

Who should I contact?

Each school district in Ohio has a homeless liaison, who works to protect the rights of students experiencing homelessness and helps them receive

services they are entitled to. They can help students with fee waivers.



To find your district liaison, contact the State

Coordinator at: **614-466-4161**

or visit on the Web:

<http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1037&Content=4866>

Where can I learn more?

If you are interested in learning more about the rights of students experiencing homelessness, you can visit the following places on the Web:

- ✓ Ohio Department of Education
<Http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Template/s/Pages/ODE/ODEPrimary.aspx?page=2&TopicRelationID=1037>
- ✓ National Association for Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEH CY)
<http://www.naehcy.org>



Ohio State Legal Services
555 Buttlers 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

You CAN go to School and Graduate for Free!



**A Guide to School Fees
Requirements for Children and
Youth Experiencing
Homelessness in Ohio**

What are School Fees?



Every child in Ohio has the right to attend public school for free.

Sometimes, though, schools will require students to pay fees for certain things at school, such as:

- ✓ lockers
- ✓ workbooks
- ✓ classroom supplies
- ✓ art supplies
- ✓ field trips
- ✓ after-school activities
- ✓ sports



What happens if I do not pay School Fees?

Sometimes, if school fees are not paid, the school might:



- ✓ not release report cards
- ✓ not allow the student to graduate
- ✓ not allow the student to participate in after school activities
- ✓ not allow the student to go on a field trip with the class (if there is a fee)

- ✓ not provide transcripts to transferring students

What if I cannot afford to pay School Fees?

Public schools are required to remove barriers to school enrollment and full participation for students experiencing homelessness.

This means that schools should not require students experiencing homelessness to pay certain school fees, particularly those for classroom supplies, if the fees act as a barrier.



Schools should not prevent you from participating in after-school activities or sports only for failure to pay club dues or uniform fees if you are experiencing homelessness.

Schools also should not hold back transcripts or diplomas because you cannot pay the fees. Instead, you should be able to “waive out” of the school fees requirement.

There are two ways to obtain a **school fees waiver**:

- ✓ If you are currently receiving Ohio Works First (OWF), Ohio disability financial assistance, or Ohio disability medical assistance, whether or not you are currently experiencing homelessness, the school should provide a waiver form, and after verifying your financial status, they should waive school fees. **Note:** they are not required to waive fees for sports or activities.
- ✓ If you are currently experiencing homelessness but are not currently receiving OWF, etc., the school should still waive school fees. The school should not require you to verify your income or residency or to have a parent or guardian to get this waiver if such requirements act as a barrier for you.

Does this apply to me?

This applies if you:

- ✓ are currently experiencing homelessness AND
- ✓ are of at least preschool age AND
- ✓ are age 21 or younger



Note: For special education students, the waiver requirement applies up to age 22.