



MCKINNEY - VENTO PROGRAM HOME VISIT GUIDE

Home visits create trust and improve educational outcomes by engaging with families outside of school. These home visits help form a shared understanding and demonstrate that educators care about their students. Home visits can be in motels, shelters, shared housing units, RVs, and other settings. Home visits help staff locate students, and render supports needed, in order for students to return to school, re-enroll, and/or address attendance concerns, as well as academics.

MCKINNEY-VENTO ACT

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the McKinney-Vento Act

- Schools must remove barriers to identification, enrollment, and retention of McKinney-Vento students.
- Under FERPA, "privacy" generally means that schools must have specific, written consent to release any information from a student's education record.
 - Disclosing a student's status can expose them, create safety risks, increase vulnerability and create stigma.
 - Refrain from sharing student housing status unless there is a legitimate educational interest.
 - Providing unaccompanied youth access to their own records is an important strategy to remove barriers to enrollment and retention.
 - Once a student turns 18 years of age, all FERPA rights transfer to them.

Safety Concerns for student includes:

- Keep in mind that home visits are not a *requirement to identify MV students* or to verify eligibility. Also, a surprise home visit can create negative consequences for students and families with a landlord.
 - Landlords can misinterpret visits as a sign of trouble or the family's inability to pay rent.
 - In domestic violence situations, families do not, or cannot, share their location to avoid the perpetrator from finding them. If families are in shelter, avoid sharing location information.
 - Unaccompanied minors may live with non-relatives, and a home visit could jeopardize their stay.

Considerations for Home Visit:

Safety

- Conduct your visits in pairs - never alone
- Wear school or district clothing with logos
- Wear comfortable shoes
- Wear a badge or name tag with your credentials and role
- Research the neighborhood and park your car as close as possible
- Be aware of your surroundings before leaving your car
- Carry business cards with you
- Avoid going inside of the property
- Inform your supervisor and team of the location you are visiting and estimated time of return



Records

- Bring attendance records, or any pertinent information to share with student and parent/family

Documentation

- Document interventions, including the number of attempts, follow ups, and supports rendered
 - For example, "per home visit, family doubled up, offered... and plan to follow up with uniforms and rental assistance information"

Building Trust Through Home Visits

- Try to anticipate any needs or concerns the student and family might have.
- If at all possible, try to prepare the student and family for your visit. Notify them of your intended visit via phone call, a note home with the student, or by email. Home visits should never be a surprise or unannounced. If a student or family is in immediate danger, notify the appropriate agencies.
- Do not take law enforcement or school resource officers. Law enforcement may be perceived as threatening or intimidating. Some families may not open the door due to fear of contact with legal authority.
- It is helpful to bring useful items and resources. Examples include: information on available resources, a list of contacts and referrals, laundry detergent, uniforms, bus passes, food, or school supplies.