



**To:** Service Providing Agencies, Service Coordinators and Early Intervention Providers



**Date:** 08-09-2024



**Subject:**  
Serving families experiencing homelessness

## Arizona Early Intervention Program Technical Assistance Bulletin

### IDEA Part C Federal Regulations

#### Section 303.17 Homeless children.

Homeless children means children who meet the definition given the term homeless children and youths in section 725 ([42 U.S.C. 11434a](#)) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended, [42 U.S.C. 11431](#) et seq.

#### Section 303.302 (b)(1)(ii) Comprehensive child find system.

Scope of child find. The lead agency, as part of the child find system, must ensure that—(1) All infants and toddlers with disabilities in the State who are eligible for early intervention services under this part are identified, located, and evaluated, including—(ii) Infants and toddlers with disabilities who are homeless, in foster care, and wards of the State.

### Purpose

This bulletin is meant to provide clarity for AzEIP Contracted Providers regarding the provision of services for children and families experiencing homelessness during the referral process and ongoing services with AzEIP.

Service Coordinators and team members will be able to understand how to document conversations and enter data into I-TEAMS for identification of the homeless factors involving the child and the family.

### AzEIP Policy

1.0.1 It has been established in the Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) to continuously develop and implement a statewide, comprehensive, coordinated, interagency, multidisciplinary system for providing early intervention services, which are based on scientifically based research, to the extent practicable, to all children who are eligible under IDEA, Part C, and their families, including:

A. Native American infants and toddlers with disabilities, and their families who reside on a reservation geographically located in the state

B. Infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families

C. Infants and toddlers with disabilities, and their families who are experiencing homelessness

D. Infants and toddlers with disabilities who are wards of the state.

## Policy and Procedure Clarification

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines Homeless children as:

- Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence including children 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; or are abandoned in hospitals
  - 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
  - Are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings

Any time a Service Providing Agency identifies a child as homeless, the team should:

- Determine which region the child will be best served by
  - Discuss with the family the location(s) where they would like Early Intervention Services provided, including but not limited to:
    - Park
    - Library
    - Family or friends home
    - Other community locations
  - The family is not required to identify a home address.
  - Once the family has identified the location(s) where they would like Early Intervention Services provided, the SC should reach out to the AzEIP office for assistance in determining how the home address should be entered into I-TEAMS and confirming the region assignment
  - If a transfer is needed based on the cross streets and zip code provided by the family for services to be provided, the Service Coordinator will submit a transfer request and copy [AzEIPQualityImprovement@azdes.gov](mailto:AzEIPQualityImprovement@azdes.gov) on the request
- Support the family in identifying a mailing address through one of the following:
  - "General delivery" at the post office
  - Local shelters
  - Community organizations
  - Friends and families
  - Work/school or;
  - If they are unable to identify a mailing address, the AzEIP office address can be used.
- Review the current stable resources/supports in the family's life and discuss obtaining a consent to share to assist with:
  - Staying in communication with the family
  - Collaborating to support the family in building their capacity to reach their desired outcomes

## Policy and Procedure Clarification (Continued)

- Document all discussions with the family in the Contact Log(s) including the family's decision on the location(s) they would like to have their services provided
- Update I-TEAMS
  - Enter the home address as identified by the AzEIP office
  - Enter the parent's mailing address
  - Enter a comment on the Demographics page stating: "Family is experiencing temporary homelessness. Early Intervention services will be provided in Region XX."
- Continually review and update the IFSP and:
  - Recognize that the families priorities may be different than a family with a permanent residence
  - Allow the family to discuss all of their priorities and concerns
  - Discuss community resources
  - Utilize Family Outcomes to support the family with their priorities and concerns
  - Provide support to family in identifying and accessing community resources and making referrals
  - Provide additional support during transition to ensure the family experiences a smooth transition
  - Document in contact log(s) coaching and support provided to assist the family in achieving their outcomes. *(we want to support the family in finding and utilizing resources to build their capacity)*

## Considerations and Reflections

Communication may be more difficult for a family experiencing homelessness. Extra communication attempts may be needed before proceeding with Loss of Contact procedures.

When screening or determining eligibility, the team should reflect on how environmental factors may affect the child's development.

Discussions with families shall be conducted with sensitivity and courteousness in light of the nature of their current circumstances.

Repetition and expansion of some subject matters in explaining processes is normal and should be expected.

Anything shared or said shall be held in the strictest confidence between the family and the team.

Supervisors or leadership should be looked to as a support for any uncertainty on how to work with homeless families.

Service Providing Agencies are recommended to provide ongoing training and support to staff related to serving families experiencing homelessness.

## Resources

- [AzEIP Policy Manual](#)
- [McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act \(Title IX, Part A of ESSA\)](#)
- [School House Connection](#)
- [Early Head Start](#)
- [211 Arizona](#)
- [The Society of St Vincent De Paul Shelter and Transitional Housing](#)
- [Central Arizona Shelter Services](#)
- [Phoenix Rescue Mission](#)
- [Nourish Phoenix](#)
- [UMOM New Day Centers](#)
- [Strategies for Increasing ECE Services for Homeless Children](#)
- [Early Childhood and Family Homelessness Resource List](#)
- [Homeless Services – Arizona Department of Economic Security](#)
- [Arizona Housing Coalition Homelessness Resources](#)
- [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Shelters and Emergency Housing: Arizona](#)
- [Arizona Department of Housing – Homeless Assistance](#)

## Acronym List

A.R.S. - Arizona Revised Statutes  
AzEIP - Arizona Early Intervention Program  
ESSA - Every Student Succeeds Act  
IFSP - Individualized Family Service Plan  
I-TEAMS - Infant-Toddler Electronic Administration and Monitoring System  
IX - Nine (Roman Numeral)  
IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act  
QI - Quality Improvement  
TBEIS - Team-Based Early Intervention Services  
U.S.C. - United States Code



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