

## **Definitions of Unaccompanied Homelessness for Youth and Young Adults**

A Way Home Washington defines youth and young adult homelessness as unaccompanied young people ages 12-24 who are considered homeless under Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition **as well as** young people who are unstably housed, couchsurfing and/or doubled up.

Education systems use the FRA - Fixed, Regular and Adequate housing - definition of homelessness, which includes young people experiencing homelessness by the HUD definition **as well as** those who are doubled up, couchsurfing and/or migrant children.

For the Student Stability Innovation Grants, projects can target solutions towards any groups of **unaccompanied** students experiencing or at risk of experiencing a housing crisis who meet the McKinney Vento definition of homelessness.

*See below for a detailed description of each of these definitions.*

### **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)**

HUD defines homelessness for their program into four categories. The categories are:

#### **Category 1: Literally Homeless**

Individual or family who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:

- I. Has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not meant for human habitation;
- II. Is living in a publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state and local government programs); or
- III. Is exiting an institution where (s)he has resided for 90 days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution

#### **Category 2: Imminent Risk of Homelessness**

Individual or family who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:

- I. Residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;

- II. No subsequent residence has been identified; and (iii) the individual or family lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing

### **Category 3: Homeless under other Federal statutes**

Unaccompanied youth under 25 years of age, or families with children and youth, who do not otherwise qualify as homeless under this definition, but who:

- I. Are defined as homeless under the other listed federal statutes;
- II. Have not had a lease, ownership interest, or occupancy agreement in permanent housing during the 60 days prior to the homeless assistance application;
- III. Have experienced persistent instability as measured by two moves or more during in the preceding 60 days; and
- IV. Can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time due to special needs or barriers

### **Category 4: Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence**

Any individual or family who:

- I. Is fleeing or attempting to flee their housing or the place they are staying because of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions related to violence that has taken place in the house or has made them afraid to return to the house, including:
  - o Trading sex for housing
  - o Trafficking
  - o Physical abuse
  - o Violence (or perceived threat of violence) because of the youth's sexual orientation;
- II. Has no other residence; and
- III. Lacks the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing.

## **U.S. Department of Education (ED)**

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homeless children and youths as follows:

The term "homeless children and youths" —

- A. means individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(1) of this title); and
- B. includes —

- i. children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement;
- ii. children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C) of this title);
- iii. children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- iv. migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this subtitle because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines unaccompanied youth as follows:

The term “unaccompanied youth” includes a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

### **A Way Home Washington’s Definitions**

**Actively Homeless:** As of the last day of the reporting month, the number of actively homeless unaccompanied young people under the age of 25 on your active list.

**Unsheltered:** Young people who are living on the street or other places not meant for human habitation (HUD – Cat 1i).

- HMIS NOTE: Can use Active status: 4.12 Current Living Situation; most recent Current Living Situation entered: Place not meant for habitation

**Sheltered:** Young people experiencing sheltered homelessness in shelter, transitional housing or other time-limited setting (HUD – Cat 1ii & iii).

- HMIS NOTE: Can use Active status: 4.12 Current Living Situation; most recent Current Living Situation entered:
  - ES, including hotel or motel paid for with emergency shelter voucher, or RHY funded Host Home Shelter

- Safe Haven
- Residential or halfway house with no homeless criteria
- Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher
- Transitional housing for homeless persons
- Host Home (non-crisis)
- Foster care home or foster care group home
- Hospital or other residential non-psychiatric medical facility
- Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility
- Long-term care facility or nursing home
- Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility
- Substance abuse treatment facility or detox center

**Doubled Up/Couch Surfing:** Unaccompanied youth and young adults who are staying with others (may include staying with friends and family) in situations that are unsafe or unstable. The young person does not have control over how long they can stay; does not feel safe where they are staying (HUD – Cat 2, 3 & 4, HHS – RHYA definition, US Dept of Ed – McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act definition).

- HMIS NOTE: Can use Active status: 4.12 Current Living Situation; most recent Current Living Situation entered:
  - Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment or house (T)
  - Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment or house (T)

**Other/Unknown:** Young people experiencing homelessness who do not fit into any of the above categories or for whom the location they are staying is unknown.

**Notes:**

- Actively homeless individuals may reside in shelter, transitional housing, or in a location not meant for human habitation (on street, beach/riverbed, in car, etc.).
- Note that young people who enter transitional housing (or other time-limited safe and stable housing eg. host homes, temporary housing placement with friends or family) should remain on the active list until they are permanently housed.
- Actively homeless individuals may have received a voucher or subsidy. However, if they have not yet moved into a permanent housing destination, they should still be counted as actively homeless.
- Unaccompanied young people who have a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (even if shared) are not considered homeless, unless they do not feel safe where they are staying or do not have control over how long they can stay.