



2025 College Starter Kit Opportunity

For College Bound Students Experiencing Homelessness

PURPOSE & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Idaho Department of Education's Homeless Education for Children & Youth Program is offering an opportunity for graduating high school students in Idaho who are experiencing homelessness to receive a College Starter Kit. The kit will include items such as a laptop, school supplies, and other essential items to prepare a student for success in the first year of college for the 2025-26 academic year.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Applicant must have experienced homelessness during the 2024-25 school year.
2. Applicant must have been identified as experiencing homelessness (McKinney-Vento eligible) by the LEA or charter school in ISEE data reporting.
3. Applicants must provide proof of acceptance and/or enrollment into a college or university for the 2025 summer/fall semester or term.

RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All recipients must meet with the school/district McKinney-Vento liaison to custom order their College Starter Kit by **May 30, 2025**. Receipts of purchases must be sent to the [State Coordinator](#) of the Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program by the liaison.
2. All recipients are required to attend the College Starter Kit Celebration either in-person in Boise, Idaho or online in July 2025.
3. All recipients are required to participate in a virtual check-in during the 2025-26 college academic year with the [State Coordinator](#).

INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit a completed application packet by **April 20, 2025** at <https://www.jotform.com/build/243546327570055>. Application packet must include the following:



1. A completed application
2. A personal essay (1,000-1,500 words) about the impact of experiencing homelessness and the desire to attend college (see essay evaluation criteria).
3. A minimum of one letter of recommendation from a teacher, counselor, or adult who can speak to the applicant's educational qualifications (Advanced Placement classes, honor roll selection, academic improvements, standardized tests, academic certificates, or awards) and life experiences.
4. Proof of acceptance into a college or university (e.g. college acceptance letter, class schedule, or housing confirmation letter).

ESSAY EVALUATION CRITERIA

The applicant will submit an essay about the impact of experiencing homelessness on the student's life and their desire to attend college, consisting of a 1,000-1,500-word range. Essays must be submitted as a Microsoft Word attachment or PDF. Each essay will be evaluated based on the following:

- Demonstrated commitment to education during their experience of homelessness
- Academic achievement and accomplishments
- Potential impact of receiving the College Starter Kit on the student's educational career
- Statement of goals and career interests
- Grammar and use of language

DEADLINE

Application materials must be submitted electronically through the [Jotform](#) link by 11:59pm MT, Sunday, **April 20, 2025**.

AWARD NOTIFICATION

Students selected to receive a College Starter Kit will be notified by May 1, 2025 by phone, email or other information provided by the applicant, legal guardian or district liaison. The McKinney-Vento liaison listed on the application will also be notified.

COLLEGE STARTER KIT

The McKinney-Vento liaison will be provided with an Amazon card and will work with the recipient to order College Starter Kit items according to the allowable list provided by the Idaho



Department of Education (SDE). After placing the Amazon order, the liaison must provide a receipt of the order to the state coordinator. Failure to do so will result in reimbursing the SDE the full value of each Amazon card (\$1,500).

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information or questions, please contact the State Coordinator for the Education for Homeless Children & Youth at esommer@sde.idaho.gov or (208) 332-6904.