

FAQ: Health Care Consent for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

As of June 9, 2022, unaccompanied homeless youth under the age of 18 can consent to their own health care, if they cannot receive consent from school staff.

Does this new law apply to me?

You can consent to health care under this law if you:

- Are under the age of 18,
- Are an unaccompanied homeless youth, and
- Are unable to receive health care consent from a school nurse, school counselor, or school homeless liaison.

How do I know if I'm an unaccompanied homeless youth?

There are many examples of what it means to be an unaccompanied homeless youth. Generally, this means that:

1. You are not physically staying with a parent or guardian, and
2. You do not have a fixed, regular, and adequate place to sleep at night.

What are some examples of homelessness?

Here are a few examples of youth homelessness:

- Staying on a friend's couch because you don't feel safe at home
- Staying in a youth shelter or living on the streets or in a park
- Staying temporarily with relatives because your parents didn't make arrangements for who should take care of you
- You came undocumented from another country and are staying with someone who isn't your parent

Does this mean I cannot go to my school nurse, school counselor, or homeless liaison for health care consent?

No, definitely still reach out to your school nurse, school counselor, or homeless liaison. This new law only applies if you CAN'T get health care consent from those school staff. In most cases, school staff can also connect you to other health or housing resources to provide you with additional support.



What kinds of health care does this include?

This new law applies to certain primary care services, including:

- Physical exams,
- Vision exams and eyeglasses,
- Dental exams,
- Hearing exams and hearing aids,
- Immunizations,
- Treatments for illnesses and conditions, and
- Routine follow-up care.

How can I get health care under this new law?

Since this is a new law, not everyone may know about it yet. When you schedule an appointment or reach out to a doctor for health care:

- It might be helpful to bring a copy of the new law or this document with you.
- They might ask you a few questions about your living situation to make sure that you are included under this new law.
- They might ask you to share documentation that you are an unaccompanied homeless youth.

How do I provide documentation that I am an unaccompanied homeless youth?

There are three types of adults you can reach out to for either written or electronic (such as email) documentation:

- Someone who works at a human services or homeless agency, such as a youth shelter,
- An attorney who is working with you,
- An adult relative or another adult who knows you and your housing situation.

The documentation only applies to your living situation. **You do not have to share your health care information with the adults providing documentation for you.**

Helpful Links:

- Learn more about signing up for Medicaid through Apple Health Insurance or call 1-855-923-4633 and say "I need to talk to a Medicaid eligibility worker."
- Find a location to get the COVID-19 vaccine near you.
- Learn more about minor consent laws, including consent for other types of health care.