



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

Here's what the law says:

Truant

A truant is someone who has 4 unexcused absences from school in one month or 10 unexcused absences in one school year.

Habitual Truant

A habitual truant is someone who has a habit of being absent from school. A habitual truant is someone with 20 unexcused absences in one school year.



What will happen if I am a truant?

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

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

What if my parent or guardian does not go to the meeting at school?

If your parent or guardian does not go to the meeting, or if the school thinks your parent/guardian is not helping you come to school, they can send your case to court through the "Families with Service Needs" law.



What happens if the school refers my case to court?

Your case will be assigned to a probation officer.

The probation officer will refer you and your family to a program to help you. You may be referred to a place called a "Child and Youth Family Support Center" that has programs for kids who are truant, who run away from home, or who have trouble following rules at school or in the community.

Will my case be sent to a judge?

Maybe. If you and your family are not successful with the services, your case can be sent to a judge.

What happens if my case is sent to a judge?

You and your parent/guardian must go to court. You will get a summons in the mail that tells 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 represent you at the hearing. Ask your lawyer to explain the legal process to you.

What can the judge do?

Some of the things the judge can do are:

- Close your case and give you a warning
- Continue your case for up to 6 months and refer you to services like counseling or an after-school program
- Order you to be supervised by a probation officer
- Order you to go to school and be supervised by school administrators
- Require DCF to get involved with you and your family

Can I get arrested or locked up for truancy?

You cannot get arrested or placed in juvenile detention for truancy, but if you do not obey the judge's orders, the judge can order you to be placed in a facility for up to 45 days.



Need Help?

Truancy is a serious problem.
We want to help you stay in school.

Information about truancy and your legal rights

860-570-5327 and 203-335-0719
speakupteens.org and kidscounsel.org



This brochure is intended as reference only and should not be interpreted as legal advice. If you need specific information about the law, please call 860-570-5327 or 203-335-0719.

Center for Children's Advocacy
speakupteens.org
kidscounsel.org

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Missed a lot of school?

Truancy. What does the law say?