



ARP Homeless Children and Youth Program

American Rescue Plan Guidance

Introduction

On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act into law. The ARP Act authorized the ARP Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) program—an \$800 million reservation within the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III or ARP ESSER) Fund—to address the urgent needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness. This reservation seeks to support states and districts in identifying and providing homeless children and youth¹ with wraparound services that address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure they can attend school and fully participate in school activities. With that, the purpose of this document is to provide districts with initial guidance regarding the ARP-HCY program, its awards, allowable uses, and consortia requirements.

Allocations

Iowa will receive approximately \$5 million in ARP-HCY funds. The funds are allocated to the Iowa Department of Education (Department) in two awards: ARP Homeless I (25%) and ARP Homeless II (75%). For each award, the Department will allocate at least 75% to district subgrantees and use the remaining funds to provide related training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement at the state and district levels (see Table 1).

ARP Homeless I (25%) – Competitive McKinney-Vento EHCY Program Subgrants

ARP Homeless I funds (approximately \$1.3 million) were disbursed in April 2021 to supplement the state's McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento Act) Education for Homeless Children and Youths (EHCY) program grant. Subgrants were awarded on a competitive basis, as required by the ARP Act, to the state's existing subgrantees.

ARP Homeless II (75%) – Formula Subgrants to All Districts

As required by the [final requirements](#), ARP Homeless II funds (approximately \$3.8 million) must be distributed on a formula basis. The formula is based equally on the district's Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) allocation for the most recent fiscal year and its number of identified homeless children and youth in either school year 2018-2019 or 2019-2020, whichever number is greater.

MINIMUM AWARD FOR ARP HOMELESS II

The final requirements prohibit the Department from awarding any ARP Homeless II subgrants less than \$5,000. Districts with allocations less than the \$5,000 threshold must join a consortium to combine funds to reach the minimum allocation or decline ARP Homeless II funds.² Additional information is available in the following [Consortium Requirements section](#).

¹ Homeless children and youths “lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence” (McKinney-Vento § 725(a)).

² A school district with an allocation of \$5,000 or more may join with other districts to form a consortium of districts to receive ARP Homeless II formula funds.

Table 1. Comparison of ARP-HCY Awards.

	ARP Homeless I	ARP Homeless II
Amount	\$1,268,374 (25% of total state award) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 75% to districts Remaining funds for state- and district-level training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement 	\$3,807,531 (75% of total state award) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 75% to districts Remaining funds for state- and district-level training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement
Subgrantees	Existing McKinney-Vento EHCY subgrantees	All school districts
Award Type	Competitive. Subgrants must be awarded on a competitive basis, as required by the statute.	Formula. Subgrants must be awarded using the formula specified in the final requirements, which includes a proportional share of the district's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title I, Part A of the ESEA allocation for the most recent fiscal year (50%). Number of identified homeless children and youth in either school year 2018-19 or 2019-20, whichever number is greater (50%).
Minimum Award	None	\$5,000. All districts with an allocation of less than \$5,000 must join a consortium to reach this threshold (or decline funding).

Allowable Uses of ARP Homeless I and II Funds

Requirements

The district must:

- Use ARP-HCY funds (ARP Homeless I and II) to:
 - Identify homeless children and youth;
 - Provide them with wraparound services that address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and
 - Provide assistance needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and fully participate in school activities.
- Adhere to the allowable uses described under section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Act (see the following Allowable Uses (McKinney-Vento § 723(d)) section).
- Ensure that all costs are reasonable and necessary and align with the McKinney-Vento Act's purpose and requirements.

Allowable Uses (McKinney-Vento § 723(d))

Allowable uses of ARP Homeless I and II are activities that support the purposes of the McKinney-Vento Act's EHCY program. Such uses include:

- The provision of tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services that are linked to the achievement of the same challenging state academic standards as the state establishes for other children and youths.
- The provision of expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (e.g., educational programs for gifted and

talented students, children with disabilities, and English learners; services provided under Title I of the ESEA or similar state or local programs; career and technical education programs; school nutrition programs).

- Professional development and other activities for educators and specialized instructional support personnel that are designed to heighten the understanding and sensitivity of such personnel to the needs of homeless children and youths, the rights of such children and youths under section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Act, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youths.
- The provision of referral services to homeless children and youths for medical, dental, mental, and other health services.
- The provision of assistance to defray the excess cost of transportation for students under section 722(g)(4)(A) of the McKinney-Vento Act, not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding, where necessary to enable students to attend the school selected under section 732(g)(3) of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- The provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs, not otherwise provided through federal, state, or local funding, for preschool-aged homeless children.
- The provision of services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, particularly homeless children and youths who are not enrolled in school, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youths.
- The provision for homeless children and youths of before- and after-school, mentoring, and summer programs in which a teacher or other qualified individual provides tutoring, homework assistance, and supervision of educational activities.
- If necessary, the payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youths in school, including birth certificates, immunization or other required health records, academic records, guardianship records, and evaluations for special programs or services.
- The provision of education and training to the parents and guardians of homeless children and youths about the rights of, and resources available to, such children and youths, and other activities designed to increase the meaningful involvement of parents and guardians of homeless children or youths in the education of such children or youths.
- The development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youths, as described in section 722(g)(5) of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- The provision of specialized instructional support services (including violence prevention counseling) and referrals for such services.
- Activities to address the particular needs of homeless children and youths that may arise from domestic violence and parental mental health or substance abuse problems.
- The adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for any non-school facilities made available under section 723(a)(2) of the McKinney-Vento Act to provide services under section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Act.
- The provision of school supplies, including those supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities or other appropriate locations.
- The provision of other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and fully participate in school activities.

ALLOWABLE EXPENSES UNDER THE REQUIRED AND ALLOWABLE USES

Allowable expenses are those necessary to facilitate the identification, enrollment, retention, or educational success of homeless children and youth so they can attend school and fully participate in school activities.

Examples of allowable expenses include:

- Providing wraparound services (which could be provided in collaboration with and/or through contracts with community-based organizations and could include academic supports, trauma-informed care, social-emotional support, and mental health services);
- Purchasing needed supplies (e.g., personal protective equipment, eyeglasses, school supplies, personal care items);

- Providing transportation to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and fully participate in school activities;
- Purchasing cell phones or other technological devices for unaccompanied, homeless children and youth to enable such children and youth to attend school and fully participate in school activities;
- Providing access to reliable, high-speed internet for students through the purchase of internet-connected devices or equipment, mobile hotspots, wireless service plans, or installation of community Wi-Fi hotspots (e.g., at homeless shelters), especially in underserved communities;
- Paying for short-term, temporary housing (e.g., a few days in a motel) when such emergency housing is the only reasonable option for COVID-safe temporary housing and when necessary to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and fully participate in school activities (including summer school); and
- Providing store cards or prepaid debit cards to purchase materials necessary for students to fully participate in school activities.

Consortium Requirements for ARP Homeless II

General Information

School districts with ARP Homeless II allocations of less than \$5,000 must join a consortium to participate or decline funds. Under this arrangement, the sum of all members' ARP Homeless II allocations must be greater than or equal to \$5,000. The local area education agency (AEA) will serve as the consortium's fiscal agent. The AEA will administer the subgrant on behalf of all consortium members but will not receive any of the consortium's allocation.

A district can determine whether consortium membership is necessary by viewing its ARP Homeless II allocation on the [Emergency Relief Funds for PK-12 Schools webpage](#) or in the Consolidated Accountability and Support Application (CASA) when completing the required ARP-HCY collection.

Required and Authorized Subgrantee Activities

While the ARP Homeless II consortia's fiscal agent is their local AEA, all districts should be familiar with the general purposes, requirements, and authorized activities under ARP Homeless II. For more information on the allowable activities, see the previous [Allowable Uses of ARP Homeless I and II Funds section](#).

Questions and Additional Guidance

If you have questions, please contact Emily Teeter at emily.teeter@iowa.gov. For additional ARP-HCY guidance and information, please visit the Department's [Emergency Relief for PK-12 Schools webpage](#).