



Brighter Futures

Regular school attendance is essential to school success. Frequent absence (full or partial days) from school is one of the number one reasons that youth have poor achievement and discouragement in school. Students cannot expect to achieve their full potential if they frequently miss class sessions.

It is the legal and moral responsibility of parents, guardians, and/or legal custodians to ensure regular school attendance. This pattern is established early on through the attitude and support of the school, as shown by the caregiver(s).

School and community resources are available to give support to caregivers as needed to ensure regular school attendance.

Truancy Defined

Truant is defined as “a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse...*for all or part of* any day on which school is held during a school semester.”

Habitual Truant is defined as “a pupil who is absent from school without an acceptable excuse...*for all or part of* 5 (five) or more days on which school is held during a school semester.”

Schools want youth in class; if you are having trouble with attendance, speak to your school principal and ask for a meeting to generate ideas *before* a referral is made.

When a student meets the definition of truancy, the school may do the following:

Missed all or Part of 1 Day:

- ☑ Enforce an in-school response such as detention or loss of privileges, etc.

Simple Truancy:

- ☑ Refer the youth to Teen Court.
- ☑ Request an officer to issue a Citation to the youth or a Contributing to Truancy Citation to the caregiver(s).
- ☑ Encourage voluntary community services to address underlying needs and prevent further truancy issues.

Second & Subsequent Offenses:

If attendance continues to be an issue, a school truancy meeting will occur, and a student may be found to be Habitually Truant.

If the youth is 17 + years old, a Habitual Truancy citation may be issued.

If the youth is 6 – 16 years old, the following may occur:

- ☑ The student and family may be referred to Human Services for voluntary services in lieu of further Habitual Truancy action.
- ☑ If voluntary services are unsuccessful in addressing Habitual Truancy concerns, then an officer may issue a Contributing to Truancy or Habitual Truancy Citation, or
- ☑ A Habitual Truancy Referral may be sent to Crawford County Health & Human Services Juvenile Intake, and
 - ✎ The student may have ordered conditions that mandate service involvement and limit personal freedoms until school attendance has improved, in addition to paying fines and completing community service.
 - ✎ The caregivers may also have ordered conditions that support the resolution of underlying needs that may be contributing to the truancy concerns.