



ENROLLING YOUR CHILD IN ANOTHER SCHOOL AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER

If your child's school district has closed due to a natural disaster, your child can enroll in school elsewhere. If a family fits the McKinney-Vento definition of "homeless" due to a natural disaster, your child can enroll immediately. "Homeless" includes, among others, those who (1) lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; (2) are living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, State, or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing); or (3) have documented evidence that they will imminently lose their housing, have no subsequent residence identified; and lack the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing.

A child who is not considered "homeless" can enroll in another district if their school district is closed but will reopen under an adjusted calendar. However, if the child returns to his/her home district when it reopens, he or she will follow the district's adjusted calendar and may ultimately go to school longer than 180 days.

OBTAINING SCHOOL RECORDS AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER

In some situations, a school may determine that it is necessary to disclose information to appropriate parties in order to address a disaster or other health or safety emergency. FERPA permits school officials to disclose, without consent, education records, or personally identifiable information from education records, to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency, if knowledge of that information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

If enrolled in a Texas public or charter school, school district staff can access your student's student identification information (name, date of birth, and student ID number) submitted on the enrollment application into the PID/PET databases to find the student's existing identification number. The student should not be given a new identification number when one already exists. If there is no Texas public school data history for the student, the school district will need to enroll the student using the information on the student enrollment application until you can obtain records from the prior school verifying the provided information.

OBTAINING IMMUNIZATION RECORDS AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER

Rules relating to immunization requirements for school entry allow a student transferring from one Texas school to another Texas school to be provisionally enrolled without proof of required immunizations for up to 30 days. Additionally, displaced students who are considered homeless may be admitted to attend school without documentation of required immunizations for up to 30 days. As the 30-day period draws closer to an end, if there appears to be a significant number of displaced students who are still having trouble obtaining their immunization records, DSHS will consider whether a short additional provisional enrollment period is possible. The 30-day time period begins the day the student begins attending classes at the new school.

Many schools have electronic access to ImmTrac2, the Texas immunization registry. Many student immunization records can be found there. Most school districts are registered to use or access ImmTrac2.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS IN HOMELESS SITUATIONS AFTER A NATURAL DISASTER

Students who are homeless or displaced following natural disasters are eligible for free meals. This includes students relocated in a designated disaster area and students relocated outside of the disaster area. Relocation includes students who are relocated to shelters, hotels, or any home that is not the student's home.

Because this is an emergency, paperwork/documentation to support a student's homelessness may not be readily available; i.e., students, families, and emergency organizations may not be able to provide a list or other paperwork immediately. Regulations allow schools to provide free meals to homeless and displaced students while working to get lists or other paperwork from shelter directors/coordinators and state or federal emergency officials.

Additionally, if funds are not reasonably available from other public or private sources to provide the following services, the school district can use Title I funds for supplies and materials, eye glasses, clothing to meet a school's dress or uniform requirements, medical/dental services, immunizations, and information and referrals to health and social services.

For additional information, contact the Communications Division for the Texas Department of Education at **(512) 463-9000**.