

# Hurricane Harvey Crisis Code FAQ

**1. When should LEAs use the 'crisis code 5A'?**

The crisis code 5A should only be used to identify students who enroll in a different LEA due to Hurricane Harvey.

This code identifies students who must change LEAs either because their home campus was damaged or they had to move to another LEA because their home was impacted.

**2. When should LEAs use the 'crisis code 5B'?**

The crisis code 5B should only be used to identify students who enroll in another campus in the same LEA due to Hurricane Harvey.

This code identifies students who must change campuses either because their home campus was damaged or they had to move to another campus attendance zone within the same LEA because their home was impacted.

**3. When should LEAs use the 'crisis code 5C'?**

The crisis code 5C should be used to identify students who become homeless per the McKinney-Vento definition by Hurricane Harvey, but have not had to change campuses. These students should also be coded as Homeless in TSDS PEIMS.

**4. It may take my software vendor time to add the new crisis codes and/or me time to recode my students. What if I cannot submit the new codes on October 13th?**

Submit the data when reasonably possible.

**5. Which PEIMS submissions will the crisis codes be reported?**

Fall and Summer

**6. A student was enrolled at one LEA at the end of the school year and their home was destroyed during the hurricane. The student moved to another LEA which started school on 9/7 for the first time. Does the student get a crisis code?**

Yes, this student would be coded with crisis code 5A.

**7. If a student moves from one house within a campus attendance zone to another house within the same campus attendance zone, do we code the student with crisis code 5B?**

No, this student would not get a crisis code unless they are considered homeless due to Harvey, then, they would be coded with crisis code 5C.

**8. Once an LEA identifies a student with a crisis code, does the LEA leave the student identified with the crisis code throughout the school year even if the student enrolls in their original campus of enrollment?**

Yes, the LEA that codes the student with a crisis code will not remove the code any time during the 2017-2018 school year.

**9. Should all students who were displaced because of Hurricane Harvey be coded as homeless?**

No, only students who meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless, should be coded as homeless. Some students whose housing is displaced by the storm might not meet the definition of homeless if they have other permanent housing (e.g. own another property or secured a lease on their own). Those families receiving emergency assistance from FEMA or other third parties are considered homeless. Students made homeless by Hurricane Harvey but not changing campus or district would receive the 5C crisis code and homeless coding in TSDS PEIMS.

In many instances, students who are displaced by Hurricane Harvey are McKinney-Vento eligible and considered 'homeless' under federal law, yet each scenario should be reviewed expeditiously on a case-by-case basis based on the circumstances of each student.

The McKinney-Vento Act defines children and youth who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including children and youth:

- Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or similar reason
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds, due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters, or are abandoned in hospitals
- Living in a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- Migratory children living in the above circumstances.

**10. If a student's home becomes damaged due to Hurricane Harvey, is the student coded as homeless?**

Residing in housing that has been so damaged by the storm, e.g. no heat, no running water, no electricity, mold growing, severe overcrowding, etc. is considered substandard housing and therefore McKinney-Vento eligible. Situations where a family is living in the second story of their home, because the first floor is flooded and they cannot use their kitchen, would generally be considered substandard and meets the McKinney-Vento definition.

**11. Are LEAs required to identify all homeless students, including students who became homeless, as a result of Hurricane Harvey?**

Yes. Districts and charter schools are required to identify all students, who are homeless, including students newly designated as homeless and McKinney-Vento eligible as a result of

Hurricane Harvey.

Districts must have policies and procedures in place for identifying homeless students at enrollment and throughout the school year. It is imperative that training is provided to district staff. Due to the impact of Hurricane Harvey in certain communities, schools should make certain that all staff are trained and there is appropriate capacity to support the district with identifying newly designated homeless students, as a result of Hurricane Harvey.

**12. What if a family meets the definition of homeless under McKinney-Vento and does not want to be designated as homeless?\***

In some instances, a family may not want to be identified as homeless. In these instances, the district is required to identify the student as homeless for data collection purposes. The family has the right to refuse services provided for students who are designated as homeless and McKinney-Vento eligible.

\*New addition\* - To honor the request of the family, LEAs should have a process in place to ensure that students and families that were identified as homeless, but have refused services are not included in follow-up district communications or outreach concerning McKinney-Vento programs or support services.

# **Additional Guidance (TSDS) PEIMS Crisis and McKinney-Vento Homeless Coding FAQ**

**13. Does a family need to complete a Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) to be identified as homeless?**

No, a student can be identified as homeless even if a Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ), intake form, or other documents were not completed or signed by a parent or guardian.

**14. If a student was coded as homeless in TSDS PEIMS, but previously refused McKinney-Vento support services; such as, school of origin transportation, do they have an option to receive services at any time during the 2017-2018 school year?**

Yes, if a student was identified and coded as homeless, but refused services earlier during the school year, they can access and utilize McKinney-Vento support services at any time during the 2017-2018 school year.

**15. What can an LEA use in place of a Student Residency Questionnaire (SRQ) to determine if a family would qualify for McKinney-Vento services during a disaster like Hurricane Harvey?**

Listed below are several examples of audible documentation that can be used in a time of crisis or disaster to assess a student's housing status other than an SRQ:

- Google doc/survey
- intake form
- other written communication
- documentation of a phone call or conversation with a school representative.

**16. How long is a student identified and coded as homeless in TSDS PEIMS?**

A student's eligibility is assessed annually. Identification and coding lasts for the current school year and does not carry over from year-to-year.

**17. Does a family's income affect whether they are considered homeless?**

No, the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homelessness focuses on the student's living arrangement. There are no specific income requirements in the definition. Due to a crisis or a natural disaster like a hurricane, many more families may be eligible for the McKinney-Vento program.

**18. What if a student's home was so damaged due to Hurricane Harvey, that the family is living in a travel trailer that is parked in their driveway while repairs are underway at their home? Would this student be coded as homeless?**

Yes, residing in a travel trailer because a family lacks an alternative accommodation due to the damage of their home would be considered substandard housing, therefore McKinney-Vento eligible. The LEA would need to consider the adequacy of the trailer home, including: the number of people living in the trailer, the condition of the trailer, and the availability of running water, electricity, and other fundamental utilities.

**19. What criteria should be used to determine if housing is "substandard"?**

Listed below are several factors to consider in determining whether housing is "substandard":

- lacks one of the fundamental utilities such as water, electricity, or heat;
- infested with vermin or mold;
- lacks a functional part such as a working kitchen or a working toilet;
- or may present unreasonable dangers to adults, children, or persons with disabilities.