



Oregon Department of Education | McKinney-Vento Program

UNDERSTANDING TRANSPORTATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

The Oregon Department of Education is dedicated to assisting districts in providing students who are McKinney-Vento eligible safe and dependable transportation to school.



To counteract the educational disruption caused by mobility, the [McKinney-Vento Act](#) provides students experiencing homelessness with the right to continue attending the school of origin or to enroll in any public school that non homeless students who live in the same attendance area are eligible to attend, according to the student's best interest [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3) (A)]. The term "school of origin" means the school that a child or youth attended when permanently housed, or the school in which the child or youth was last enrolled, including a preschool [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g)(3)(I) (i)].

Under the McKinney-Vento Act, schools are to immediately enroll homeless students [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (3)(C)]. Therefore, districts must arrange transportation without delay. Transportation arrangements should

ensure that a homeless student is able to participate for the full school day, neither arriving late nor leaving before the school day has ended. The law also requires districts to coordinate transportation services with other districts [42 U.S.C. § 11432(g) (5)(A)(ii)]. Transportation is a critical component of educational stability.

According to the [U.S. Department of Education's \(ED\) Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program Non-Regulatory Guidance](#), based on the best interest of the student and in consultation with the parent/guardian, the LEA ultimately determines the mode of transportation.

Drivers who provide allowable non-school bus transportation need to hold the appropriate approval through the Oregon Department of Education ([ODE](#)) (using Form [581-2279-M](#) Application and be

trained (per the ODE [Type 10 Training Manual](#)) as required in rule ([OAR 581-053-0320](#) Type 10 Driver Training and Approval). Most taxi or transport companies can contract to provide dedicated drivers and vehicles on a schedule and ensure that personnel assigned meet these requirements. Drivers cannot provide service without meeting these requirements.

Vehicles used for this purpose must be inspected by an ODE certified inspector (your school bus contractor should have someone holding this credential) using Form [581-2255-M](#) Annual Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance Report. Before a vehicle can be used for pupil transportation purposes, it must also be approved by ODE using Form [581-2251-M](#) School Activity Vehicle License Approval (ORS 801.455).

Other Transportation Resources:

- ✓ [National Center for Homeless Education \(NCHE\) - Transporting Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- ✓ [NCHE - The Educational Rights of Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness: What Service Providers Need to Know](#)
- ✓ [NCHE - Transportation for Homeless Children and Youth: Strategies for Rural School Districts](#)
- ✓ [ODE McKinney-Vento District Transportation Agreement Template](#)

Other McKinney-Vento Resources:

- ✓ [ODE | Department of Early Learning and Care \(DELIC\) - Supports for Early Learners Experiencing Housing Instability](#)
- ✓ [NCHE - Determining Eligibility for McKinney-Vento Rights and Services](#)
- ✓ [NCHE - Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness](#)
- ✓ [SchoolHouse Connection \(SHC\) - McKinney-Vento \(School of Origin\)](#)

Most Common Questions

Is my district responsible for transportation for McKinney-Vento students going to preschool or head start?

Early childhood education programs funded through tax dollars or other public funds, and for which the Local Education Agency is a financial or administrative agent or for which they are accountable for providing early childhood education services are required to provide school of origin transportation to those eligible under McKinney-Vento. To learn more about whether your LEA meets this criteria, refer to the [Schoolhouse Connection Preschool Flowchart](#).

Do walking zones apply to McKinney-Vento students?

For transportation that is not to the school of origin, local educational agencies are required to provide transportation that is comparable to that provided to housed students. 42 USC 11432(g)(4)(A). Therefore, the same policy on walk zones would apply to McKinney-Vento students. However, the McKinney-Vento Act also requires LEAs to eliminate barriers to the school enrollment and retention of students experiencing homelessness. 42 USC 11432(g)(1)(I), (g)(7).

Does the McKinney-Vento Act permit a blanket mileage limit for school of origin transportation by a district?

No it does not. The McKinney-Vento Act requires districts to provide transportation to the school of origin at the request of a parent or guardian or, for unaccompanied youth, at the McKinney-Vento liaison's request. 42 USC 11432(g)(1)(J)(iii).

If a student is in Foster Care and has also been determined eligible for McKinney-Vento how does transportation work?

ODE recommends setting costs under the foster care provisions. Once a student is identified as McKinney Vento eligible, they are covered for the remainder of the academic year, whereas that is not the same for foster care. At the same time, the student may have some specific needs that aren't available through the district's foster care education program but would be through the McKinney Vento program.



What are some ways to cover costs of transporting McKinney-Vento Students?

Districts may purchase store cards for gas for students to get to school and school activities. LEAs also have the flexibility to use regular district funds, McKinney-Vento funds, and Title I Part A funds. However, it is important to note that all of the federal funds are to be used for the excess cost of transportation, so depending on the situation, general funds would be the first option to consider. Another option could be payment to parent reimbursement for eligible costs of home to school transportation under [OAR 581-023-0040](#) approved transportation costs for payments from the State School Fund. The district can align the reimbursement with attendance as a means to address the accountability concern.

Are districts required to provide transportation for students across state lines?

Yes, if a student moves from the school of origin to an area served by a different district, whether in the same state or a different state, and that district determines it is in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin. Transportation must be provided to the student. The district of origin and the district in which the student now resides may agree upon a method to apportion the responsibility and costs of providing the student with transportation to and from the school of origin (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Section 722(g)(1)(J)(iii)(II)). If the two districts are unable to agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs for transportation must be shared equally (Section 722(g)(1)(J)(iii)(II)). This requirement applies even if the school district in which the student now resides is in a state different from the school of origin. Transportation must be arranged promptly to ensure immediate enrollment and so as not to create barriers to the homeless student's attendance, retention, and success.

To help connect with neighboring out-of-state district liaisons about transportation logistics and other necessary services and support for eligible students, a contact list is found below for each state:

- [California](#)
- [Washington](#)
- [Idaho](#)
- [Nevada](#)

Collaboration between the Local Education Agencies' McKinney-Vento program staff and transportation staff is critical to ensure student success in attending school. If you need to reach someone at the state level regarding transportation questions or concerns please contact the McKinney-Vento State Coordinator at OR-MV@ode.oregon.gov or the ODE Transportation Manager at buslicense@ode.oregon.gov.