



***Student Residency & Homelessness:
Everything the Business Office Needs to Know***

November 27 and 29, 2018
Mt. Laurel, NJ and Rockaway, NJ

New Jersey Association of School Business Officials

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Overview

- ❑ Review of Residency Statutes/Regs
 - Who is eligible to attend
 - Proofs and determining eligibility
 - Removal Process
- ❑ Best Practices for Documenting Residency Matters
- ❑ Review of Homelessness Statutes/Regs
 - Breakdown of Key Legal Definitions
 - Responsibilities of District of Residence, Liaisons
 - Disputes between School Districts and/or Parents
- ❑ Best Practices for Documenting Homelessness

Student Residency Statutes & Regulations

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Applicable Statutes & Regulations:
 - Residency Statutes: N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 et seq.
 - Residency Regulations: N.J.A.C. 6A:22 -1.1 et seq.
 - McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (federal): 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.
 - N.J. Homeless Statute: N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12
 - N.J. Homeless Regulations: N.J.A.C. 6A:17-1.1 et seq.

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Who Has a Right to Attend School in Your District?
- N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 – Public schools free to the following persons between 5 and 20 years of age:
 - (1) Any person domiciled within the District
 - (2) Affidavit Students
 - (3) Students whose parent or guardian is temporarily residing in the District (though not domiciled in the District)
 - (4) Students placed in the District by the Division of Children and Families (DCF)

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

■ Who Has a Right to Attend School in Your District? Continued. . . .

(5) Homeless students (per N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12; N.J.A.C. 6A:17)

(6) Students moving due to violence/abuse/family crisis (when not homeless) – See N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(h).

(7) Students placed in foster homes by court order – No district required to take unreasonable number of children, unless ordered to do so by the Commissioner. See N.J.S.A. 18A:38-2; N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(e).

(8) Students of service members called to active duty

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Who Has a Right to Attend School in Your District?
- N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1 – Public schools free to the following persons between 5 and 20 years of age:
 - (1) Any person domiciled within the District
 - “Domicile” – A person’s physical residence, which they regard as their home, and to which they intend to return even when temporarily residing elsewhere
 - A person can have many residences, but only one domicile

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(2) Affidavit Students

- Residing in home of person domiciled in the District who is not their parent or legal guardian, and
- Supported by such person *gratis* (without remuneration) as if he were that person's own child.
- Must file sworn affidavit with the above, and stating:
 - That they will assume all responsibilities relative to the child;
 - That their gratuitous support of the child is for longer than the school term and is not solely to allow attendance within the District
- Must furnish a copy of lease or letter from landlord (if renting)

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(2) Affidavit Students continued....

- “Occasional gifts” or “limited contributions” from the parents toward the student’s welfare do not disqualify a student from being an affidavit student, provided the resident caretaker does not receive “payment or other remuneration for regular maintenance of the student.” N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(a)4.
- Any person who fraudulently allows a child to use their residence, or fraudulently claims to have given up custody of the child, commits a disorderly persons offense. N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1c; N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(a)5.

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(3) Students whose parent or guardian is temporarily residing in the District (though not domiciled in the District)

- Can attend based on temporary residence, notwithstanding existence of domicile elsewhere
- If Board requires, parent must demonstrate that temp residence is not solely for purposes of attending school
- “Any person who has or shall have his all-year-round dwelling place within the district for one year or longer shall be deemed domiciled within the district for purposes of this section.” N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1d.
 - Will discuss effect of this provision further along in context of homelessness case law.

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(4) Students placed in the District by the Division of Children and Families (DCF)

- Applies when DCF is acting as the child's guardian

(5) Homeless students

- Per N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12 and N.J.A.C. 6A:17
- See later slides re: determination of district of residence for funding purposes vs. district of attendance

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(6) Students moving due to violence/abuse/family crisis (when not homeless)

- Students who move as a result of domestic violence, sexual abuse, or other family crisis
 - “Family crisis” includes: (i) domestic violence or sexual abuse; (ii) disruption of family unit from death of parent/guardian; (iii) unplanned displacement rendering residence uninhabitable, such as flood, fire, etc.
- Permitted to remain for remainder of school year
- District of origin must provide transportation, but may apply to State for reimbursement
- Procedure for determining/challenging what qualifies –
See N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(h).

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(7) Students placed in foster homes by court order

- Students placed by order of a court of competent jurisdiction (but not custody orders btw two parents); or
- Placed by a society, agency, or institution whose object is the care and welfare of indigent, neglected, or abandoned children, or children likely to become delinquent
- No district required to take an unreasonable number of children, unless ordered by the Commissioner

N.J.S.A. 18A:38-2; N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(e).

- See N.J.S.A. 30:4C-26b (a/k/a the Educational Stability Statute) – process for determining educational placement for children placed by DCF in resource family homes

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

Re: Students placed in Foster Homes & Group Homes:

- N.J.S.A. 30:4C-26a – State’s authority to place in foster “resource family” home or group home
- N.J.S.A. 30:4C-26b – Child placed within a District by DCF in a foster or group home is entitled to attend school and obtain all benefits of that District for all purposes “except school funding”
- N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12 – “District of residence” responsible for tuition and transportation costs is:
 - Foster Homes – is the “present district of residence of parent/guardian with whom the child lived prior to the most recent placement in a resource family home.”
 - Group Homes – is the “present district of residence of parent/guardian with whom child lived prior to most recent admission/placement by State

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

(8) Students of service members called to active duty

- Students whose parent/guardian who is a member of the NJ National Guard or a member of a reserve component of the U.S. armed forces
- District not required to provide transportation
- Following return of parent/guardian from active service, child remains eligible to be enrolled in the District through the end of the current school year, unless domiciled in the District

N.J.S.A. 18A:38-3b, -3.1; N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.2(f).

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Eligibility to attend school is *not* affected by:
 - Physical condition of applicant's housing;
 - Compliance with local housing ordinances;
 - i.e. – no Certificate of Occupancy, unsafe housing, etc.
 - Compliance with terms of lease;
 - i.e. – too many occupants, not listed on lease
 - Immigration/visa status – district cannot request proof of citizenship or immigration status (unless an “F-1” visa)

N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.3.

Student Residency Regulations

- How do we determine District of attendance where parents have different domiciles?
- Can arise as a result of:
 - Divorce;
 - Separation;
 - Parents never married but share joint legal custody
- Difference between “physical” custody and “legal” custody

Student Residency Regulations

- When parents have different domiciles:
- First question is always whether there is a court order or written agreement specifying where the children will attend (usually settlement agmt or divorce decree)
- Attendance is decided in the following order:
 - 1) District of attendance specified in written agreement or court order (e.g., divorce decree or settlement agmt);
 - 2) District of parent with whom student lives for majority of school year (regardless of legal custody)

Student Residency Regulations

- If no written agreement or court order specifies where the children attend, and . . .
 - . . . physical custody is shared on an equal time, alternating week/month, or similar basis, then:
 - 3) District of domicile of the parent/guardian with whom the student resided on last school day prior to the October 16 preceding the application date;
 - 4) District of domicile of the parent/guardian who the parents/guardians indicate the student will be residing with on the last school day prior to the ensuing October 16;
 - 5) District of domicile of the parent/guardian with whom the student actually lives as of last school day prior to the ensuing October 16

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

Proof of Eligibility – No “magic” or “must-have” document. Can be any combination of the following sufficient to prove residence under “totality of information”:

- Property tax bills, deeds, contracts for sale, leases, mortgages, signed letters from landlords, other evidence of ownership, tenancy, residency
- Voter registration, licenses, permits, financial account info, utility bills, delivery receipts
- Court orders, State agency agmt
- Receipts, bills, cancelled checks, insurance claims or payments
- Medical reports, assessments, employment docs, unemployment claims, benefit statements, other evidence of family/economic hardship or temp residency
- Affidavits, certifications, sworn attestations re: statutory criteria
- Docs re: military status/assignment
- Business records or gov't docs
- District may accept other forms of documentation

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Proof of Eligibility continued....

District cannot require or request disclosure of:

- Income tax returns;
- Documentation/information re: citizenship, immigration, or visa status (except “F-1” visas, N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.3(b));
- Documentation/information re: compliance with local housing ordinances or conditions of tenancy; or
- Social security numbers

.... but may consider such docs if voluntarily disclosed.

N.J.A.C. 6A:22-3.4(d), (e).

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

■ Determining Eligibility

- Should use Commissioner-approved forms available online or locally developed forms consistent with them.
 - Commissioner-approved sample forms available online at <http://www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap22sample.pdf>
- District cannot demand or suggest:
 - That guardianship or custody must be obtained before enrollment if the enrollment is sought as an “affidavit student”
 - That an applicant who has guardianship or legal custody of the student produce “affidavit student” proofs

N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1.

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Determining Eligibility continued. . . .
 - Determination must be made at time of application
 - Must enroll student in the District except in cases of “clear, uncontested denials”
 - Even if applicant provides “incomplete, unclear, or questionable information”
 - Must notify applicant that student may be removed in accordance with removal procedures, but still have to enroll student
 - Can only deny initial enrollment if the parent accepts and does not contest the denial – Best to document such acceptance in writing.

N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.1(c).

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

■ Removal Process

- Step 1 – Gather information & documentation that supports decision to determine student ineligible
- Step 2 – Begin the removal process by furnishing an Initial Notice of Ineligibility to the parent/guardian

Two General Scenarios:

- ❑ Contested Initial Enrollments – Removal of students who were admitted initially but whose initial eligibility was denied by the District with denial contested by the parent
- ❑ Removal of Current Students – Removal of students already in the school system based on discovery of information/documentation showing that the student is no longer eligible to attend school in the District

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Removal Process *continued....*
 - Initial Notice of Ineligibility – for Required Contents, see N.J.A.C. 6A:22-4.2(b). Includes:
 - Clear description of basis for determination of ineligibility (in cases of initial enrollment denial, must include specific subsection of statute under which enrollment is denied)
 - Clear statement of parent/guardian’s rights to:
 - Appeal to Board of Education for Board-level hearing (can include timeframe in notice for parent to request in writing)
 - Right to contest Board’s determination within 21 days of final determination after Board-level hearing
 - Right to continued enrollment throughout appeal process
 - Risk of being charged tuition (and tuition rate) if unsuccessful in appealing denial of eligibility to attend school

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Removal Process *continued*
 - Step 3 – Hold Board-level hearing, if parent responds to initial notice with such request
 - Allow Board to consider all evidence
 - Allow parent to address Board and provide documentation
 - Document Board member’s review of evidence
 - If parent fails to appear or fails to respond within designated timeframe and request hearing – then Final Notice of Ineligibility should be sent
 - If Board holds hearing and affirms ineligibility, then Final Notice of Ineligibility should be sent

Student Residency Statutes and Regulations

- Removal Process continued....
 - Step 4 – If parent/guardian appeals Board's decision:
 - Appeals are made to the Commissioner of Education as contested controversies under N.J.A.C. 6A:3
 - Burden of Proof is on parent to show entitlement to attend school free of charge under above standards
 - If parent withdraws or district prevails on merits, tuition is assessed for period of ineligible attendance at per pupil rate for up to one year's tuition (incl. 21-day period)
 - These cases can take quite a long time at OAL

Best Practices for Residency / Removal Matters

- ❑ Surveillance Techniques
- ❑ Obtaining Outside Documents & Proofs
 - NJ DMV databases, other databases for acquiring info
 - Leases, landlords, notaries, employers, etc.
- ❑ Generation and Documentation of Proofs
 - Logging surveillance observations
 - Logging phone calls and other contacts
- ❑ Other Best Practices

Homelessness Statutes and Regulations

Homelessness Statutes and Regulations

- NJ Homelessness Regulations – N.J.A.C. 6A:17
 - Mirror McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act – 42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.
 - Mirror NJ Homeless Statute regarding determination of “district of residence” – N.J.S.A. 18A:7B-12
 - Understanding their interpretation and implementation at the County Offices, and the State level, is key

NJ Homelessness Regulations

■ Key Definitions –

- **“Homeless child”** – child or youth who lacks a “fixed, regular, adequate” residence
- **“School district of residence,”** as used in regs means:
 - “. . . the school district in which the parent or guardian of a homeless child resided prior to becoming homeless.”
 - May not be the district where student currently resides
 - Synonymous with “District of Origin” as used in McKinney-Vento Act
- **“School District Liaison”** – communicates with family/other district, and facilitates duties under regs re: homeless students

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Key Definitions *continued* –
- Definition of “Homeless Child”: Lacking:
 - **Regular** – Residence is a place normally used for human habitation
 - E.g. – Not a warehouse, park bench, boxcar, store, etc.
 - **Adequate** – Residence is sufficient for use of occupants as a home/residence
 - E.g. – Are there walls, roof, stove, lights, etc.? Trying to fit 8 people into a 2 bedroom apartment, etc.?
 - **Fixed** – Residence is a permanent abode, as opposed to transient or temporary – ***(What is problematic?)***

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Definition of “Homeless Child” *continued...*
- Also, defined with following caveats:
 - Public/Private Shelter – for temp accommodation
 - Includes: hotel/motel, dom. violence/runaway shelter, transitional housing, or homes for adolescent mothers
 - Place not designed for ordinary sleeping accommodation (goes to “regular”)
 - “Substandard” (goes to “adequacy”) housing
 - Any temp location awaiting foster care placement

Authority: N.J.A.C. 6A:17-2.2.

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Definition of “Homeless Child” *continued...*
- Also, defined with following caveats:
 - “Residence of relatives or friends where the homeless child resides out of necessity because his or her family lacks a regular or permanent residence of its own.”
N.J.A.C. 6A:17-2.2(a)3.
 - Used to say “residing with . . . out of financial necessity”
 - Compare with language of McKinney-Vento:
“sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason”
42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)(B)(i).

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Key Definitions *continued* –
- “**Homeless**” – child or youth who lacks a “fixed, regular, adequate” residence
- **PROBLEM:** By far, most homelessness controversies center around the notion of “**FIXED**”
 - “Fixed” distinguishes a temporary situation from a permanent living situation
 - Where residence is otherwise “adequate” and “regular,” whether it is “fixed” inquires into the
 - Subjective intent of the parents to reside there temporarily or permanently
 - Are they “looking” for permanent housing elsewhere?

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Definition of “**School district of residence**”:
 - General Definition: “. . . district in which parent or guardian . . . last resided prior to becoming homeless.”
 - **Shall be responsible** for education of child and shall determine district of enrollment after consultation with parent

For determining Financial Responsibility *only*

- Placed in Resource Family Home (after 9/9/10): present district of residence of parent/guardian with whom child lived prior to most recent placement in resource family home
- Group homes, resid. state facilities, private schools or out-of-state facilities: same as above
- If, however: (1) DOR cannot be determined; (2) DOR is out-of-state; (3) child resides in Dom. Viol. Shelter/Transitional Facility for more than 1 year: then **State covers costs**

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- District of Residence/Origin – determined by DOR itself based on info available
- **Remains** the District of Residence/Origin for:
 - Attendance Purposes – Until the parent establishes a permanent residence
 - If parent continues to claim residence is “temporary,” this could go on for years, even if District believes it is permanent / solely for schools
 - In those circumstances, the only way to remove the student may be to provide notice of disenrollment, initiate the removal process, and, if the parent appeals, bring the issue to hearing at OAL

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- District of Residence/Origin
- **Remains** the District of Residence/Origin for:
 - Financial Responsibility Purposes – Until parent establishes permanent residence or family has been continuously residing in district for 1 year
 - “Any person who has had or shall have his all-year-round dwelling place within the district for one year or longer shall be deemed domiciled within the district.” N.J.S.A. 18A:38-1d.
 - Bd. of Educ. of Twp. of Egg Harbor v. Bd. of Educ. of Mainland Reg’l High Sch. Dist., EDU 6680-09, Agency Ref. No. 170-7/09 (Comm’r) (Dec. 30, 2010) – After 1 year of continuous residence, financial responsibility for homeless student shifts
 - Egg Harbor does not affect right to attend school, as homeless status continues until elements of statutory definition are no longer met (i.e., permanent residence)

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Example of Egg Harbor/Mainland in Operation:
 1. Family becomes homeless from **District A** and moves to **District B**, claiming temp residence
 2. After 6 months in **District B**, moves to **District C**
 3. After another 6 months in **District C**, moves again to **District D**
 4. Family resides in **District D** for 12 months or more
- A. *Which district(s) bear financial responsibility for the child? (Hint: If responsibility shifts, at what point?)*
- B. *Which district(s) must enroll or continue to enroll the child? (Assuming child was orig. enrolled in **District A**)*

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Example of Egg Harbor/Mainland in Operation:

Answers:

- A. **District A** bears financial responsibility for the first 24 months, after which responsibility shifts to **District D**.*

*Why? – Because at the 24 month mark, the family will have been residing in **District D** for 1 full year or 12 continuous months. **Districts B** and **C** never obtain responsibility.*

- B. Whichever District the child was originally enrolled in upon becoming homeless continues to have an obligation to allow attendance, as long as the family is still homeless.*

What remedy do these Districts have if they believe homelessness no longer exists or is no longer valid?

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- Responsibilities of District of Residence/Origin
 - Responsible for child's education
 - Determines District of child's enrollment, after consulting parent
 - Pays cost of tuition when child attends elsewhere
 - Provides transportation of the child
- Responsibilities of District of Temp Residence
 - What should the District of Temporary Residence be doing?

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- CSA of District of Residence/Origin initially decides:
 - Which District is the District of Residence
 - Which District/school the child will attend, based on determination of child's best interests, as follows:
 - Enroll in DOR to extent feasible, except if parent does not want that;
 - Consider continuity of child's educational program;
 - Consider eligib. for spec. ed. instructional programs;
 - Consider distance, travel time, safety factors in coordinating transportation
- In practice, parent preference generally determines

NJ Homelessness Regulations

- CSA of District of Residence/Origin must:
 - Determine district of enrollment immediately after consultation with parent
 - Advise parent of right to appeal decision
 - Provide decision to enroll in district other than DOR in writing
 - Forward to new school all student records (including health records)
 - Treat homeless special ed students as transfer students under N.J.A.C. 6A:14 (Spec. Ed. Regs)

Preparing for and Handling Disputes Involving Claims of Homelessness

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

- Disputing Homelessness Issues
 - Typical Parties to Disputes:
 - Parents / guardians
 - District of Residence/Origin
 - District of Temporary Residence
 - Other prior districts involved?
 - The State, in certain circumstances

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

- ❑ What are some **red flags** that there may be an issue with residency/homelessness:
 - Family moves citing unique circumstances (mold, eviction, property destroyed, etc.)
 - Frequent absenteeism of children?
 - Issues with Transportation?
 - Have the children made statements to friends/district staff about living elsewhere?
 - Reports from other parents or community residents?
 - Year of Continuous Residency? Has it been documented?

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

- Disputing Homelessness Issues *continued....*
 - Types of Disputes:
 - Two or more Districts dispute determination of District of Residence/Origin
 - Parties dispute District/School of Enrollment
 - Two or more Districts dispute financial responsibility
 - Often in cases involving special education students of homeless families who are placed in out-of-district placements
 - Parents and District(s) dispute whether family is or is not homeless to begin with
 - Parents and District(s) dispute whether family continues to be homeless or has established permanent domicile (for attendance purposes)

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

■ Disputes Between Districts

- Example 1: *Family moves from **District A** to **District B**, claiming homelessness on the registration paperwork. District B enrolls the students and reaches out to District A for payment, but District A is unresponsive for months. Eventually, District A responds that they disagree with the finding of homelessness. District B then goes to the ECS and obtains a determination that the family is homeless and a decision directing District A, as the district of origin, to pay tuition/transportation costs to District B.*
- What are the takeaways?
 - If you have a relationship with the other BA, reach out.
 - Always bring disputes to the ECS “immediately” upon their occurrence, including in cases where the other district is ignoring your district.

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

■ Disputes Between Districts

- Example 2: *Family moves from **District A** to **District B**, claiming homelessness and requesting that District A, the district of origin, continue the children's enrollment there. District A enrolls the students and continues educating them for several years, bussing them from District B. However, neither the parent nor District A's homeless liaison ever notify District B. After one year of continuous residency in District B, District A realizes that financial responsibility should shift and then contacts District B seeking to shift financial responsibility and recoup back-tuition.*
- Questions:
 - Is District B financially responsible for back-tuition?
 - Is District B responsible going forward? From what point?
 - Must District A continue as district of enrollment?
 - If so, for how long?

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

■ Disputes Between Districts

- Example 3: *Family moves from **District B** to **District C**, claiming homelessness for their two children, who are classified special ed students and placed in a private, out-of-district placement. The parents are transient, moving from location to location, and both districts accept their homelessness status. However, **District B** believes that the family was already homeless at the time it moved into its district and disputes its status as the district of residence, believing that the family originated either from **District A** or from out-of-state.*
- Questions:
 - How would District B go about disputing its financial responsibility?
 - Which district is financially responsible? From when to when?
 - What if the parties dispute the district of enrollment?

Avenues of Recourse for Districts

Disputing Homelessness Issues *continued. . . .*

- ❖ In all cases, the **Executive County Superintendent (ECS)** is the initial arbiter of the dispute
- ❖ Districts must notify the ECS “immediately.” Then appeal:
 - Disputes involving the determination of **homeless status or district of enrollment**:
 - Parties must file a Verified Petition to Commissioner as contested case under N.J.A.C. 6A:3 (Controversies and Disputes).
 - Disputes involving only the determination of **financial responsibility** among districts:
 - Parties may petition the Division of Finance directly, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-19.2(d) to determine their respective financial obligations.

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

- Disputing Homelessness Issues *continued....*
- How does **ECS** initially determine
 - Homeless status? – **Almost always** in favor of parents' wishes, except in cases where district can clearly document family is not homeless
 - District of Enrollment? – Same – In practice, ECSs give **very** heavy consideration to parent preference
 - District of Residence/Origin? – Districts submit documentation of family's history of moves, prior/current residence(s)
- **Highlights importance of DOCUMENTATION**

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

And now

. . . without further adieu

. . . to demonstrate the heavily tactical

. . . strategic maneuvering that can, unfortunately, . . .

. . . sometimes accompany such matters,

We will discuss the operative legal principles above

. . . and their practical application in New Jersey

. . . through the use of several, illustrative

WAR STORIES

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

Why is it so important to document homelessness matters early on? Because the story may very well change

*“Oh! What a tangled web we weave
When first we practise to deceive!”*

*–Sir Walter Scott
“Marmion” (1808)
Canto VI, stanza XVII,
Lines 332-33*

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

Knowledge Is Power

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

- Understand how the NJ Department of Education thinks and seeks to interpret these regulations.
- Understand what the parent wants and is likely to do. (Is the family genuinely homeless and concerned with finding housing? Is the family feigning homelessness to get their child in, or keep their child in, a particular district?)
- Understand what the other district wants and is likely to do. (Are they trying to avoid financial responsibility? Do they want the family out of their district?)
- If you understand these things, you can reasonably predict what the parent, other district, and County Office are going to do, before they do it.

Homelessness Claims/Disputes

- If you understand the motivations of the various different stakeholders, you can reasonably predict how they might change their story or position, before they change it.
- Have you documented their original position from the start, before the story changed?
- If not, the “change of tune” designed to produce a particular result may just become the new reality

Best Practices for Handling & Documenting Homeless Issues

- ❑ Communication between Districts
 - Request documentation in writing from other districts
- ❑ Communication with Parents
 - Know what to ask! – Be guided by definition of homelessness
 - Log and make notes of ALL phone calls and other contacts
 - Both Admins and Homeless Liaisons
- ❑ Surveillance Techniques
- ❑ Obtaining Outside Documents & Proofs
- ❑ Other Best Practices

Questions



Thank you.

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