

What happens if I have to change schools?

Do I have to change schools if I move?

Education Stability—Maine passed a law in 2010 that allows a youth who enters foster care, or changes placement while in foster care, to attend either the school where they resided prior to the placement or to attend the school where they resided during the placement, based on the youth’s best interests. DHHS will determine the school that meets your best interests, and will notify the school in writing. When it is in your best interest to attend the school where you previously resided, your caseworker will arrange and pay for your transportation to and from the school. For more information on this law visit:

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/20-A/title20-Asec5205.html>

Moving to a New School

If you move to a new school, you can use the checklist on the following page from the Keeping Maine’s Children Connected program, designed by students for students. It gives you a list of topics to ask school staff, and it includes everything from credits to teachers to your new lunchroom.

School Records

If you transfer to a different school while in foster care, the school must send your records to the new school no later than 5 days after you enroll. For more information visit: <http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/20-A/title20-Asec6001-B.html>

Homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act protects the educational rights of youth who are homeless by allowing you to remain in your school, help with transportation, or to enroll in a new school where you are living. Each school district has a Homeless Liaison. You can ask your school social worker or guidance counselor for help connecting with this person, or you can find the complete list of liaisons at http://www.maine.gov/education/homeless_ed/liaisoncontacts.htm#liaison

Department of Education Diploma

The Commissioner of the Department of Education (DOE) can issue you a Department of Education diploma if you are unable to obtain a diploma from a high school due to disruptions in your education and a shortage of credits. You will still be required to complete all the diploma requirements that every other student in Maine must meet, but the Department of Education will work with you and support the process. You can get additional information from DOE at the following website:

<http://www.maine.gov/education/disruption/process.html>