

Who Can Make a Determination of Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Status?

The following chart lists the four groups of professionals authorized to make a determination that a student meets the definition of an unaccompanied homeless youth or is self-supporting and at risk of becoming homeless for filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Professional	Comments
School district or high school McKinney-Vento liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determines if student is eligible to receive services under the McKinney-Vento Act • Must inform unaccompanied homeless youth of their FAFSA status as independent students and assist them to obtain verification of that status¹ • May continue to make a determination of a youth's status for as long as the liaison has access to the information necessary to make such a determination²
Director or designee of an emergency shelter or transitional housing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program must be funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) • Documentation should include the time frame that the student resided in the shelter or program. In rare cases where a recognized authority provides documentation of unaccompanied homeless youth status to a person no longer receiving services from the authority's organization, that documentation is acceptable for verifying unaccompanied homelessness. • May provide supporting documentation for subsequent year determinations
Director or designee of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can only make a determination if the student utilized the services of the shelter or program on or after the date specified on the FAFSA • Documentation should include the time frame that the student resided in the shelter or program. In rare cases where a recognized authority provides documentation of unaccompanied homeless youth status to a person no longer receiving services from the authority's organization, that documentation is acceptable for verifying unaccompanied homelessness.
Financial aid administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must make a determination if a student does not have a determination from another professional • Purpose of determination is to confirm student's living situation meets the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness • Making a determination does not require a dependency appeal • Making a determination is not an exercise of professional judgment authority • Determination may be made using a documented interview

¹ Per amendment to Subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, effective October 1, 2016. 11432(g)(6)(A)(x)(III).

² Per [U.S. Department of Education Non-Regulatory Guidance, Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program](#)