allow children who become homeless to continue to attend or to provide transportation. Hence, all recommendations in this document are at the discretion of the educational institution.

For more information about the rights of STLS students in Chicago Public Schools, call the STLS program at (773) 553-2242, fax at (773) 553-2182, email at STLSInformation@cps.edu, go to www.cps.edu/STLS, or visit the STLS policy at www.cps.edu/STLSpolicy. You can also contact the Illinois State Board of Education- for information on Homeless Education at homeless@isbe.net

# AREAS OF FOCUS



## RESOURCES

### 1. Housing & Shelter

Streetlight Chicago: Provides up-to-date information on shelters, health clinics, emergency beds, mental health services, and more. <https://www.streetlightchicago.org/>

### 2. Food Resources

To find soup kitchens or food pantries, go to [www.chicagosfoodbank.org](http://www.chicagosfoodbank.org) and use the "Find Food" tool to search by Zip Code. You can also call the Greater Chicago Food Depository at 773-247-FOOD.

### 3. Health & Medical

The Chicago Department of Public Health Fast Track Clinics provide immunizations at no charge for children 0-18 years of age. More info, including locations and hours of operation can be found at [https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdph/supp\\_info/health-services/immunizations\\_walk-inclinics.html](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdph/supp_info/health-services/immunizations_walk-inclinics.html)

Federally Qualified Health Centers provide medical care even if the patient has no health insurance or is not a US Citizen. They have sliding fee discount programs. Find a center by going to <http://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov/>

### 4. Public Benefits

Find info about various public benefits at <https://www.illinoislegalaid.org/legal-information/health-benefits> including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Social Security Benefits, Medicaid, and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Call the State of Illinois' Domestic Violence Helpline at 1-877-863-6338. The Helpline is a 24-hour, toll-free confidential number. Victims receive immediate information about their options, safety planning, and referrals to community-based providers including shelters, counseling, legal advocacy, and more.

City Of Chicago Department Of Family And Support Services: Provides direct assistance to individuals and families and serves as a connection to a network of community-based organizations, social service providers and institutions.

[https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/fss/provdrs/serv/svcs/community\\_servicecenterlocations.html](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/fss/provdrs/serv/svcs/community_servicecenterlocations.html)

### 5. Legal Assistance

CARPLS can provide free legal assistance and referrals throughout Chicago. The free hotline is (312) 738- 9200. The Law Project of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless provides legal advice and assistance to homeless youth and families. For assistance, contact 1-800-940-1119 and ask for Law Project staff.

## IDENTIFICATION

is the first step to connecting students experiencing homelessness or unstable housing situations with the information, resources, and supports necessary to promote and ensure stability and access to an education.

Strategies for identifying students:

- Raise awareness
- Conduct community assessments
- Provide targeted outreach
- Establish liaison program within facility

## 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

For Connecting all Students to What They Need to Thrive In And Out Of School

1. Relationship-Driven
2. Equitable
3. Comprehensive
4. Student- Centered
5. Personalized
6. Information-Driven
7. Actionable
8. Cross-Sector
9. Secure
10. Sustainable