



Federal Policy Update on Child & Youth Homelessness

February 5, 2026



General Housekeeping



This webinar will last one hour



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Session is being recorded



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About National Network for Youth

**NN4Y is on a mission to
transform systems so that no
young person in America
experiences homelessness.**



collaborate • advocate • transform

<http://nn4youth.org/>

NN4Y works with youth who have experienced homelessness and youth service providers from across the country to prevent and end youth, young adult, and young parent family homelessness and human trafficking. Together, we envision a future in which all young people have a safe place to call home, with endless opportunities to achieve their fullest potential.

Our Programs

- Federal Policy Advocacy
- Youth + Youth Adult Partnerships
- Community-Based Solutions

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Today's Agenda

- **Federal Funding**
 - Highlights of Final Enacted FY2026 Funding Legislation
 - FY2027 Budget Process: Timeline and What to Expect
- **Federal Agency Action and Litigation Update**
 - HUD Continuum of Care and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program Notice of Funding Opportunity
- **Other Legislation: RHYA, Homeless Assistance, Higher Education**
- **How to stay engaged**





Final Enacted FY2026 Appropriations (2026-2027 School Year)

Status of Final FY2026 Funding Package

- On Tuesday, February 3, President Trump signed into law the final FY2026 funding bills for early care, education, homeless assistance and housing.
- The only FY2026 appropriations bill that has not been enacted for a full year is for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). DHS funds Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Protection, as well as FEMA and TSA.
- Congress passed a two-week Continuing Resolution to fund DHS while they attempt to negotiate reforms to ICE.
- Note: ICE received significant funding from HR 1, the budget reconciliation bill enacted in July.

Broad Overview of Final FY2026 Funding Package

- On a bipartisan basis, Congress rejected nearly all of President Trump's proposed funding cuts for domestic programs across agencies.
- For the most part, the final bill provides federal early care, education, homelessness, and housing programs with the same amount of funding as they currently receive; a few programs received small increases.
- The final enacted legislation includes some important policies to limit the funding disruption that agencies experienced in 2025.

Overview of Targeted Federal Homelessness Programs

Program	Final Funding Amounts	
	FY2025	FY2026
Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY)	\$129 million	\$129 million
Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs (RHYA)	\$146.3 million	\$146.3 million
Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)	\$107 million	\$107 million
HUD Homeless Assistance Grants	\$4.05 billion	\$4.4 billion

[Click Here To View More Detailed Funding Chart](#)

FY2026 Highlights: Education for Homeless Children and Youth

- Directs the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to issue guidance on the use of EHCY funds for short-term emergency housing on a case-by-case basis if reasonable and necessary to facilitate school attendance, and as a last resort when other funding sources are not readily available.
- Requires ED to release EHCY, IDEA, and ESEA funds as soon as the funds become available.
- Requires ED to maintain staffing levels sufficient to carry out its responsibilities.
- Continues a prohibition on ED transferring programs and funds to other agencies without Congress expressly authorizing it in appropriations law. (*Note: litigation on ED's interagency transfers is ongoing.*)

FY2026 Highlights: Early Care K12, and Higher Education Funding

Most early care, prek-12, and higher education programs received level funding – i.e. the same as last year's funding, including:

- Migrant Education
- Title II
- Title III
- Title IV

The following programs received slight increases:

- Title I, Part A – \$18.4 billion (an increase of \$20 million)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – \$14.2 billion (an increase of \$20 million)
- Child Care and Development Block Grant - \$8.8 billion (an increase of \$85 million)
- Head Start/Early Head Start - \$12.4 billion (an increase of \$85 million)

FY2026 Highlights: Early Childhood Policies

- Requires HHS to send Child Care and Development Funds (CCDF) funds to states at least quarterly.
- Directs HHS to make Head Start continuation awards no later than the day after a grant period expires.

FY2026 Highlights: Higher Education Policies

- **FAFSA:** Directs ED to correct wrongful “provisional independence” errors for unaccompanied homeless youth, publish FAFSA data on homeless and foster youth within 60 days, and brief Congress within 90 days on oversight of institutions with high rates of unfulfilled Unaccompanied Homeless Youth determination requests.
- **Basic Needs Grant Program:** \$10 million, and directs ED to carry out this program as Congressionally mandated.
- **Child Care Access Means Parents In Schools (CCAMPIS):** \$75 million (same as current level) and includes language requiring a new competition in 2026.

FY26 Funding: Runaway and Homeless Youth Act Program

- **\$125.28 million** for Basic Center Programs, Transitional Living Programs, and Maternity Group Homes.
- **\$21 million for Prevention Grants to Reduce Abuse of Runaway Youth.** Has historically funded the Street Outreach Program—it will either fund street outreach activities for the other RHYA grant opportunities or the Street Outreach Program will be restored as a standalone NOFO.
- **\$5 million for Prevention Demonstration Program grants.** Funds new communities to implement innovative measures to prevent youth homelessness.

FY26 Funding: HUD Homeless Assistance

- **\$4.4 billion** for HUD Homeless Assistance, which includes:
 - **\$4.01 billion** for the Continuum of Care program.
 - **\$107 million** for new Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grants, of which up to \$25 million can be used for new Youth Homelessness System Improvement grants and \$10 million can be used for technical assistance.
 - **\$290 million** for Emergency Solutions Grants.

FY26 Funding: Continuum of Care Program

FY 2026 bill addresses the current FY 2025 CoC/YHDP NOFO process that's still ongoing.

- FY 2025 automatic one-year renewals
 - CoCs whose funding expires in the first quarter (Jan-March) receive an automatic one-year renewal.
 - If awards are not issued by 4/1/26, CoCs expiring in Q2 are automatically renewed.
 - If awards are not issued by 7/1/26, Q3 and Q4 expirations are automatically renewed.
- FY 2026 NOFO must be issued no later than 6/1/26. Awards must be made no later than 12/1/26.

See more programs' funding [here](#).

FY26 Funding: Continuum of Care and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Programs



New language protects Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funding:

If a CoC and the Youth Action Board decide not to renew their YHDP, then that money will be awarded competitively to another community for a new YHDP.

This keeps YHDP money in the YHDP bucket—prevents it from being used for other subpopulations.

See more programs' funding [here](#).

FY26 Funding: Emergency Housing Vouchers

- The bill provides over \$600 million for new Tenant Protection Vouchers (TPVs), an over \$263 million increase from the previous year.
- The bill includes language allowing Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to use TPVs to help transition families who currently receive rental assistance through the Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) program to new assistance.

Congress directs HUD to support K12 students and their families experiencing homelessness:

FY2026 Highlight: HUD Report Language on K12 Student Homelessnes s

"The Committee is concerned about the growing number of homeless K-12 students in the United States. Many of these students are in shelters and even more are ``doubled up" or temporarily living in the homes of friends or families when they would otherwise choose not to. The Committee directs HUD to identify current policies of locating homeless students and to work with the relevant Federal partners to ensure students and their families have a pathway to adequate housing resources."

Congressional Negotiations on ICE

- Congressional leaders are considering a range of reforms to ICE as part of FY2026 funding for Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- One demand from Democratic leaders is to prohibit funds to conduct enforcement near “sensitive locations,” such as schools, child care centers, churches. Presumably, this also would include homeless service providers.
- Other demands include prohibitions on entering private property without a judicial warrant and on face coverings for immigration agents, and requirements for agents to display IDE and use body cameras for accountability purposes.
- As of today, it seems very unlikely that these demands will be met.



FY2027 Budget Process: Timeline and What to Expect

What is the Outlook for FY2027 Federal Funding?

2026 is an election year. That means:

- It is highly unlikely that Congress will pass all 12 appropriations bills prior to the end of the fiscal year (September 30, 2026).
- A short-term continuing resolution likely will be needed to keep agencies open until after the November elections.
- Nonetheless, Congress will begin working immediately on the FY2027 budget to make as much progress as possible before August recess.

It is critical to engage in FY2027 appropriations advocacy early to ensure deadlines are met.

FY2027 Appropriations Timeline

Now-March	April-May	May-July
Members determine their own priorities and communicate those priorities to appropriations committees Members circulate “Dear Colleague Letters” to show support for specific federal programs ● STAY TUNED: We expect House and Senate bipartisan support letters for the EHCY and RHYA programs in the next month or so. <u>We will need your help to get as many Members as possible to sign them.</u>	Budget oversight hearings	Appropriations committees release bills and vote on them

Please Help Us Educate Policymakers

- 95% of Congressional staff that we speak to have never heard of McKinney-Vento, or know much about federal programs serving homeless children, youth, and families.
- The vast majority of Congressional staff have never had anyone meet with them about McKinney-Vento or family or youth homelessness - local, state, or national
 - If Congressional staff don't know, their bosses likely don't know
 - It is much easier to cut or harm programs that are unknown or perceived as being irrelevant to a district/state.
- Please contact TJ Lucas at tj@schoolhouseconnection.org if you are interested in receiving support to help educate your Members of Congress.
 - We can set up virtual meetings, help prepare, and even facilitate meetings.

In-District Advocacy

In-district advocacy is engaging with your lawmakers and their staff when they are in their home districts and states rather than in DC.

- ★ Meet with lawmakers and their staff at their local offices.
- ★ Host a site visit to show the impact of your programs and services.

[Use our in-district toolkit!](#)

Upcoming State Work Periods

Senate:

- March 30 - April 10
- May 4 - 8, 25 - 29
- June 29 - July 10
- August 10 - September 11

House:

- March 9 - 13
- March 30 - April 10
- April 27 - May 1
- May 25 - 29
- June 15 - 19
- July 6 - 10
- July 27 - August 28

Federal Agency Updates

Impact of Appropriations : FY25 CoC + YHDP NOFO

What are we talking about?

1. FY 2025 Continuum of Care + Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Notice of Funding Opportunity

- Funds HUD homelessness assistance CoC renewals and renewals, reallocations, or replacements of current YHDP projects.
- Funding starts in 2026.
- Funding should have been awarded by the end of 2025, but was not.
- Being challenged in court.

2. FY 2026 Appropriations Bill

- Proposes automatic renewals for some **FY 2025 CoC + YHDP awards**.
- Proposes new funding levels and timeline for **FY 2026 CoC + YHDP awards**. The NOFO should be released no later than 6/1/26.

Ongoing Litigation: FY25 CoC + YHDP NOFO

What about the ongoing lawsuit?

- **December 19:** Federal Judge orders HUD to reinstate the Biden-era FY 2025 NOFO while the lawsuit is ongoing. Read our [blog post](#).
- **February 17:** Responses to the defendants' (HUD) [argument](#) are due.

The court is expected to rule in the plaintiff's favor (homeless advocates). HUD will likely appeal.

The appeals process will drag the case out longer. This is why the automatic renewal language in the **FY 2026 appropriations bill** is so important.

Funding for CoCs: The Bottom Line

- CoC and YHDP grants should be renewed for one year at their current funding level. CoC grants expiring soon may experience a short gap in funding.
- Two new NOFOs should be released this spring-summer:
 - **FY 2026 CoC + YHDP NOFO** - Funds renewals, reallocations, and replacements. Funding to be awarded by December 2026.
 - **NOFO for new YHDP + YHSI communities** - HUD currently has \$321 million for new YHDP + Youth Homelessness System Improvement grants that they have not yet released.

Federal Agencies

Federal Grants: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



- On January 14, SAMHSA sent letters to grantees abruptly terminating their funding, stating that the grant awards no longer aligned with the Administration's priorities.
- Later on that same day, the decision was reversed. SAMHSA grantees received new notices to disregard the initial termination notice.
- There will likely be significant changes to the upcoming SAMHSA NOFOs.
 - The Administration's CoC NOFO (under litigation) included provisions requiring treatment.
 - The Administration does not support harm reduction policies.
 - Many youth homelessness providers receive SAMHSA funding.



Other Child, Youth, and Family Homelessness Federal Legislation

Legislation

Introduced: Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act (RHYTPA)



RHYTPA reauthorizes and updates the current Runaway and Homeless Youth Act program.

Updates RHYTPA would make include:

- ★ Prioritizes outreach and extends services to survivors of sexual abuse, exploitation, and/or trafficking.
- ★ Allows RHYA grantees the option of applying for an additional \$75,000 for preventative services.
- ★ Increases the eligible age for Transitional Living Programs and Maternity Group Homes from 22 to 25 years old.
- ★ Ensures youth are assisted in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.
- ★ Requires HHS to develop a national estimate of the prevalence of youth experiencing homelessness every three years.

Introduced:

Homeless Children & Youth Act

S. 1667: U.S. Senators Katie Britt (R-AL) and Angela Alsobrooks (D-MD)

H.R. 6403: U.S. Representatives Mike Lawler (R-NY), Janelle Bynum (D-OR), and Delia Ramirez (D-IL)

Ensures that children, youth, and families experiencing homelessness are no longer shut out of homeless assistance because they do not meet the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) restrictive definition of homelessness.

Key Components:

- Aligns HUD's definition of homelessness with those of other federal programs.
- Requires HUD to score applications primarily on whether they are cost-effective in meeting the priorities and goals that communities identify in their local plans.
- Improves HUD homeless assistance data and transparency.

[More information and take action.](#)

Coming Soon: Housing for Homeless Students Act (HHSA)

Bipartisan, Bicameral Re-Introduction of the Housing for Homeless Students Act

The Issue:

- Since 1987, over 3.7 million Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units were created to provide affordable housing options to lower-income individuals.
- However, full-time students are excluded from the list of eligible tenants.
- There are some exceptions to this student rule - including former foster youth. However, homeless youth are not eligible. As a result, they must choose between being a full-time student, and having a place to live.

The Solution:

- HHSA would add homeless youth and veterans to the list of eligible tenants. It has no budget impact.

Coming Soon-ish: Higher Education Access and Success for Homeless and Foster Youth Act (HEASHFY)

Bipartisan, Bicameral Bill to Remove Obstacles to Higher Education

- Requires the designation of a higher education liaisons for homeless and foster youth (similar to K-12 liaison) with specified duties
- Requires a plan for housing during breaks and during semester, and priority for on-campus housing
- Requires that admissions applications provide youth the opportunity to identify as homeless or foster youth for the purposes of being provided information about financial aid and student support services.
- Requires that TRIO and GEAR-UP programs identify, conduct outreach to, and recruit homeless children and youth, and children and youth in foster care
- Provides homeless and foster youth in-state tuition.
- Prioritizes homeless and foster youth for the Federal Work-Study Program.



Education Breakouts
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National Summit on Youth Homelessness + Hill Day

March 12-13, 2026 | Washington DC, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill



What You Can Do

New Resources: Immigration



New Webpage From NN4Y:

Know Your Rights & Immigration Resources for Youth Experiencing Homelessness + Youth Homelessness Service Providers

This comprehensive resource hub is designed for youth homelessness providers and young immigrants experiencing homelessness across the country. It includes practical guidance, legal resources, and technology-based tools that can be used in real time.

SHC and NN4Y Trackers

- [SHC's Tracking of Major Federal Actions](#)
- [SHC Federal Policy Page](#)
- [Read NN4Y's latest blog posts](#)
- [NN4Y's Take Action Center](#)
- [Sign up for NN4Y's Newsletter to stay up-to-date](#)



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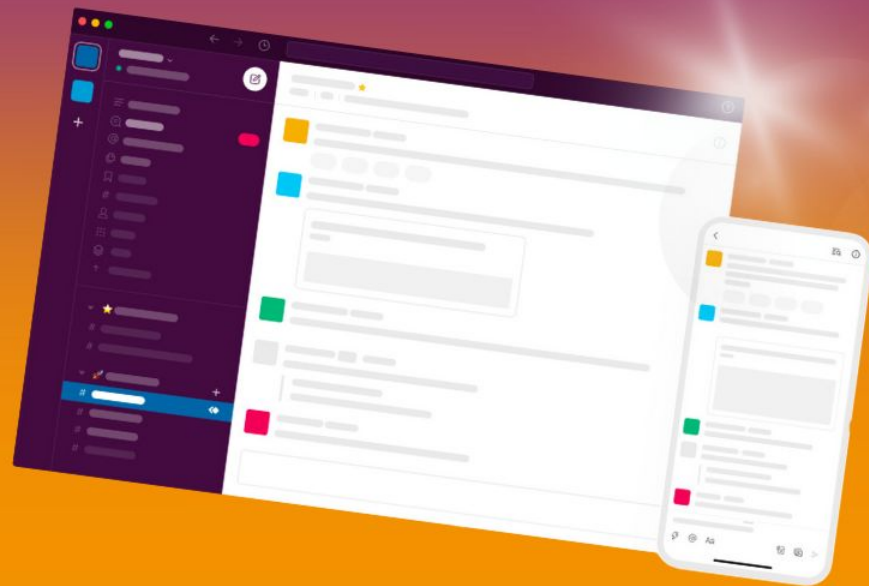
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