

Assistance for Students Experiencing Homelessness and Truancy

1. It is important that **you make your homeless liaison** aware of your situation because they may be able to work out a plan that meets your needs.
2. Find out if your school has a **truancy mediation program**. If they do, ask how you can participate in it.
3. Each school district in Ohio has a homeless liaison who works to protect the rights of students in transition and helps them receive the services they are entitled to. To find out who your homeless liaison is, call the State Coordinator at **614-466-4161**.



Ohio State Legal Services
555 Buttles Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-221-7201
800-589-5888
www.oslsa.org



Equal Justice Foundation
88 E. Broad St., Suite 1590
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-221-9800
800-898-0545



Youth Empowerment Program
Coalition on Housing &
Homelessness in Ohio
175 South 3rd Street
Suite 250
Columbus, Ohio 43215
614-280-1984

Truancy in Ohio



A Guide to
Truancy Laws
for Children and Youth
Experiencing Homelessness in Ohio

Who is Homeless?

Under the main source of law on education for students experiencing homelessness (McKinney-Vento), a student is homeless if she does not have a **fixed, regular, or adequate place to live**.

This can include:

- ◆ **Sharing housing** of a relative or friend due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- ◆ Living in **motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds** due to the lack of adequate housing;
- ◆ Living in emergency or transitional **shelters**, on the **street**, or in a **car**; or
- ◆ In **similar substandard** arrangements.



What is Truancy?

Truancy is an absence from school without permission.

What are the types of truancy?

- ◆ Habitual truancy is when a student is absent for five or more consecutive school days OR seven or more days in one school month OR twelve or more days in one school year.
- ◆ Chronic truancy is when a student is absent for seven or more consecutive school days OR ten or more days in one school month OR fifteen or more days in one school year.

How is homelessness connected to truancy?

- ◆ Sometimes students experiencing homelessness may face truancy because of their living situation.

How Do the Laws Protect Students Experiencing Homelessness?

If you are in transition or experiencing homelessness, a special law (McKinney-Vento) exists to **protect you from school policies** that punish you **because of** your homelessness.

- ◆ Schools cannot have policies that act as **barriers to your education**. If you have been missing school solely based on your living situation, then your truancy might be a direct result of your homelessness.
- ◆ If you think that your school is labeling you a “truant” without taking into account your status of homelessness, **contact the homeless liaison** in your district. To find your liaison, call 614-466-4161.

