



Student Support and Operations

Pupil Transportation

Technical Assistance Paper No. 2 (TAP 2)

Questions regarding Pupil Transportation and
the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act

Overview

This paper provides information on how the McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act relates to pupil transportation in Washington State and describes transportation choices and requirements.

What does the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act require for the homeless?

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must provide students experiencing homelessness with transportation to and from their school of origin, at a parent or guardian's request. For an unaccompanied youth, the request would be from the LEA's homeless liaison.

Is transportation for the homeless required regardless of the distance involved?

There is an assumption of reasonableness with the transportation of the homeless student, unless attending the school of origin is against the student's best interest. Every LEA has a homeless liaison who should make determination of whether the transportation of the student falls in

the student's best interest.

Reasonableness should not be determined solely on the basis of cost. Air flights, extensive travel time, or other circumstances that result in extremely unusual travel demands may all result in appropriate denial of transportation to the school of origin. There is an appeal process that a parent can use when they disagree with the decision of the school district.

What else needs to be considered with homeless transportation?

Providing sensitivity training to bus drivers and arranging bus stops to keep student's living situations confidential is important in being able to assist these students through this difficult time in their lives with as little disruption as possible. Developing close ties between school district homeless liaisons, school staff and pupil transportation staff will help make this process work smoothly.

Which school district is responsible for transportation costs when a homeless student requires transportation across district boundaries?

When a homeless student requires transportation to the school of origin,

and that school is outside the current school district, the two districts involved should collaborate to determine which district is going to assume responsibility for transportation costs. If there is no agreement between the two districts, each district is required to pay half the cost.

How is funding provided?

Transportation is provided through the standard state funding system. If the level of funding is such that it does not cover the cost of the transportation, other state or local funding may be used.

What are the reporting requirements?

For students being transported on existing routes, there are no additional reporting requirements. Care should be taken to clearly estimate the state funding received for a particular route, and the complete costs associated with that route.

How long must transportation be provided after a homeless student has moved into permanent housing?

Students can stay in their school of origin the entire time they are homeless, and until the end of any academic year in which they move into permanent housing.

What mode of transportation should be provided?

There is no requirement that provided transportation be of any specific mode (school buses are not necessarily required). Transportation must be safe and appropriate for the individual student's situation and age. Modes may include school bus, transit passes, gas vouchers or reimbursement for parents or youths with cars, contracts with taxi companies (with driver background checks required), and contracts with Medicaid transportation brokers (with driver background checks required).

For additional information regarding Pupil Transportation in Washington State, please go to the OSPI Pupil Transportation website at:
<http://www.k12.wa.us/transportation/>.

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Instruction

This material is available in alternative format upon request.

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