

# Using Federal Funds to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness

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## Learning Outcomes

- Understand the impact of homelessness on children and youth.
- Learn the requirements under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Understand allowable uses of federal funds pertaining to students experiencing homelessness, including ARP-HCY, EHCY, and Title I.

# McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act

- The intent of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is to ensure all children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence receive access to the same free, appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth.
- As part of the McKinney-Vento Act, all LEAs are required to remove barriers to the enrollment, attendance, and the academic success of children and youth experiencing homelessness, and provide this student population with the opportunity to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held.

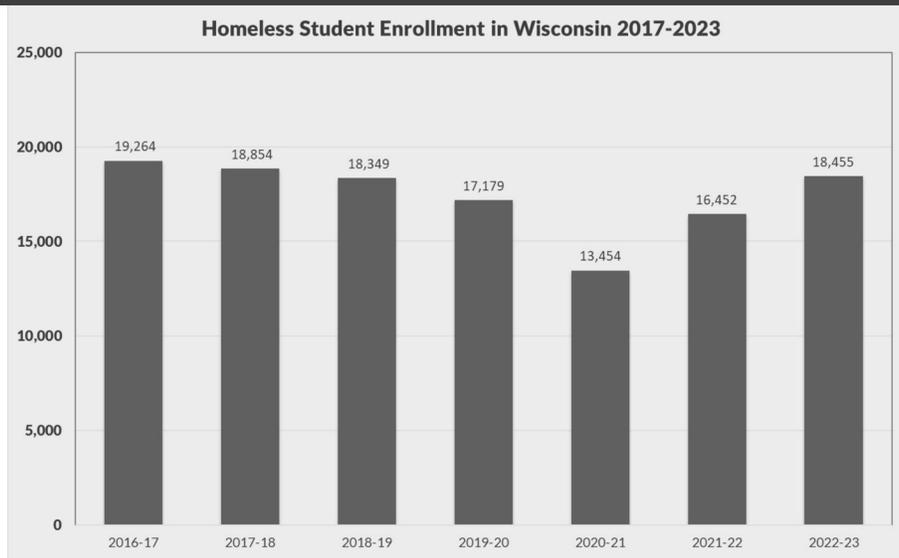
## Causes of Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing
- Poverty
  - Increase in low vs. middle wage employment
- Health problems
  - Lack of health insurance
  - Alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA), mental health
- COVID-19 related factors
- Domestic violence
- Natural and other disasters
- Abuse, neglect, family dysfunction (unaccompanied youth)

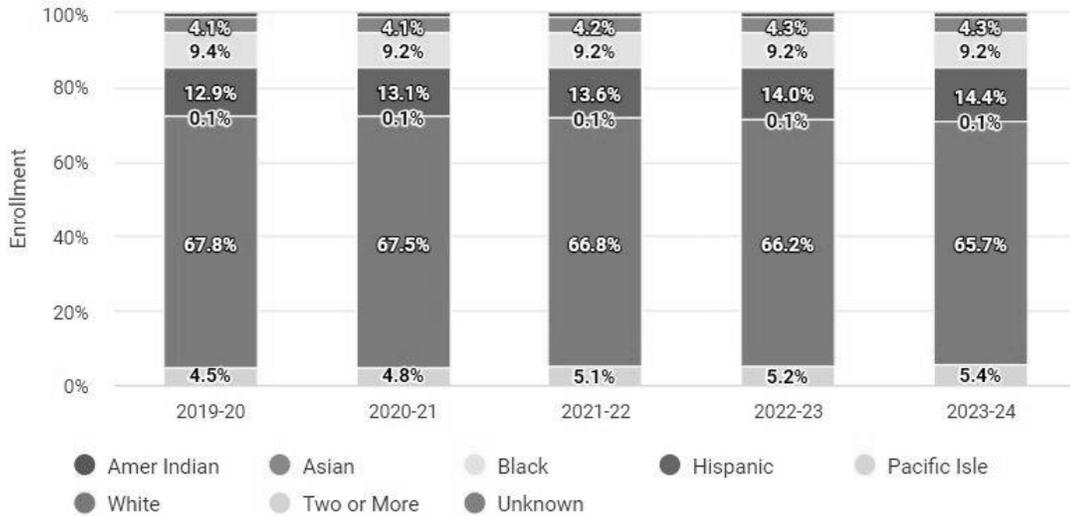
# Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth

- Higher incidences of acute and chronic illnesses, depression and anxiety.
- Homelessness at any time in early childhood is associated with poor classroom engagement and poor social skills in early elementary school.
- The achievement gap between homeless and low-income elementary students tend to persist, and may even worsen over time.
- A youth who experiences homelessness is 87% more likely to dropout of school.

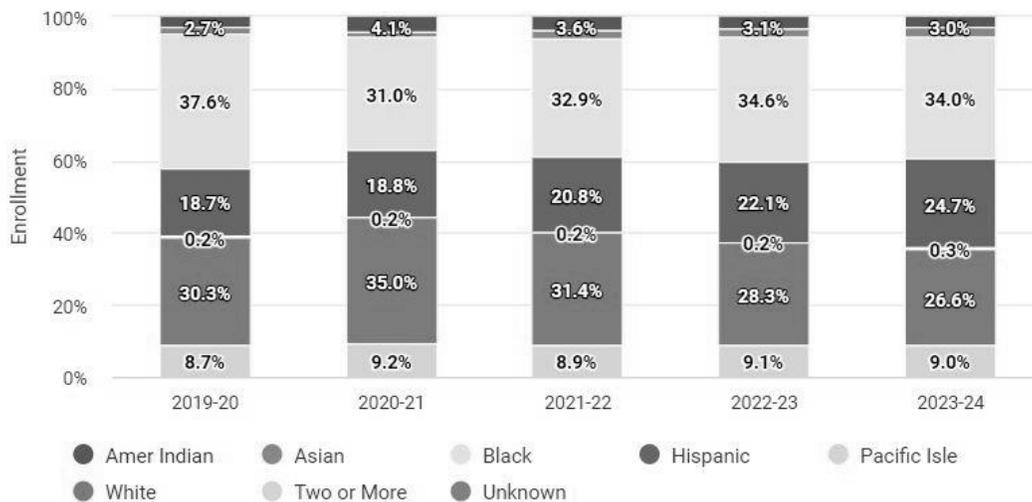
## Homeless Student Enrollment in Wisconsin 2017-2023



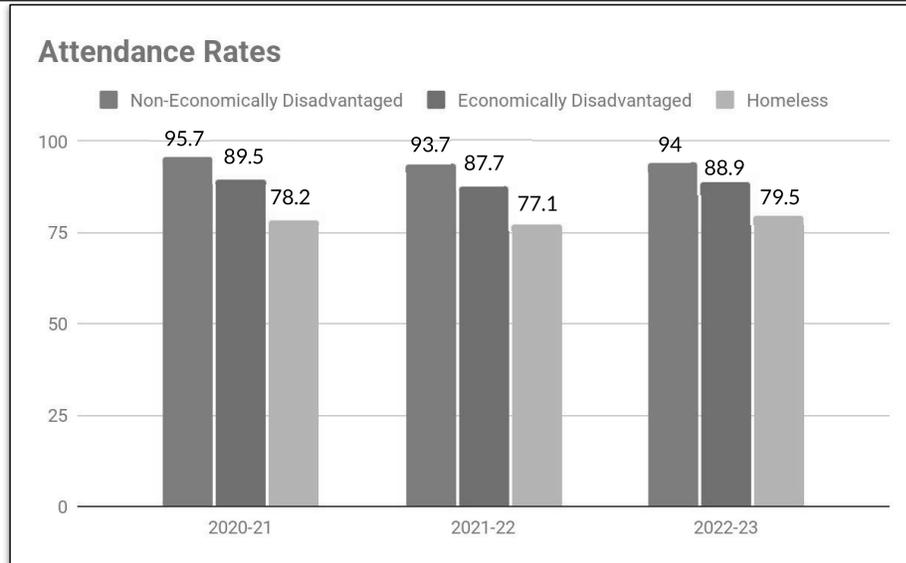
# Percent of Students Enrolled by Race/Ethnicity



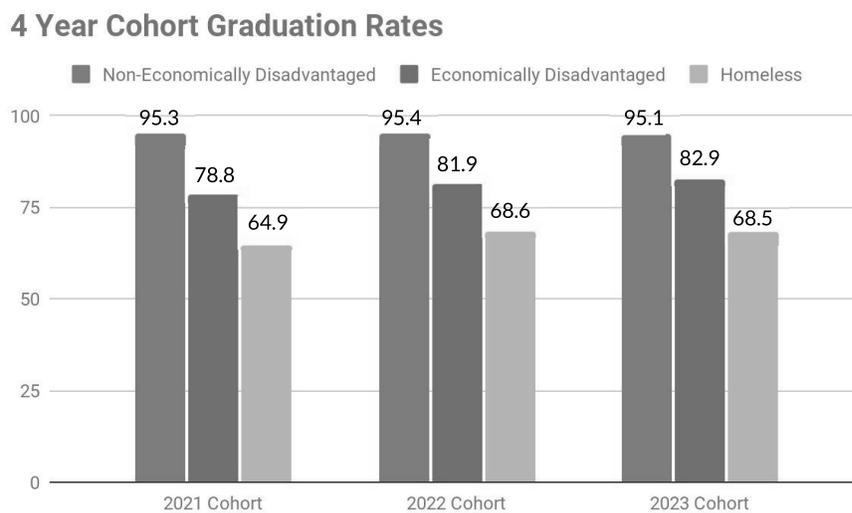
# Percent of Students Experiencing Homeless by Race/Ethnicity



# Attendance Rates



# 4 Year Cohort Graduation Rates



# Homelessness Defined

The term “homeless” children and youth means:

“Children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence—”

What exactly is a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence?

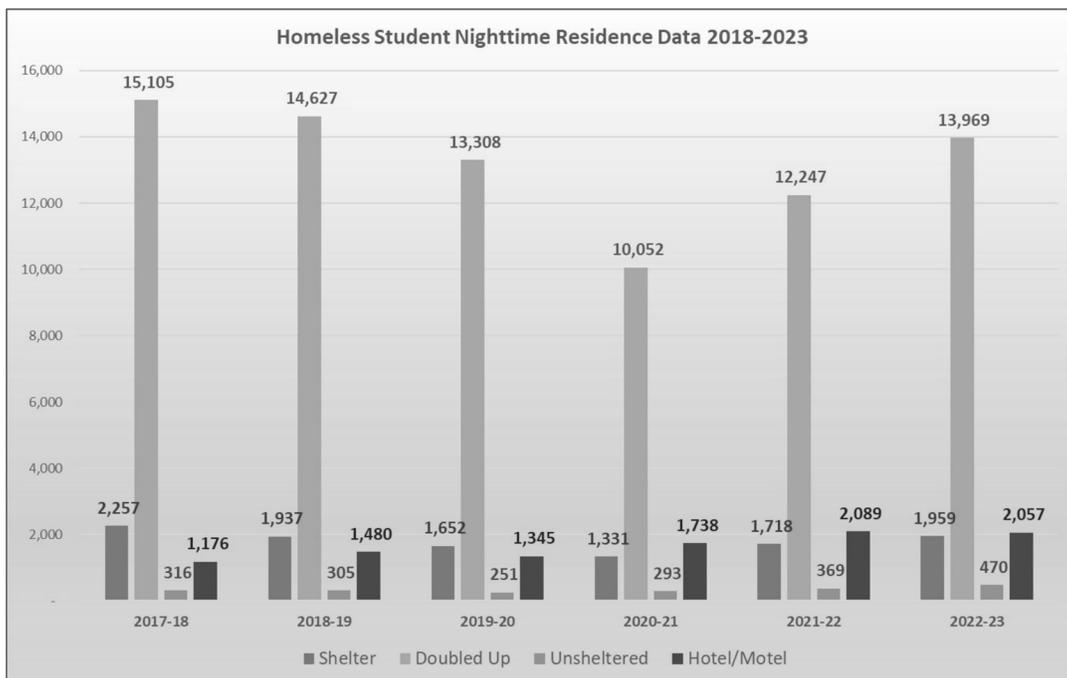
## Fixed, Regular, and Adequate

- **Fixed:**
  - Stationary, permanent, not subject to change
- **Regular:**
  - Used on a predictable, routine, consistent basis
  - Consider the relative permanence
- **Adequate:**
  - Lawfully and reasonably sufficient
  - Sufficient for meeting the physical and psychological needs typically met in a home environment

Can the student go to the **SAME PLACE (fixed) EVERY NIGHT (regular)** to sleep in a **SAFE AND SUFFICIENT SPACE (adequate)**?

# Eligibility

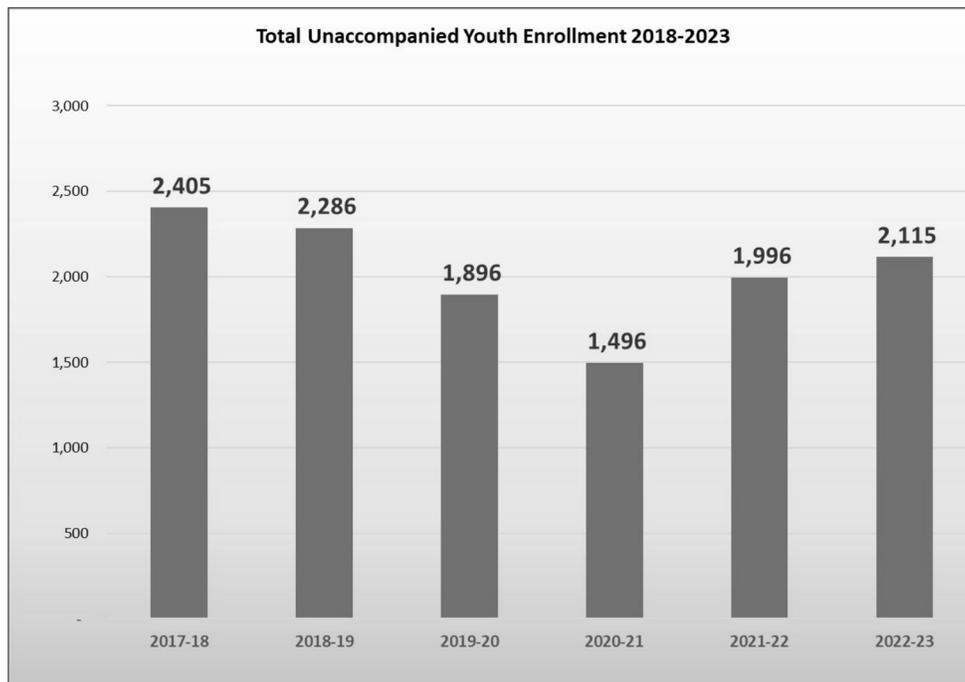
- Sharing the housing of others due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason (sometimes referred to as doubled-up)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds due to lack of adequate alternative accommodations
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for ordinary use as a regular sleeping accommodation for humans (cars, parks, bus or train stations, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, etc.)
- Children from migratory families who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above
- Unaccompanied youth living in the above circumstances



# Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

## Definition:

Youth who meet the definition of homeless AND are not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian (i.e., youth living with relatives on an emergency basis, youth living with a friend or runaway).



# School Stability

Each LEA shall, according to each child's or youth's best interest:

- Continue the student's education in the school of origin for the duration of homelessness, and until the end of the academic year in which the student becomes permanently housed; OR
- Enroll in any public school that housed students living where the student is living are eligible to attend.

# School of Origin and Residence

- School of origin: school that child or youth attended when permanently housed or last enrolled.
- School of residence: school in the local attendance area where the child or youth is staying.

## School Stability (*continued*)

- Applies when students lose housing during the year or during the summer
- School of origin:
  - Includes a preschool
  - Includes the designated receiving school at the next grade level for feeder school patterns, when the student completes the final grade level served by the school of origin

## Transportation

LEAs must provide transportation to and from the school of origin, including until the end of the year when the student obtains permanent housing, at a parent's or guardian's request (or at the liaison's request for unaccompanied youth).

- If staying in the same LEA, that LEA must provide or arrange transportation to the school of origin.
- If crossing LEA lines, both LEAs must determine how to divide the responsibility and share the cost, or they must share the cost equally.

# Transportation—Key Provisions

- LEAs must provide students in homeless situations with transportation services comparable to those provided to other students.
- LEAs must eliminate barriers to the identification, enrollment, and retention of students experiencing homelessness (including transportation barriers).

## Role of the Homeless Liaison

Every school district must designate a McKinney-Vento homeless liaison able to carry out their legal duties.

The homeless liaison serves as one of the primary contacts between families experiencing homelessness and school staff, district personnel, shelter workers, and other service providers. The liaison coordinates services to ensure that children and youth experiencing homelessness enroll in school and have the opportunity to succeed academically.

U.S. Department of Education Non-Regulatory Guidance F-1

[NAEH CY-Designating a Homeless Liaison](#)

# Duties of the Homeless Liaison

The homeless liaison must ensure that all aspects of McKinney-Vento are followed in the LEAs, including:

- Children and youth are identified through outreach and coordination with other agencies.
- Children and families are referred to services they need: housing services, healthcare, mental health services, etc.
  - Know what community resources exist
  - Create collaborative partnerships to refer families to resources.
- All school personnel receive training on McKinney-Vento and the procedure to refer students to the homeless liaison.

## Support for Academic Success: Coordination with Other Laws/Programs

- LEAs must coordinate McKinney-Vento and special education services within the LEA and with other involved LEAs.
- Information about a student eligible under McKinney-Vento's living situation is a student education record subject to Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

# Title I Eligibility

Children and youth experiencing homelessness are:

- automatically eligible for Title I services, including services provided through schoolwide or targeted assistance programs
- eligible to receive Title I services, even if not attending a Title I school, through the Title I reservation
- eligible to receive Title I services for the remainder of any school year in which they become permanently housed

**Federal Funds to Support Students  
Experiencing Homelessness**

# Federal Funds to Support Students Experiencing Homelessness

- Title I, Part A Homeless Reservation
- Education for Homeless Children and Youth Grant (competitive)
- ARP-HCY Part I and Part II

## Title I-A Reservation

- Title I funds must be used to support students to succeed in school and meet academic achievement standards.
- LEAs may provide students experiencing homelessness with services that are not ordinarily provided to other Title I permanently housed students, and are not available from other sources.
- Services must be reasonable and necessary to assist students experiencing homelessness to take advantage of educational opportunities.
- Title I, Part A funds must be used only when funds or services are not available from other sources that provide similar services for economically disadvantaged students in general.

# Determining the Title I-A Reservation

There is not a specific amount of Title I, Part A funds an LEA must reserve. However, it is required that the amount be sufficient to provide services to students experiencing homelessness. Options include:

- an LEA may use a districtwide, per pupil amount for students experiencing homelessness.
- an LEA may reserve a percentage of their total Title I, Part A allocation.
- an LEA may determine its own amount that is reasonable and necessary to provide comparable Title I services to students experiencing homelessness.

[DPI Title I, Part A Homeless Reservation FAQ](#)

# Determining the Title I-A Reservation

**It is important to work with your staff supporting students experiencing homelessness, including the homeless liaison, when determining a reasonable and sufficient amount for the TI-A reservation in order to meet the needs of the students in your district.**

## **Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Grants**

- Under the McKinney-Vento Act, DPI distributes federal EHCY grant funds to LEAs in a competitive manner. The last competition for these funds was held in 2023. The next competition will take place in spring 2026.
- A total of 40 LEAs were awarded funding, totalling around \$1.25 million distributed each year.
- Grant funds may be used for the 16 activities authorized under Section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
- Majority of grant funds must be used to help meet grant goals.

## **American Rescue Plan - Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY)**

- ARP-HCY funds are specifically dedicated to support the identification, enrollment, and school participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including through wrap-around services.
- Funds should address the specific and urgent needs due to the extraordinary impact of the pandemic on students experiencing homelessness, include academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

# Purpose and Focus of ARP-HCY

- Providing what your district needs to serve students experiencing homelessness!
- Grant funds may be used for the 16 activities authorized under Section 723(d) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Overall, costs must be “reasonable and necessary” and align with the purpose of, and other requirements in, the EHCY statute.
- “other extraordinary or emergency assistance needed to enable homeless children and youths to attend school and participate fully in school activities.”

## ARP-HCY At A Glance

- **ARP-HCY total amount allocated to LEAs: \$8,428,658**
- **The funding was split into two grants:**
  - ARP-HCY Part I
  - ARP-HCY Part II (formula allocation)
- **Initial budgets should have already been completed in 2022.**

# ARP-HCY grant in WISEgrants

Grants are found in the 2021-22 grant year

WISEgrants Wisconsin Information System for Education Federal Grants Portal

Clara Pfeiffer, Standard DPI User

Home Admin Menu Programs Authorizations Reports Message Board (5) Technical Assistance 2021-2022

ARP Homeless

ARP Homeless C

ARP Homeless Children and Youth I

ARP Homeless Children and Youth II

Appleton Area Sch Dist - 440147

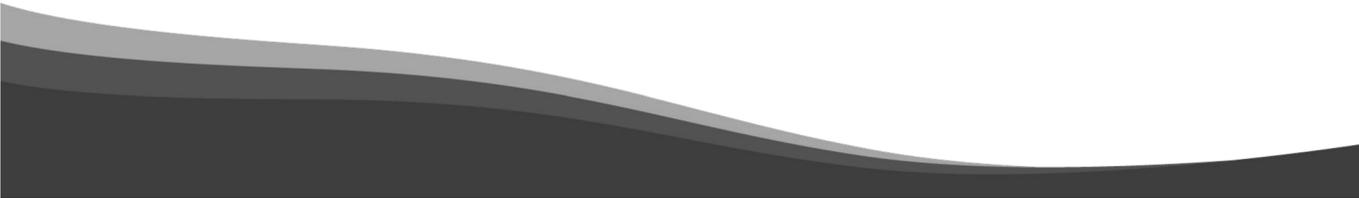
Find Claims Report

## ARP-HCY Budgets and Claims

Currently 65% of ARP-HCY funds are unclaimed!

- Part I
  - 57% of funds are unclaimed (\$1.5 million)
- Part II
  - 68% of funds are unclaimed (\$3.9 million)
- Business officials should work with LEA homeless liaisons to complete the budget ASAP.
- Please start making partial claims ASAP.

# ARP-HCY Funds Timeline

- Your total ARP-HCY allocation will not change from now until the end of the grant period
  - Grant funds must be obligated (used) by September 30, 2024
  - Final claims on these funds are due to DPI by December 6, 2024
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# Ideas to Use Funds

- Homeless liaison's salary
  - Excess cost of transportation to and from the school of origin
  - Clothing/shoes/cap and gown, other participation and extracurricular activity fees
  - School supplies
  - Medical/dental services (glasses, hearing aids, immunizations), mental health services
  - Outreach, printing brochures, posters
  - McKinney-Vento training for ALL staff members in the LEA.
- 

## Ideas to Use Funds

- Increase staff hours for the homeless liaison or McKinney-Vento related personnel to provide or attend professional development, create materials, summer hours, etc.
- Contract with mental health therapists in the community to provide school based mental health.
- College readiness: Stipend for counselors to review credits of students and to assist students and families in completing the FAFSA. Pay for college application expenses such as registration fees, preparation materials, entrance and placement exams, and other fees associated with college applications

## Ideas to Use Funds

- Provide extra academic support through tutoring, reading or math interventions, or even an online tutoring program
- Purchase a vehicle for students experiencing homelessness' school of origin transportation.
- Hire drivers for district vehicles or a transportation coordinator.

# ARP-HCY Specific Use of Funds

These are expenses that are allowable with the increased flexibilities of ARP-HCY that are **NOT allowable** with EHCY or TI-A funds.

- **Providing emergency housing for families experiencing homelessness**  
Hotel/motel stays, vouchers - Motel stays of longer than three days [are allowable] if “reasonable and necessary” to allow children and youth to attend school, and as a last resort when other funding resources are not available.

More details and guiding questions are available in the [DPI ARP-HCY FAQ](#)

# ARP-HCY Specific Use of Funds

These are expenses that are allowable with the increased flexibilities of ARP-HCY that are **NOT allowable** with EHCY or TI-A funds. More details and guiding questions are available in the [DPI ARP-HCY FAQ](#)

- **Providing a gift card for school and hygiene supplies, clothing, or items necessary to attend and fully participate in school.**  
Gift cards/prepaid debit cards may be acceptable as long as obligations rules under EDGAR are followed and there are procedures in place. [ARP-HCY Procedures for Gift Cards](#)
- **Car repairs for student or family experiencing homelessness**  
Situation specific. Is it the only way to ensure the student(s) can attend school? Is there any other transportation option?

# Claims Reminders! (Spend Those Funds!)

- Please work with staff to plan the use of these funds ASAP!
- Budget revisions can be made at any time. Please try not to let budget revisions wait until the end of September!
- Please make partial claims so we know who to follow up with!

## DPI Resources

- DPI ARP-HCY Grant Information
  - <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/arp-hcy>
  - [DPI ARP-HCY Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- DPI EHCY Grant Information
  - <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/grant-info>
- DPI EHCY Guidance Topics (including Title I-A reservation)
  - <https://dpi.wi.gov/homeless/guidance>

# Related Resources

- **SchoolHouse Connection:**
  - <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/arp-hcy/>
  - <https://schoolhouseconnection.org/how-to-use-arp-funds/>
- **USDE Frequently Asked Questions: ESSER and GEER**
- **DPI Guidance on allowable costs under ESSER**
- **US Department of Education Frequently Asked Questions: Transportation**

# Contact Us

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# Questions?

