



### **Maine's Homeless Education State-Level Dispute Resolution Process**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 USC Chapter 119, Subchapter VI, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths) requires school districts and states to have procedures in place to promptly resolve disagreements over student eligibility for homeless education services and the educational placement of homeless students.

If you have completed all steps in your local school district's dispute resolution process and are still dissatisfied with the school's final decision, you may appeal that decision to the Maine Department of Education. Your local McKinney-Vento Liaison will help you to make the appeal.

During a state-level appeal, students have the right to continue attending the school that the family or unaccompanied youth has requested.

Here is a brief summary of what to expect if you decide to appeal an eligibility or placement decision to the Maine Department of Education:

1. You will complete the attached Dispute Resolution Appeal Request form, with your local liaison's assistance if needed.
2. Your liaison will work with you to create a packet that includes the appeal request form and all documents from the local process you have completed, including the school's initial letter of determination.
3. Your liaison will send the appeal packet to the State Homeless Education Coordinator by mail or email. The Coordinator will review all the materials provided and may contact you and/or the school for additional information. Within 10 working days of receiving the appeal packet, the Coordinator will complete the review of your situation and send you and all relevant school districts a written decision. If everyone is satisfied with that resolution, the process is complete.
4. If you or either of the involved school districts is not satisfied with the Coordinator's decision, a final appeal can be made to the Commissioner of Education. The dissatisfied party has 7 working days to inform the Coordinator in writing that they wish to make this final appeal.
5. The State Coordinator will accept any additional written information you and/or the schools wish the Commissioner to consider for at least 10 more working days. Then the Coordinator will forward all materials to the Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner has 20 working days to issue a final decision and may, during that time, contact you for additional information or to schedule a hearing. You will receive written notification of the Commissioner's final decision.

Your local liaison and the State Coordinator can answer your questions and assist you at any point in the process. You can reach the State Homeless Education Coordinator, Gayle Erdheim, at (207)-624-6637 or by email at [amelia.lyons@maine.gov](mailto:amelia.lyons@maine.gov). You may also contact the National Center for Homeless Helpline at 800-308-2145 or [homeless@serve.org](http://homeless@serve.org).

## RSU 71 and State-Level Homeless Education Dispute Resolution Request Form

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Individual requesting state-level resolution of a homeless education dispute (disputant): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship of above individual to student(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Best contact information for disputant:

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

School district that made the disputed determination: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of local liaison for the school district: \_\_\_\_\_

Liaison's email: \_\_\_\_\_ Liaison's phone: \_\_\_\_\_

In the space below or on a separate attached paper, please explain why you are appealing the final decision made by your local school district. You may ask the local liaison or anyone else to assist you.

