

# COUNTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH

HUD requires each Continuum of Care (CoC) to perform a point-in-time count of homeless persons every January. In recent years, HUD has increasingly focused on the inclusion of children and youth in point in time count data. As CoCs work to improve the accuracy of children and youth counts, it is important to note that the U.S. Department of Education (DoE) definition of “homeless children and youths” differs in several respects from HUD’s definition of “homeless”. When collaborating with schools and school districts, CoCs should take steps to ensure that all school data included in point in time counts align with the HUD definition of “homeless”.

## WHO IS HOMELESS?

	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development <sup>1</sup>	U.S. Department of Education
Streets/abandoned buildings	YES	YES
Emergency shelters	YES	YES
Doubled up	NO	YES
Hotels/motels	YES, if subsidized	YES
Trailer parks	NO	YES
Campgrounds	YES	YES
Vehicles not designed for habitation	YES	YES
In hospital	YES, if exiting after 90 days or less and previously resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for habitation	YES, if abandoned
Awaiting foster care placement	NO	YES
Imminently losing primary nighttime residence	Under some circumstances (see paragraph 2 of HUD definition below); not considered homeless for PIT counts	NO
Fleeing domestic violence	YES	If lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (see DoE definition below)

<sup>1</sup> HUD’s definition of “homeless” includes, under some circumstances, persons defined as homeless under other

**McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance and Improvements Act of 2001 §725**

(2) The term “homeless children and youths” —

(A) means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 103(a)(1)); and

B) includes —

- (i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- (ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 103(a)(2)(C));
- (iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- (iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 1309 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).<sup>2</sup>

**HUD – “HOMELESS”**

(1) An individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- (i) An individual or family with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- (ii) An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
- (iii) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;

(2) An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

- (i) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
- (ii) No subsequent residence has been identified; and
- (iii) The individual or family lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks needed to obtain other permanent housing;

(3) Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

- (i) Are defined as homeless under section 387 of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (42 U.S.C. 5732a), section 637 of the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9832), section 41403 of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e–2), section 330(h) of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 254b(h)), section 3 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012), section 17(b) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786(b)), or section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a);
- (ii) Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing at any time during the 60 days immediately preceding the date of application for homeless assistance;
- (iii) Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during the 60-day period immediately preceding the date of applying for homeless assistance; and
- (iv) Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse (including neglect), the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or two or more barriers to employment, which include the lack of a high school degree or General Education Development (GED), illiteracy, low English proficiency, a history of incarceration or detention for criminal activity, and a history of unstable employment; or

(4) Any individual or family who:

- (i) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual’s or family’s primary nighttime residence or has made the individual or family afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
- (ii) Has no other residence; and
- (iii) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg116.html>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/HEARTH\\_HomelessDefinition\\_FinalRule.pdf](https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/HEARTH_HomelessDefinition_FinalRule.pdf)