



**Department of  
Homeless Services**

PROCEDURE NUMBER 16-502

<b>Subject:</b>  Expectations for Commercial Hotel Providers Pending the Phase Out of Commercial Hotel Placements	<b>Applicable To:</b>  Commercial Hotels Providing Temporary Housing Assistance to Families with Children	<b>Effective Date:</b>  July 5, 2016
---	---	--

<b>Administered By:</b>  Family Services Division	<b>Approved By:</b>   Steven Banks, Commissioner Department of Social Services
---	--

**I. Introduction**

- A. The New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) is charged with ensuring temporary housing assistance for eligible homeless individuals and families with children. In order to meet our legal mandate and the housing needs of families with children, families have been temporarily assigned placement at commercial hotel locations pending the phase out of such placements.
- B. This document outlines DHS' expectations of provider agencies delivering social services at commercial hotels occupied by families with children as DHS works to phase out the use of such placements. Placements of families in commercial hotels are intended to be short-term, while a family's eligibility is determined. There are, however, circumstances in which families may remain there longer (e.g., families whose contacts take longer to verify, families who require ADA-compliant units, families with special needs who require medical intervention, large families). Providers must make the services described below available to all families placed at commercial hotels.

## **II. Background**

- A. During a family's placement at a commercial hotel, the DHS provider covering the hotel is responsible for ensuring that the needs of families are met through an array of services.
- B. As DHS moves forward with phasing out commercial hotels, providers must work with DHS to reduce the length of stay of individual families in hotels.
- C. Hotel units can only be located within the five boroughs of New York City and must meet the building standards of an operating commercial hotel.
- D. Unlike traditional shelter sites, these hotel rooms are booked on a short-term basis to meet an emergency need as determined by DHS.
- E. Providers are expected to allow for one to two rooms in the hotel to serve as offices to manage operations and provide on-site social services.

## **III. Operational Expectations**

- A. Providers are expected to manage relationships between clients, contracted security personnel, and hotel staff, and ensure that staff members treat clients with dignity and respect.
- B. Providers must provide vacancy and usage information on a daily basis to DHS Housing Emergency Referral Operations (HERO).
- C. Providers must work with DHS to ensure that clients are connected to other housing resources as expeditiously as possible, with the goal of doing so within 30 days
- D. Providers must notify the DHS Security and Emergency Operations Division (SEOD) and their respective Program Administrator if contracted security personnel are not present or incidents occur, which may lead to changing the security arrangements.

## **IV. Social Services Expectations**

- A. Providers must have a staffing structure capable of providing transitional shelter services with an adequate social services staff to client ratio (i.e., at least one case manager for every 25 clients). At a minimum, the staffing structure shall include housing specialists, bachelor's level case managers, and at least one licensed master's level social worker to provide regular supervision to staff responsible for assisting clients in their efforts to move to permanent housing and live independently. Providers must also have a citywide network of linkages to community-based organizations.

- B. Providers must ensure that social services staff have experience serving homeless families and receive ongoing training in topics including, but not limited to, assessing risk and needs, identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect, effective case management practices, and evidence-based and/or evidence-informed approaches, such as motivational interviewing.
- C. Providers must demonstrate the ability to engage clients in educational and/or vocational training, occupational development training, and the necessary mental health and substance use treatment services. The provider must also work with clients to build life and decision-making skills in order to promote long-term educational gains, career pathways, employment attainment and retention, and improved quality of life. The provider must leverage resources from the local community in order to support families and their ability to live independently and attain stable and/or increased earnings.
- D. In partnership with housing specialists, case managers must connect clients to opportunities in the community to fulfill their needs and promote stable employment earnings and public assistance, where needed, to sustain permanent housing.
- E. More specifically, case managers must follow the DHS *Case Management Guidelines for Family Shelters*, located at [www.nyc.gov/casemanagementguidelines](http://www.nyc.gov/casemanagementguidelines), and complete the following tasks to assist families:
  - 1. Conduct intake interviews and assessments in CARES;
  - 2. Determine the best exit strategy according to individual needs and what the family can afford;
  - 3. Conduct biweekly Independent Living Plan (ILP) meetings, and document in CARES;
  - 4. Meet with assigned clients about their exit strategies at least every two (2) weeks and explore every possible housing option available, including eligibility for housing subsidies;
  - 5. Ensure that only DHS clients are accessing/residing in rooms.
  - 6. Create savings plans, if applicable;
  - 7. Determine and monitor clients' immediate needs, functional capabilities, and the assistance needed to stabilize housing, healthcare, finances, etc.
  - 8. Explore the option of family reunification as a way to transition out of shelter;
  - 9. Ensure that clients view at least three (3) apartments weekly;
  - 10. Assist clients in finding suitable apartments, and escort clients to apartment viewings and interviews;
  - 11. Liaise with landlords/brokers and housing-related community organizations;
  - 12. Identify available apartments of all sizes and rent levels to be offered to housing-ready families;
  - 13. Help clients complete applications and collect the necessary documents for affordable and subsidized housing;
  - 14. Assist clients throughout the entire housing process from application to meeting prospective landlords to lease signing and move out;

15. Work directly with realtors, landlords and DHS to expedite the lease signing process and move outs;
16. Keep updated records of meetings and actions taken, and document such in CARES;
17. Establish and maintain working relationships with public agencies concerning public benefits, employment services, supportive services, housing resources, etc.;
18. Counsel clients when confronting issues adversely affecting their lives (e.g., mental illness, addiction, abuse, loss);
19. Link clients to appropriate community partners and services;
20. Prepare housing status reports as needed;
21. Update case notes and document all noncompliance in CARES;
22. Work with clients to identify ways to resolve adverse credit reports;
23. Meet or exceed housing placement targets set by DHS;
24. Maintain a flexible work schedule taking into account working clients' schedules;
25. Inspect units on at least a biweekly basis; and
26. Conduct weekly unit inspections for child welfare-involved families and families with children from birth to six (6) months of age.

#### **V. Baseline Assessment**

The following questions and topics must be incorporated as part of providers' baseline assessment of all families:

- A. What are the names and ages of your children?
- B. Do you or anyone in your household have any medical issues that need to be accommodated? If yes, what are they and what services are you or your family member(s) receiving? Where are service providers located?
- C. Do you have any scheduled medical or other appointments for yourself or your children?
- D. Are your children's immunizations up to date? When did they last see a doctor?
- E. Are your children attending school and/or childcare? What is the location of school and/or childcare? And how are they traveling? (Talk about the bus, the routes, and the schedule.)
- F. Status of PA case: (Provide a residency letter and MetroCards)
- G. Diversion Efforts: (Can the family return back to where the family was residing?)
- H. Support Systems: (Are there family members with whom the family can reside?)
- I. Rules of the hotel

#### **VI. Transferring Families to Shelter**

Providers must prioritize for transfer families with child welfare involvement and/or multiple service needs (e.g., medical or mental health needs). Cases can be escalated to HERO to transfer families to more suitable placement (e.g., families who would benefit from a more structured setting). Where possible, priority will be given to families with longer lengths of stay in the commercial hotel setting; and HERO shall prioritize families for transfer to traditional shelter on an ongoing basis.

## **VII. Food Storage and Distribution Guidelines**

- A. Provider staff responsible for handling food must take the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) Food Protection Course and pass the exam in order to receive a certificate.
- B. Providers must actively monitor food demand (i.e., confirm that families are able to receive meals by using sign-in logs).
- C. Providers must adjust orders based on actual consumption (i.e., note the amount discarded at each meal period and adjust accordingly).
- D. Providers must complete a *Daily Food Monitoring Report* (Attachment A), and forward it to the DHS Administrative Contracts Unit weekly for review.
- E. Food to be discarded must be discarded promptly (within two (2) hours after hot food has been warmed or cold food has been removed from refrigeration). Food should not be stored. If food to be discarded cannot be discarded promptly, it must not be co-located with food to be consumed.
- F. In locations with no refrigeration, food vendors must make separate meal deliveries for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. These meals must be delivered in coolers with ice.
- G. Providers must contact the appropriate Program Administrator immediately upon noting deficiencies with meals or delivery, and the Program Administrator must then contact the DHS Administrative Contracts Unit.
- H. All food provided must meet citywide nutritional and dietary standards.

## **VIII. Educational Service Coordination: School Attendance and Transportation**

DHS, the New York City Department of Education (DOE), and provider staff must collaborate to ensure families are stable during their short stay at commercial hotels. This includes offering contracted yellow bus service to students or providing MetroCards to students and their parents, providing shuttle service (for select hotels), assisting with school enrollment, and monitoring attendance.

- A. Provider staff must help distribute the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Students in Temporary Housing Guide for Parents & Youth* (Attachment B) along with the *Students in Temporary Housing Liaison Contact Information* (Attachment C) to ensure families know who to call about school issues, enrollment information, and

transportation to and from school, including yellow bus service and/or MetroCards for students and their parents. To effectively track educational needs, providers must complete the *Daily School Tracking Form* (Attachment D). This form will assist providers in tracking important school information, such as location, mode of transportation to school, and any needed follow up. Provider staff must email the form to the appropriate Program Administrator and the DHS Educational Services Unit (see email addresses below).

- B. If there are any issues with attendance or school enrollment, provider staff must inform the appropriate Program Administrator, the DHS Educational Services Unit (“DHS Education Team”) and the DOE Students in Temporary Housing (STH) Content Experts.
- C. Yellow bus service is available for students in kindergarten through grade six who reside in shelter, as well as for any student who has door-to-door busing listed on his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP). Provider staff must coordinate the distribution of MetroCards with DOE staff to ensure that students and their families receive the transportation they need. Providers must ask the DOE STH Family Assistant and/or STH Content Expert to email a Transportation Request to the DOE Office of Pupil Transportation (OPT), and make arrangements with families for the distribution of MetroCards as needed. This coordination also includes ensuring families utilize shuttle services provided by DHS. DHS will provide shuttle services for select locations to assist children and families navigate from commercial hotels.
- D. The DOE STH team has committed additional staff to work with families and children in commercial hotels.
- E. Providers must establish a daily check-in system to ensure that students leave on time for school. Providers must also ensure that parents do not keep their children out of school when the parent has appointments, and must help schedule appointments early in the day so that parents can pick up their children from school on time.
- F. Providers must collaborate with DOE STH Family Assistants/STH Content Experts, individual schools, and other agencies, such as ACS to hold interdisciplinary case conferences with families to address school-related concerns. Providers are expected to partner with local schools to raise awareness about the needs of students residing in shelter and to increase the supports schools can provide. For additional assistance, providers may contact Susana Vilardell, Director of Educational Services at DHS, at [svilardell@dhs.nyc.gov](mailto:svilardell@dhs.nyc.gov).

## ATTACHMENTS

- A. Daily Food Monitoring Report
- B. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act Students in Temporary Housing Guide for Parents & Youth
- C. Students in Temporary Housing Liaison Contact Information
- D. Daily School Tracking Form

**DAILY FOOD MONITORING REPORT**

SHELTER:

CENSUS:

DATE:

	BREAKFAST	LUNCH	BAG LUNCH	DINNER	*OTHER: (specify)	*OTHER (specify)	*OTHER (specify)		
STANDING ORDERS/OTHER									
CHANGE ORDER NEW AMOUNT									
<b>*OTHER(specify): O = OUTING; B = BARBEQUE; M = MEETING; H = HOLIDAY; P - PARTY; Y = YOGURT; F = FRUIT; ML = MILK; S = SNACK</b>									
ORDERS RECEIVED	ARRIVAL TIME	TIME LATE	ORDERS RECEIVED	CORRECT Y/N	# BEVERAGES RECEIVED		CORRECT Y/N		RECEIVER INITIAL OR NAME (HAND WRITTEN)
					MILK	JUICE	MILK	JUICE	
BREAKFAST									
LUNCH									
BAG LUNCH									
DINNER									
*OTHER: (specify)									
*OTHER: (specify)									
<b>IMPORTANT! PLEASE MAKE ALL THE NECESSARY CHECKS TO SHOW FOLLOW-UP</b>									
MEAL B - BREAKFAST L - LUNCH D - DINNER	ITEM PLEASE PRINT S = SUBSTITUTION	# MISSING	# SPOILED	# BROKEN	TIME VENDOR NOTIFIED	TIME CORRECTED -C OR DID NOT CORRECT - (DNC)	NOTED ON DRIVERS RECEIPT (YES OR NO)	COMMENTS, ETC PLEASE PRINT (NAME OF SUBSTITUTED ITEM ONLY)	
EQUIPMENT PROBLEM (specify)	DELIVERY:					VENDOR'S RESPONSE:			

BREAKFAST / / LUNCH / / DINNER / / SAMPLES PICKED-UP YES / / NO / / (COUNT AS DISCARDS)

MEALS SERVED	# SERVED	# SECONDS	# DISCARDS	COMMENTS (PLEASE PRINT)
BREAKFAST				
LUNCH				
BAG LUNCH				
DINNER				
*OTHER: (specify)				
*OTHER: (specify)				

Review monitoring report for completeness/accuracy. The following day, if there is a problem or incident, FAX to Contract Analyst/Nutritionist before 10 AM at (917) 637-7563.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SHELTER FOOD SERVICE COORDINATOR/ DESIGNEE: PRINT

\_\_\_\_\_  
 SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
 DIRECTOR'S NAME/ DESIGNEE: PRINT

\_\_\_\_\_  
 DIRECTOR'S/DESIGNEE SIGNATURE IN CASE OF DISCREANCY





## McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

### Students in Temporary Housing Guide for Parents & Youth

TOPIC	IMPORTANT INFORMATION
<p><b>Children living in the following situations are considered homeless for the purposes of education rights under the McKinney-Vento Act:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a shelter, transitional shelter, motel, campground, abandoned in a hospital, or awaiting foster care placement.</li> <li>• In a car, park, public place, bus, train or abandoned building.</li> <li>• Doubled up with friends or relatives because you cannot find or afford housing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unaccompanied Youth</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian and who meets the definition of homelessness set forth in the explanation above.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Unaccompanied homeless youth have the same rights as homeless students who reside with a parent or guardian.</i></p>
<p><b>Students who fall under the McKinney-Vento Act's definition of homeless have the following rights:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To a free public education.</li> <li>• To immediate enrollment in the zoned school.</li> <li>• To attend school no matter how long they have lived at their current location.</li> <li>• To stay in their school of origin (school attended before becoming homeless or the last school attended) or choose to attend their new zoned school.</li> <li>• To transportation services to and from school.</li> <li>• To not be denied immediate school enrollment just because of their situation or because they lack enrollment documentation.</li> <li>• To not be separated from the regular school program because they are homeless.</li> <li>• To receive free school meals.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Important information:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Office of Safety and Youth Development (OSYD) has at least one Students in Temporary Housing (STH) Content Expert in each borough who serves as the STH liaison and manages programs and services designed to help children who are homeless pursue their education. The STH Content Expert supervises a team of Family Assistants.</li> <li>• Each Children First Network (CFN) has a designated Youth Development liaison available to assist children who are homeless with their educational needs and provide support to the schools in the network.</li> <li>• Additionally, District 75 and District 79 each have a designated STH liaison available to assist children who are homeless with their educational needs.</li> <li>• Family Assistants are located at shelters and in some schools. They are responsible for assisting homeless parents and their children with their educational needs.</li> <li>• Family Assistants are available to assist the child's parent/guardian with school enrollment, obtaining immunizations, school records, and arranging transportation to and from school. School staff should not hesitate to contact their STH liaison for individual questions, to arrange training, or to assist unaccompanied youth.</li> </ul>
<p><b>School Selection:</b></p>	<p>Schools must allow parents/guardians to choose the child's school when their child is homeless. The parent/guardian may choose among the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The school the child attended when permanently housed (school of origin);</li> <li>b) The school in which the student was last enrolled; or</li> <li>c) Any school available to a permanently housed child residing in the area where the homeless student is currently residing.</li> </ol>
<p><b>School Enrollment: (Apply only if your child is not currently enrolled or you want to change school)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elementary School – register your child at your zoned school. If you are currently residing in a NYC Department of Homeless Services shelter, the family assistant at your shelter will be able to assist you, if needed. If there is no family assistant in your shelter or if you are not residing in a shelter, please contact your school or the STH liaison for assistance.</li> <li>• Middle School – same procedure as elementary school except where your district does not have zoned middle schools, then you must report to the Borough Enrollment Center. For the location of your Borough Enrollment Center, please call 311.</li> <li>• High School – all high school students must register at the Borough Enrollment Center. For the location of the nearest Borough Enrollment Center, please call 311.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enrollment Disputes:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a dispute arises over the school selection or enrollment, your child must be immediately admitted to the school in which he/she is seeking enrollment, pending resolution of the dispute.</li> <li>• The parent/guardian must be provided with a written explanation of the school decision on the dispute, including the right to appeal, and referred to the STH Family Assistant or STH liaison for assistance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Transportation:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students who are defined as homeless by the McKinney-Vento Act are entitled to transportation to and from school, if necessary.</li> <li>• If available, busses will be provided to students grades K-6; if not available, they are eligible for student MetroCard.</li> <li>• For students in grades Pre-K to 6 who are eligible for transportation and receive a student MetroCard, their parents/guardians are eligible for public transportation assistance (MetroCard) to accompany the child.</li> <li>• Students in grades 7-12 are eligible for student MetroCard.</li> </ul>

For more information, please contact the borough Students in Temporary Housing Program or your Children First Network to speak to an STH liaison or call 311 or visit our web site at:  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/StudentSupport/NonAcademicSupport/StudentsinTemporaryHousing/default.htm>



## Students in Temporary Housing Liaison Contact Information

Office of Safety & Youth Development (OSYD)

OSYD Borough Center Location	Districts	STH Content Expert Name	Office Number	E-mail
Bronx [Redacted]	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12	Stephanie Dyer	(718) 741-7783	<a href="mailto:SDyer@schools.nyc.gov">SDyer@schools.nyc.gov</a>
			(718) 741-8595	
Brooklyn North [Redacted]	13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 32	Jean Regnier	(718) 935-3296	<a href="mailto:Jregnier@schools.nyc.gov">Jregnier@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Wayne Harris	(718) 935-3562	<a href="mailto:Wharris22@schools.nyc.gov">Wharris22@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Brooklyn South/Staten Island [Redacted]	17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 31	Charlene Mitchell	(718) 758-7722	<a href="mailto:CMitchell4@schools.nyc.gov">CMitchell4@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Edonine Castor*	(718)-758-7635	<a href="mailto:ECastor@schools.nyc.gov">ECastor@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Manhattan [Redacted]	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Cecilio (Bo) Diaz	(917) 339-1698	<a href="mailto:CDiaz@schools.nyc.gov">CDiaz@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Iris Gersten	(917) 339-1718	<a href="mailto:IGersten@schools.nyc.gov">IGersten@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Queens [Redacted]	24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30	Linda Wilson-Animashaun	(718) 391-6849	<a href="mailto:LWilson33@schools.nyc.gov">LWilson33@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Boyd Shaquieta*	(718) 391-6843	<a href="mailto:SBoyd5@schools.nyc.gov">SBoyd5@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Office of Safety & Youth Development Students In Temporary Housing		Katherine Marshall - Polite Director	(718) 828-2137	<a href="mailto:Kpolite@schools.nyc.gov">Kpolite@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Bak Harris Senior Program Manager	(646) 416-0364	<a href="mailto:BHarris6@schools.nyc.gov">BHarris6@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Marygrace Ponzio Program Coordinator	(718) 391-6845	<a href="mailto:mponzio@schools.nyc.gov">mponzio@schools.nyc.gov</a>
		Winnie Tjioe Senior Data Analyst	(718) 935-4939	<a href="mailto:WTjioe@schools.nyc.gov">WTjioe@schools.nyc.gov</a>
<b>Citywide STH Partners</b>				
Special Education [Redacted]	75	Michele Marcel	(212) 802-1579	<a href="mailto:Mmarcel@schools.nyc.gov">Mmarcel@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Special Education [Redacted]	75	Joan E. Boreland	(917) 256-4262	<a href="mailto:jboreland@schools.nyc.gov">jboreland@schools.nyc.gov</a>
D79 Bronx Referral Center @ Bronx Regional HS [Redacted]	79	Linda Cervantes	(718) 518-3320 x4365	<a href="mailto:LCervan@schools.nyc.gov">LCervan@schools.nyc.gov</a>
D79 Manhattan Referral Center [Redacted]	79	Kathleen Guilbert	(212) 244-1274 x1112	<a href="mailto:kguilbert@schools.nyc.gov">kguilbert@schools.nyc.gov</a>
D79 Brooklyn Referral Center [Redacted]	79	Millie Velasquez	(718) 636-5770 x582	<a href="mailto:MVelasquez@schools.nyc.gov">MVelasquez@schools.nyc.gov</a>
D79 Downtown Brooklyn Referral Center [Redacted]	79	Deborah Rosen	(718) 935-9457 x1040	<a href="mailto:DRosen3@schools.nyc.gov">DRosen3@schools.nyc.gov</a>
District 79 Queens Referral Center [Redacted]	79	Samara Mohamed	(718) 739-2100 x5006	<a href="mailto:SMohamed3@schools.nyc.gov">SMohamed3@schools.nyc.gov</a>
D79 Staten Island Referral Center [Redacted]	79	Melissa Galli	(718) 273-3225 x120	<a href="mailto:Mgalli@schools.nyc.gov">Mgalli@schools.nyc.gov</a>
Updated 5/2016		*Indicates STH Program Manager		

