

## Free Birth Records for People Experiencing Homelessness

A new state law, [Public Act 100-0506](#), requiring that free birth certificates be provided for people experiencing homelessness took effect January 1, 2018. "Homeless person" means an individual who meets the McKinney-Vento definition of "homeless" (42 U.S.C. 11302) or an individual residing in any of the following living situations: individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including 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; 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; children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings; and migratory children who meet the previous living situations. Children and youths who have been displaced from their homes because of a natural disaster would also meet the definition.

The new law requires that a service provider sign a statement verifying the applicant's homeless status. Public school homeless liaisons or school social workers are among the service providers who may sign a statement. Individuals who are homeless must not be charged for this verification. The McKinney-Vento Act requires schools to enroll students experiencing homelessness immediately, even if the student is unable to provide documents that are typically required for enrollment (such as previous academic records, records of immunizations and other required health records, proof of residency, proof of guardianship, birth certificates, or other documentation); has missed application or enrollment deadlines during a period of homelessness; or has outstanding fees. (Section 722(g)(3)(C)(i); see also 722(g)(1)(H))

The IDPH form can be located on our website at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Homeless.aspx> under "What's New". The provider (school, McKinney-Vento liaison, homeless shelter, homeless service provider) is required to print the form on organizational/school district letterhead. The school district will only be required to add the School District Name, not the Agency Tax ID.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact State Homeless Coordinator Vicki Hodges at [vhodges@isbe.net](mailto:vhodges@isbe.net).