

What can the judge do?

If you are under 16, some of the things a judge can do are:

- close your case and give you a warning
- continue your case for up to six months with a referral to services like counseling or an after school program
- order that you be supervised by a probation officer
- order you to go to school
- order you to go to counseling
- require DCF to become involved with you and your family
- order you to be placed in a facility if you disobey the judge's orders

If you are 16 or 17, some of the things a judge can do are:

- stop you from driving a motor vehicle for a period of time
- order you to work or to do community service
- order you to go to school
- order you to go to counseling

Can I get arrested or locked up for truancy?

You cannot get arrested or placed in juvenile detention for truancy, but if you are under 16 and disobey the judge's orders, s/he can order you to be placed in a facility for up to 45 days.

Where can I get help?

Truancy is a serious problem.

We want to help you so you can stay in school.

Please call us if you have any questions about your legal rights.

Call CCA's Teen Legal Clinic at 860-570-5327.



Center for Children's Advocacy

University of Connecticut School of Law
65 Elizabeth Street, Hartford, CT 06105
www.kidscounsel.org

Have you
missed a lot
of school?

TRUANCY

What does
the law say?

***Are you wondering
what's going to happen to you
because you have missed so much school?***

In Connecticut, a truant is someone who has 4 unexcused absences from school in one month or 10 unexcused absences in one school year.

There is also something called a "habitual truant." This is someone who has a habit of being absent from school. A habitual truant is someone with 20 unexcused absences in one school year.



This is what the law says:

What will happen if I am a truant?

Your school is required to have a meeting with your parent/guardian, or another person who is taking care of you, within 10 days after you become a truant.

The reason for this meeting is to talk about why you haven't been coming to school and to help you solve the problems that keep you from coming to school.

What if my parent/guardian doesn't go to the meeting at school?

If your parent/guardian doesn't go to the meeting, or if the school feels your parent/guardian is not helping you to come to school, then they can refer your case to court. There are two laws that allow the school to get the court involved. If you are under 16, the law refers to you and your family as a "Family with Service Needs." If you are 16 or 17, the law refers to you as a "Youth in Crisis."

What will happen next?

Your case will be assigned to a probation officer. If you are 16 or 17, the probation officer will either close your case or send it to a judge. If you are under 16, the probation officer will either close your case or refer you and your family to a program to help you.

If I am under 16, does my case ever get sent to a judge?

Maybe. If you and your family are unsuccessful with the services that the probation officer referred you to, s/he can send your case to a judge.

What happens if my case gets sent to a judge?

You and your parent/guardian will be required to go to court. You will receive a summons in the mail telling you the time and place. There will be a hearing before a judge (probably more than one hearing). You have a right to have a lawyer representing you at the hearing. You should ask your lawyer to explain the legal process to you.

