

HUNTINGDON SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act guarantees the rights and services for homeless children and youth to remove educational barriers. The law requires school districts to follow a dispute resolution process when parents, guardians or unaccompanied youth and schools disagree on the eligibility, enrollment, and/or educational placement of homeless children and youth. This dispute resolution process is intended to represent each party's views for objective consideration so that disagreements can be brought to closure expeditiously and the district has developed a dispute resolution process as required by the act.

For Huntingdon Special School District, four levels of appeal will apply for any McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution Process:

1. Level 1: Appeal to the District Homeless Liaison
2. Level 2: Appeal to the District Director of Schools
3. Level 3: Appeal to the State Homeless Coordinator
4. Level 4: Appeal to the State Executive Director of the Consolidated Planning and Monitoring Division

Level 1: Appeal to the school or the district homeless liaison

If a parent or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal a school district's decision related to eligibility, enrollment, or school selection:

1. The parent or unaccompanied youth must file a request for dispute resolution with the district's homeless liaison:
 - a. Request a dispute resolution form from the school or district homeless liaison.
 - b. Complete the dispute resolution form.
 - c. Submit the completed dispute resolution form to the district homeless liaison within five (5) days of receiving the district's decision related to eligibility, enrollment, or school selection or submit the request to the school where the dispute is taking place (the school shall immediately forward the request to the district homeless liaison).
 - d. In the event that the district homeless liaison is unavailable, the parent's or unaccompanied youth's request to initiate the dispute resolution process may be provided to a school district designee.
2. The homeless liaison must log the receipt of the complaint, including the date and time, with a written description of the situation and the reason for the dispute, and a copy of the complaint must be forwarded to the director of schools.
3. Within five (5) days of the receipt of the complaint, the district liaison must make a decision on the complaint and inform the parent or unaccompanied youth in writing of the result. The notification will be made by certified mail with a return receipt request.

4. If the parent or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level 2, the parent or unaccompanied youth shall notify the district homeless liaison of their intent to proceed to Level 2 within five (5) business days of receipt of notification of the Level 1 decision.
5. If the parent or unaccompanied youth wishes to appeal the liaison's Level 1 decision, the district homeless liaison shall provide the parent or unaccompanied youth with an appeals package containing:
 - a. a copy of the parent's or unaccompanied youth's complaint which was filed with the district homeless liaison at Level 1;
 - b. the decision rendered at Level 1 by the districts liaison; and
 - c. any additional information from the parent, unaccompanied youth, and/or homeless liaison.
6. If the dispute remains unresolved, the process then moves to Level 2.

Level 2: Appeal to the district director of schools

1. If a parent disagrees with the decision rendered by the district homeless liaison at Level 1, the parent or unaccompanied youth may appeal the decision to the director of schools using the appeals package provided at Level 1.
2. The director of schools will arrange for a personal conference within five (5) business days of the parent or unaccompanied youth's notification to the district of the intent to proceed to Level 2 of the dispute resolution process. Once arranged, the meeting between the director and the parent or unaccompanied youth is to take place as expeditiously as possible.
3. The local director of schools will provide a decision in writing to the parent or unaccompanied youth with supporting evidence and reasons. The notification will be made by certified mail with a return receipt request.
4. A copy of the appeals package, along with the written decision made at Level 2, is to be shared with the district homeless liaison.
5. If the parent or unaccompanied youth disagrees with the decision made at Level 2 and wishes to move the dispute resolution process forward to Level 3, the parent or unaccompanied youth shall notify the district homeless liaison of intent to proceed to Level 3 within five (5) business days of receipt of notification of the Level 2 decision.
6. If the dispute remains unresolved, the process then moves to Level 3.

It is the desire of Huntingdon Special School District that any/all disputes be resolved at the local level.

Every effort must be made to resolve the complaint or dispute at the local level before it is brought to the Tennessee Department of Education.

If a resolution cannot be made in either the Level 1 or Level 2 Appeal process, the next appeals are as follows:

Level 3: Appeal to the state homeless coordinator

If/when this process presents itself, the district homeless liaison will assist the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth moving forward. All information pertinent to this appeal is contained in the McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution State Process Document on file in the district liaison's office.

If the Level 3 appeal fails to produce a suitable outcome, the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth may make the next appeal as follows:

Level 4: Appeal to the state executive director of Consolidated Program Monitoring

If/when this process presents itself, the district homeless liaison will assist the parent, guardian or unaccompanied youth moving forward. All information pertinent to this appeal is contained in the McKinney-Vento Dispute Resolution State Process Document on file in the district liaison's office.