

E-Mail message to Continuum of Care Contacts:

The 2006 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs application requires Continuums to assess its local homeless system's overall strategic planning and coordination efforts. (See Chart P in Exhibit 1: CoC Coordination Chart). This memo will address only one of these coordination requirements – Coordination with State Education Agencies (SEA). It will be important for your Continuum to have begun to implement a process before the CoC submits its 2006 CoC application in order to receive credit for accomplishing this requirement.

The CoC will need to identify housing facilities that serve homeless children under the age of 18. The compiled list of identified facilities should include all emergency shelters and transitional housing programs in the Continuum and should be sent to the SEA. It would also be helpful to send this compiled list to the designated Homeless Liaison(s) for the school district(s) in your community. A copy does *not* need to be sent to HUD.

Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act authorizes the Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program, which is administered by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE). HUD's goal, shared by the Interagency Council on Homelessness, is that HUD-funded programs ensure the protection of the education rights of homeless children and that families and children receive information about assistance in obtaining these rights. Examples of this assistance include enrollment in appropriate schools, and access to academic tutoring and counseling. Also, students have the right to be bused to their schools of origin in order for their education to continue without disruption. Please note that such transportation is the responsibility of the school system and *not* of the Continuum of Care.

An expanded definition of homeless children and youth has been adopted by the Department of Education for these purposes. For DOE, homeless children and youth include those who:

1. lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence
2. are sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
3. are living in motels or hotels due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations;
4. are living in an emergency or transitional shelter or a domestic violence shelter; or
5. are abandoned in hospitals, living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations or similar settings.

(See DOE's website, <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg116.html>, for the full definition). Please remember that HUD-funded providers must continue to house and serve families and children that meet the definitions and guidelines of Title IV of the McKinney-Vento Act.

To help ensure that parents and children are aware of their education rights, HUD has identified several methods you may want to consider to accomplish this task. They are as follows:

- (1) Provide information about homeless children's education rights during the intake process;
- (2) Maintain a phone contact listing of your State's Education Agency (SEA); for more information go to the National Association of State Boards of Education, http://www.nasbe.org/SEA_Links/SEA_Links.html;
- (3) Provide contact information (names, addresses and phone numbers) for the local school district's Homeless Liaison;
- (4) Encourage parents to call the National Center for Homeless Education at the toll-free HelpLine number: 1-800 308-2145;
- (5) Use posters, publications and other products available through the National Center for Homeless Education (NCHE) at http://www.serve.org/nche/products_list.php, or the U.S. Department of Education, <http://www.ed.gov>; and/or
- (6) Use training resources already developed by your State's SEA or through NCHE, <http://www.serve.org/nche/training.php>.

Thank you for your assistance. HUD appreciates your continued work with homeless individuals and families with children.