



# SCHOOL RIGHTS AFTER A DISASTER

## **1. We had to move due to the disaster. How can I get my children back in school?**

You can enroll them in a school near where you are staying. This is the because of a federal law (the McKinney Vento Act) that says homeless children can enroll in school near where they are living. Contact the local school district and tell them you had to move because of a disaster and want to enroll your child in school.

## **2. Why should I enroll my child in school?**

Going to school after a disaster is good for many children because it helps them return to a normal routine and allows them to keep up with their schoolwork. Some students are also fed through breakfast and lunch programs, which may help families who lost food because of the disaster or can't afford food. School also gives parents time to do things to help the family recover from the disaster.

## **3. Can my child go to school if we are living in a shelter?**

Yes. It does not matter where you are living. You can be living in a shelter, tent, trailer, hotel, motel, campground, in your car, a park, or with friends or relatives. Your child has the right to go to school in California.

## **4. What papers does my child need to go back to school?**

If you had to move because of a disaster your child can enroll in school right away without showing the papers that schools usually require, like proof of residency, school records, or immunization records (records of shots). Your child's new school will contact their old school to get these records.

## **5. What if my child has a disability?**

Your child has the right to get the special education services they need at any public school. This right is protected by federal and California law. Even if you do not have your child's paperwork, like their Individualized Education Plan, your child must receive services. If your child's new school can't get records from their old school you can tell the new school what your child's needs are. The school must work with you to provide the same services your child used to get or work with you and your child to develop a new plan.

**Need help after a disaster?  
Call NLSLA Disaster Relief: 800-870-0732**



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*Thank you to Lone Star Legal Aid and the National Law Center  
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