



# INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR JUVENILES

*Serving Juveniles While Protecting Communities*

## Best Practice

*Please note, this document is not a policy or procedure, but simply a reference to assist states when dealing with this type of case.*

### Topic: Working with Homeless Juveniles

On occasion, an ICJ Office may receive a request for transfer of supervision where a juvenile will reside with a relative who is homeless. Often, these cases are mandatory acceptance cases (Rule 4-104(4)), and this placement is a last resort.

It is important for the sending state to document the relative's living situation and maintain contact with the relative while the transfer request is in process, providing regular updates to the sending state's ICJ office.

It may be a challenge for receiving states to navigate the practicality of meeting with a homeless juvenile and ensuring they are complying with the terms of their supervision. The following are recommendations to assist states once they accept supervision of a juvenile who is homeless:

- Work with local offices or others to determine if there are services that may assist the relative in acquiring stable living arrangements.
- Consider the standards of supervision that prevail for your own juveniles who are on supervision and found to be in a homeless situation (Rule 5-101(1)).
- Maintain open communications between the relative and locals during the transition.
- Additional considerations:
  - Relative's ability in the past to provide a stable (or at least minimally acceptable) home.
  - Relative's ties and resources in the area – are they familiar with the area, do they have some informal support?
  - Relative's plans to find work and housing – are they realistic and achievable, with local supports?
  - What are the plans to enroll the juvenile(s) in school? Is there a local program that assists homeless juvenile(s) to be successful in school? Will the juvenile(s) have transportation?
  - What is the best way to contact the relative and are they responsive when contacted?
  - If in a shelter, is there a time limit for how long they can stay?
  - Will the juvenile be able to fulfill their court-ordered obligations?

In cases such as these, the potential for conflict between states may be high. It is essential that both sending and receiving states communicate and collaborate, within the scope of the ICJ rules, in the best interest of the juvenile(s), relative, and community.

*Communication and collaboration are essential in homeless cases*