

Unaccompanied Youth Certification Form

For authorized entities pursuant to Vermont law

DATE: / /

Youth's information

Name:

Phone Number: Date of Birth: / /

Home Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Qualifying Circumstances

Certification Information

Name of Certifying Individual (Printed):

Title of Certifying Individual:

Organization / Entity:

Signature of Certifying Individual:

Date Signed:

Date Certified:

Human Trafficking Training Confirmation

☐ I certify that I have completed a human trafficking training with the past two years.

(a) Legislative intent.

In instances in which severe family dysfunction such as abuse, neglect, child abandonment, or lack of financial support has left a youth who is 16 or 17 years of age homeless, and other supports such as foster care are deemed inappropriate, it is the intent of the General Assembly to provide an unaccompanied youth with the resources necessary to obtain services and benefits that the unaccompanied youth's peers can obtain with the consent of a parent or guardian.

(b) Definitions.

As used in this section:

(1) "Homeless child or youth" means an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

(A) a child or youth sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;

(B) a child or youth living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;

(C) a child or youth living in emergency or transitional shelters;

(D) a child or youth abandoned in hospitals;

(E) a child or youth living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;

(F) a child or youth living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or

(G) a migratory child who qualifies as homeless because the child is living in the circumstances described in this subdivision (1).

(2) "School district homeless liaison" means an employee designated by a school district to act as a liaison for homeless children and youths.

(3) "Unaccompanied youth" means a homeless child or youth 16 or 17 years of age who is not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

(c) Certification.

An unaccompanied youth may become certified if the youth is:

(1) found by a school district homeless liaison or other appropriate staff person to be an unaccompanied youth; or

(2) believed to qualify as an unaccompanied youth, by:

(A) the director of an emergency shelter program funded by the State;

(B) the director of a runaway or homeless youth program funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development or designee;

(C) a continuum of care lead agency or designee;

(D) the Chief Juvenile Defender or designee; or

(E) the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence or designee.

(d) Proof of certification.

(1)(A) The Department shall contract with a community organization that serves homeless and runaway youth in Vermont to develop a standardized form that shall be used by the entities specified in subsection (c) of this section to certify qualifying unaccompanied youths. The front of the form shall include the circumstances that qualify the youth; the date the youth was certified; the name, title, and signature of the certifying individual; and confirmation from the certifying individual that the individual has completed a human trafficking training in the past two years. This section shall be reproduced in its entirety on the back of the form.

(B) The Department shall post the certification form and information about this section on its website, including who is eligible for certification and which individuals and entities can complete the certification form pursuant to this section.

(2) Without the consent of a parent or guardian, a certified unaccompanied youth may use the completed form to:

(A) apply at no charge for a nondriver identification card pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 115, a learner's permit pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 617, or an operator's license or operator's privilege card pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 608;

(B) obtain a vital event certificate at no charge pursuant to 18 V.S.A. § 5017;

(C) consent to care by health care professionals licensed or certified in Vermont, including medical care; dental care; mental health care services, including psychological counseling and treatment, psychiatric treatment, and substance use prevention and treatment services; and surgical diagnosis and treatment, including medical diagnosis and treatment, such as preventive care and care provided in a health care facility, as defined in 18 V.S.A. § 9432, for:

(i) the youth; or

(ii) the youth's child, if the certified unaccompanied youth is unmarried, is the parent of the child, and has actual custody of the child;

(D) enter into a contract for housing or obtain admission to a shelter or transitional housing;

(E) obtain employment, pursuant to 21 V.S.A. chapter 5, subchapter 4;

(F) purchase an automobile and obtain an automobile liability policy that meets the requirements of 23 V.S.A. chapter 11;

(G) apply for a student loan;

(H) obtain admission to high school or postsecondary school and participate in school activities, including extracurricular activities and field trips;

(I) open an account at a State- or federally chartered bank or credit union;

(J) receive services for victims of domestic or sexual violence, as appropriate; and

(K) participate in a court diversion program pursuant to 3 V.S.A. §§ 163 and 164 or the Youth Substance Awareness Safety Program pursuant to 7 V.S.A. § 656.

(e) Use of certification form.

A health care professional shall accept the completed form as proof of the youth's status as a certified unaccompanied youth. Entities that provide housing, services, or benefits authorized under this section may keep a copy of the form or card in the youth's medical file.

(f) Consent of a parent or guardian.

(1) A certification issued pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall authorize an unaccompanied youth to obtain benefits and services listed in subsection

(d) of this section. A person, provider, or health care professional shall not require the consent of a parent or guardian as a condition of providing a benefit or service authorized under subsection (d) of this section.

(2) For the purposes of implementing subdivision (d)(2)(I) of this section, the Commissioner of Financial Regulation shall ensure that minimum youth certification requirements are met for the purpose of making it legally permissible for a bank, credit union, or insurance company to contract with an unaccompanied youth without the consent of a parent or guardian and with the understanding that the unaccompanied youth may not have a permanent physical address.

(g) Immunity for liability.

Any entity, provider, or health care professional who relies in good faith on a certification form presented by a person who claims to be a certified unaccompanied youth pursuant to this section shall be immune from liability for such reliance, unless the entity, provider, or health care professional acted with gross negligence.

(h) Applicability of Compact.

Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.