



## 2024-2025 Unaccompanied/Homeless Youth Verification Form

### For the Purposes of Federal Financial Aid:

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

You reported on your FAFSA that you are an unaccompanied youth who is homeless, or are an unaccompanied youth providing for your own living expenses that is at risk of being homeless. Please complete this form by checking one of the boxes below, sign and submit it, along with any required documentation, to the Financial Aid Office. Please include your name and student ID number on all documentation submitted. You should make a copy of this form and all documents for your records.

**Unaccompanied** – means you are not living in the physical custody of your parent or guardian.

**Homeless** – means lacking fixed, regular and adequate housing, which includes living in shelters, motels or cars, or temporarily living with other people because you had nowhere else to go.

**Youth** – means you are 21 years of age or younger or you are still enrolled in high school as of the day you signed your FAFSA.

\*Students who don't meet the definition of youth because they are older than 21 (and not yet 24) and who are unaccompanied and homeless or self-supporting and at risk of being homeless qualify for a homeless youth determination.

**Do not email any documents with personal identifying information such as your Social Security Number. You may mail, submit in person, or fax to 406-447-6397.**

FOR QUESTIONS CALL: FINANCIAL AID OFFICE, Helena College, 1115 N. Roberts Street, Helena, MT 59601

406-447-6916, [www.helenacollege.edu](http://www.helenacollege.edu)

RETURN DOCUMENTATION TO: FINANCIAL AID OFFICE, Helena College, 1115 N. Roberts Street, Helena, MT 59601, or fax to: 406-447-6397.

**Attaching documentation verifying homelessness or at risk of homelessness:** By checking this box, you declare that you are able to provide verification of your status as an unaccompanied youth who is a homeless child or youth defined in the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. You must sign the second page of this form and have it completed and signed by a Liaison, Director or Designee as indicated on page two of this form.

**Unable to obtain documentation – 23 years of age or younger at the time your financial aid application was signed:** Attach a signed letter explaining your situation if you have other circumstances that qualify you as an unaccompanied homeless youth or are at risk of homelessness and are not able to get documentation from one of the above officials. A student who chooses to leave their parents' home will need to demonstrate that they were at risk of harm if they continued to live with their parents. Attach any information you may have in support of your statements. The National Center for Homeless Education 1-800-308-2145 is also available if you have questions.

**Not homeless and will provide parental information on your financial aid application:** I am not homeless and do not qualify as an unaccompanied homeless youth or youth at risk of homelessness. You must correct the information on your financial aid application by providing your parental financial information. You and one parent must sign the financial aid application and submit it to the federal processor.

Status Verified by outside agency –qualifies as unaccompanied homeless youth

No verification – age 23 and under – determined to be unaccompanied homeless youth b financial aid office

Not eligible – must provide parental data

Comments supporting decision:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of review: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student:** Only complete this page if you checked "Attaching Documentation Verifying Homelessness or Risk of Homelessness" on the previous page.

This section to be completed by a Liaison, Director or Designee as listed below:

I am a: (check one)

- McKinney-Vento School District Homeless Liaison
- Director or designee of a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funded emergency shelter or transitional housing program
- Director or designee of a runaway or homeless youth basic center or transitional living program funded by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA)

I, the Liaison, Director or Designee as checked above, verify that \_\_\_\_\_  
was: (Print Student's Name)

Check one:

- An unaccompanied homeless youth (under 21) after July 1, 2023. This means that after July 1, 2023, the student named above was living in a homeless situation, as defined by Section 725 of the McKinney-Vento Act, and was not in the custody of a parent or guardian.
- An unaccompanied, self-supporting youth (under 21) at risk of homelessness after July 1, 2023. This means that after July 1, 2023, the student named above was not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian, provides for his/her own living expenses entirely on his/her own, and is at risk of losing his/her housing.

As per the College Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110-84), I am authorized to verify this student's living situation.

_____ Printed Name of Liaison, Director or Designee		_____ Title	
_____ Place of Employment		_____ Work Phone Number	
_____ Address of Place of Employment		_____ City	_____ State
_____ Signature of Liaison, Director or Designee		_____ Date	

**Student:** By signing this worksheet, you certify that all information reported on this worksheet is complete and correct. If you purposely give false or misleading information, you may be fined, sentenced to jail, or both.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## More Information about Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

**Who are Unaccompanied Homeless Youth?** Unaccompanied homeless youth are young people who lack safe, stable housing and who are not in the care of a parent or guardian. They may have run away from home or been forced to leave by their parents. Unaccompanied youth live in a variety of temporary situations, including shelters, the homes of friends or relatives, cars, campgrounds, public parks, abandoned buildings, motels, and bus or train stations.

Between 1.6 and 2.8 million youth run away from their homes each year. Generally, youth leave home due to severe dysfunction in their families, including circumstances that put their safety and well-being at risk. Unfortunately, physical and sexual abuse in the home is common; studies of unaccompanied youth have found that 20 to 50% were sexually abused in their homes, while 40 to 60% were physically abused. Unaccompanied youth do not receive financial support from their parents and do not have access to parental information.

**Who are McKinney-Vento School District Liaisons?** Under subtitle VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, every school district is required to designate a liaison for students experiencing homelessness. Homeless liaisons have a number of legal responsibilities under the Act, including identifying youth who meet the definition of homeless and are unaccompanied. The education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act is overseen by the U.S. Department of Education. For more information, see:  
<http://www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/legislation.html>

**What are HUD-funded Shelters?** The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) administers funding for homeless shelters and services under Title IV of the McKinney-Vento Act. These funds are distributed to communities through a competitive grant process. For more information, see:  
<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/programs/index.cfm>

**What are RHYA-funded Shelters?** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services administers the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs. These programs provide funding for Basic Centers, Transitional Living Programs, and Street Outreach Programs that serve runaway and other unaccompanied homeless youth. For more information, see:  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/youthdivision/index.htm#sub1> Hammer, H., Finkelhor, D., & Sedlak, A. (2002). "Runaway / Throwaway Children: National Estimates and Characteristics." National Incidence Studies of Missing, Abducted, Runaway, and Throwaway Children. Washington DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. See also Greene, J. (1995). "Youth with Runaway, Throwaway, and Homeless Experiences: Prevalence, Drug Use, and Other At-Risk Behaviors." Research Triangle Institute. Washington DC: U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services; National Runaway Switchboard,  
<http://www.1800runaway.org/>.

Robertson, M. & Toro, P. (1999). "Homeless Youth: Research, Intervention, and Policy." Practical Lessons: The 1998 National Symposium on Homelessness Research. Washington DC: U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. Retrieved July 18, 2007 from <http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/progsys/homeless/symposium/3-Youth.htm>. See also MacLean, M.G., Embry, L.E. & Cauce, A.M. (1999). "Homeless Adolescents' Paths to Separation from Family: Comparison of Family Characteristics, Psychological Adjustment, and Victimization." *Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(2), 179-187.