

**If you move around or are staying somewhere temporarily, there are laws to help with:**

- **Staying in school**
- **Going to college**
- **Getting your birth certificate and ID**
- **Seeing a therapist**
- **Getting medical help**
- **Getting help with food or money**

**Were you kicked out of your house?**

**Did you run away?**

**Staying with friends? Couch hopping?**

**Did your family lose their housing?**

For legal rights information, go to [speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org)  
For resources, go to [youth-help.org](http://youth-help.org)

## **School**

There are laws that can help if you are:

- Staying on someone's couch
- Moving from house to house
- Staying with friends/boyfriend/girlfriend temporarily
- Staying in a motel
- In any temporary living situation

### **Do I have to change schools every time I move?**

You get to choose between the school you went to before you lost your housing, the school where you are staying now, or the last school where you were registered.

### **How will I get to school?**

You have a right to get transportation. This could be a bus, a bus pass, or even a taxi. The law says you can stay in your school and get transportation for the rest of the school year, even if you find a permanent place to live.

### **Who should I contact?**

Every school district has a person who helps students who are moving around. This person is called the McKinney-Vento Liaison. Go to [youth-help.org](http://youth-help.org) to find the McKinney-Vento Liaison in your school district.

## **Can I register for school without my parent or guardian?**

Yes. You have the right to register right away.

You don't need proof of where you live, school records or health records. If the school says you cannot register or have to wait, ask your McKinney-Vento Liaison to help or call us.

### **I want to do after-school activities but can't because of my transportation situation.**

You have the right to do all school activities including after-school sports, music, and other clubs. Ask your McKinney-Vento Liaison to help you or call us for help.

### **I had to miss a lot of days because of my situation. I didn't finish the semester in my last school and now I have failing grades.**

The law says schools have to give you credit for full or partial work that you completed at another school, as long as it was passing work.

If you are moving around, schools have to make exceptions to some school policies to help you succeed at school. Ask your McKinney-Vento Liaison to help you or call us for help.

## **College**

If you are on your own, you can apply for financial aid without the help of a parent/guardian.

The McKinney-Vento Liaison should write a letter that says you are an "independent student." You must send this letter to the colleges you apply to. Be sure to check the right boxes on the FAFSA financial aid form. If you need help with this, ask your McKinney-Vento Liaison or call us.

### **Do I have to pay to take the SATs?**

You can apply for a fee waiver. Your school counselor can help with this or you can go to [sat.collegeboard.org](http://sat.collegeboard.org) and type "fee waivers" in the search box.



## **Medical Care, Therapy, Counseling**

### **Can I get medical care?**

The law says that a parent/guardian usually has to give permission for a minor (someone under age 18) to get medical care, but there are times when a minor can do this alone.

If you need birth control, abortion services, testing or treatment for an STI or for HIV/AIDS, you can do this without a parent/guardian's permission. For other medical care, you may need permission.

### **Can I see a therapist or counselor?**

You can have 6 sessions with a social worker, licensed therapist, psychologist or psychiatrist without a parent/guardian's permission if:

- you want therapy
- the therapist says you need therapy
- it would harm you if you didn't get therapy
- you are mature
- you could not get therapy if you had to ask permission

### **Can I get treatment or rehab for drugs or alcohol?**

You do not need parent/guardian permission for this.

## ID and Birth Certificate

### I am a minor. Can I get my birth certificate on my own?

If you were born in Connecticut and are on your own, you can get your birth certificate without a parent/guardian's signature. Go to the Vital Records Office in the town where you live now or the town where you were born.

You must go with the McKinney-Vento Liaison from school or with a staff person from a program that helps youth who are on their own. Go to [speakupteens.org/shelters](http://speakupteens.org/shelters) for a list of people who can help with this.

### Where is Vital Records and what does it cost?

To find the Vital Records Office in your town, go to [ct.gov/dph](http://ct.gov/dph) and type "Vital Records" in the search box.

Here is the cost to get your birth certificate:

- Vital Records Office in your town - \$20
- Vital Records Office in the town your mother lived in when you were born - \$20
- State Vital Records Office at 410 Capitol Ave, Hartford - \$30

### Do I need ID to get my birth certificate?

You and the person who goes to Vital Records with you both have to bring ID. It is best to bring a valid state ID but if you do not have one you can bring two other kinds of ID. To see the list of ID they accept, go to [speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org) and type "birth certificate" in the search box.

### To get a state ID

You must go to DMV to get a state ID. You do not need parent/guardian consent. You must show proof that you live in Connecticut, but there are options if you are moving around. For information, go to [ct.gov/dmv](http://ct.gov/dmv). Search "Non Driver ID."

## DCF

### Can DCF help me?

You can get help from DCF if you are under 18 years old and you were kicked out of your home or neglected or abused.

If you were in DCF care when you turned 18 and are under 21 now, you can go back to DCF. This is called "Re-Entry." Call the DCF Hotline at 1-800-842-2288 for help any time of the day or night.

### What happens if I do not have legal status in the US?

DCF can still help you. They will not call immigration. Call us if you have questions about this.

## Food, Cash, Medical

If you are on your own and trying to get help from the State, here are some things you should know:

### Food

ID: You can use a license, a work or school ID, your medical card, voter registration card, pay stub, or birth certificate. If you don't have one of these, a shelter worker or your employer can prove your identity.

Address: You do not need a permanent address and you don't have to prove your address. You can apply on your own, even as a minor. To find a place to get food, go to [foodshare.org](http://foodshare.org) and type "mobile sites" in the search box.

### Cash or Medical

Every program has different rules, but they cannot turn you away just because you are on your own. Apply at DSS (Department of Social Services) or call them to see if you can get help. [ct.gov/dss](http://ct.gov/dss)



## Need Help?

**If you are moving around a lot and don't have a permanent place to live, the law can help you.**

Call us at 860-570-5327 or 203-335-0719.

**Do you have questions about other teen legal rights?**  
Go to [speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org) and click on Rights & Resources.

**Do you need information about resources that can help?**  
Go to [youth-help.org](http://youth-help.org)

**Do you need more information about school and college?**  
Go to [naehcy.org](http://naehcy.org)

This brochure is intended as reference only and should not be interpreted as legal advice. If you need specific information about the law, please call 860-570-5327 or 203-335-0719.

**Center for Children's Advocacy**  
[speakupteens.org](http://speakupteens.org)  
[kidscounsel.org](http://kidscounsel.org)

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I have  
a place to sleep,  
but I'm not sure  
how long I can stay.

Moving Around

What happens with school?  
Can I get my ID or birth certificate?