

Resources & Tips for Unaccompanied Youth



Before Enrolling in College

- **Unaccompanied youth may be able to receive funds to help with school supplies and clothing while still in high school.** High school districts are also required to provide eligible students with transportation to approved shelters or group homes. Ask your school counselor about these services.
- **Check out fee waivers.** You may be eligible to take the SAT, ACT, or apply to college for free. Talk to your school counselor or an admissions counselor for more information about fee waivers.
- **Find out if you are eligible to register as a “McKinney-Vento” student.** McKinney-Vento registration assures that you will be considered as an independent student for financial aid purposes and can receive additional financial aid resources, like grants or scholarships. Your high school counselor will help you with this process.
- **Think about managing the cost of college.** Financial aid can make a college education possible even when a student does not have family support. You could be eligible for a Federal Pell Grant of up to \$7,395 (2023-2024 school year). And if you are a New Hampshire resident attending college for the first time and qualify for a Pell Grant, you can also take advantage of the Granite Guarantee. This program bridges the gap between the Pell Grant and in-state tuition at a NH public college or university. It does not cover housing or other fees, but it can help in covering a lot of the cost. There are ways to go to college more affordably, but you may need to talk to your school counselor or a Granite Edvance counselor to familiarize yourself with these options.
- **File the FAFSA by the winter/spring of your senior year.** The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is how you apply for federal student aid, including Pell grants and Federal Direct Loans, and also possibly more financial aid from colleges and scholarships. It can be accessed at studentaid.gov. Granite Edvance will help you file your FAFSA at no charge. We have in-person and virtual appointments to help you; schedule at calendly.com/GraniteEdvance.

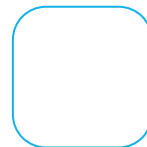
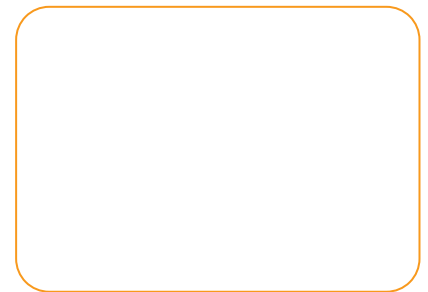
When Choosing Between Colleges

Ask about deposits

- Most colleges require a deposit for housing and/or enrollment by May 1. Ask the admissions office if you may postpone paying these fees until you receive your financial aid (which will be posted to your account once classes begin).

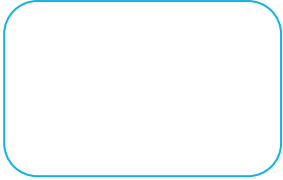
Prioritize a way to live affordably

- If you're considering community college, know that many do not offer housing on campus, but there are some that do, or will help you secure off-campus housing! Please contact the New Hampshire college you would like to go to, to see if they have housing or agreements with off campus apartments or other living arrangements.
- Thinking about living off campus? By applying for financial aid, you may receive funds that could be used to assist with housing costs. However, consider how you will get to campus each day as transportation is crucial, but may be expensive.
- Consider a more urban area. Urban areas have stronger public transportation systems, which might help you get to class.
- If your school does offer dorms, you can apply to be a Resident Assistant after your freshman year. This job means you support students in the dorms and in turn receive discounted housing.



Remember colleges are not open 24/7 year-round

- Ask the college if they provide temporary housing for unaccompanied students during Thanksgiving break, winter break, and spring break. If you cannot stay on campus, think about where you will live during these times. What options do you have for summer housing?
- Ask the college if you can enroll in summer courses and live on campus so that you have housing year-round.



Sometimes getting there is the problem

- Many unaccompanied students enroll in college and then do not attend because they have no way to get to school to move in. Have a plan for how you will get to college when you begin each year and semester. How will you pay for the cost of transportation?

Consider what else you will need to be successful

- Check out the computer lab. Many colleges have computer labs that students can use so that you do not have to buy a computer. How many computers are available on campus? What hours are they open? Can you rent a computer? What are printing costs, if any? Knowing this information can help you plan accordingly.
- Consider using an online storage system. You can use online storage systems such as Google Docs or One Drive to store any important personal documents or school work, and be able to access them from any device.
- Get supported. Ask if the college has a “Single Point of Contact” (or “SPOC”) who can serve as a point of reference for you as you navigate college life. Also, visit the counseling center, which may have support groups and special resources for unaccompanied students.
- Use academic resources. Each college has free academic support centers that can provide you with resources to help you in your studies, including a writing center and tutors.

Health insurance is probably not optional

- Ask each school where you're considering applying about their specific policy regarding health insurance, as most colleges require that you have it. Many colleges offer a low-cost health care option for students. Consider this when you are calculating the cost of college. And remember, if health insurance is required, your bill will include these expenses.



State and National Resources

State

- **New Hampshire Local Homeless Education Liaisons** – These school liaisons can assist you in getting a McKinney-Vento designation so that you have access to more financial aid and resources. See your school counselor to find out who your district liaison is, call 603-271-3840, or visit www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-learner-support/bureau-of-instructional-support/ehcy.
- **WaypointNH** – Resources for homeless youth and young adults in New Hampshire. www.waypointnh.org/programs/homelessness-youth-services
- **NH Coalition to End Homelessness** – Resources for homeless youth in New Hampshire. www.nhceh.org
- **Families in Transition** – Emergency and long-term resources for families in New Hampshire. www.fitnh.org

National

- **1-800-RUNAWAY** – Crisis center for runaway and homeless youth. You can call them and they will help you find resources in your area. They also have a message service to parents if you want to pass info on to your parents but don't want to talk to them. www.1800runaway.org
- **National Center for Homeless Education** – Provides links to resources for higher education. nche.ed.gov
- **NAECHY** – Resources, advocacy and scholarships for educating homeless youth. naehcy.org

Scholarships and Grants

- **Local scholarships** – Contact your high school counselor for local scholarship information.
- **Granite Edvance Scholarship** – After your first year of college, check out our own Granite Edvance Scholarship! This is available to returning college students who are NH residents. www.GraniteEdvance.org/scholarships
- **The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation** – A community foundation, which distributes more than \$5 million in grants and loans each year. 603-225-6641 www.nhcf.org
- **The New Hampshire Coalition to End Homelessness** – 603-641-9441 www.nhceh.org/training-education/scholarship
- **NAECHY Scholarship Fund** – Scholarships offered through the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth. www.naehcy.org/naehcy-scholarship-fund

According to the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, a person is considered homeless who “lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence.” This includes people living in shelters, cars, motels/hotels, and campgrounds, or living with friends or relatives temporarily because they lack permanent housing.

Need help? Reach out!

Granite Edvance offers virtual and in-person one-on-one appointments. Live translation services are available. Book an appointment: calendly.com/GraniteEdvance