

# KNOW THE LAW!

A child between the ages of 7 & 17 years of age must attend school every day and be on time unless they have lawful excuse for being absent. A child 17 years of age cannot drop out of school without the permission of their parents. Written forms must be completed at a school meeting. Children must attend school.

## Excused Absences

### VALID excuses may include:

- Sickness: you may be required to prove documentation from your doctor
- Medical or Mental Health appointments
- Religious holidays
- Extreme family emergency

### INVALID excuses may include:

- Staying at home to babysit or work
- Being tired, oversleeping
- Needed at home
- Cold weather
- Missing the bus

A parent or guardian may seek an excused absences from school for his/her child. [A school has the right to accept or deny an application for an excused absence.](#)

## What is our Goal?

Morrison County Social Services's goal is to increase school attendance and improve community connections across Morrison County through a collaborative early intervention providing education and support services to school-age youth and their families.



FOR QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION  
ABOUT TRUANCY CONTACT:

### **Juvenile Justice Program**

#### **AIM/ TDP Contact:**

**Logan Swendsrud**

[logans@co.morrison.mn.us](mailto:logans@co.morrison.mn.us)

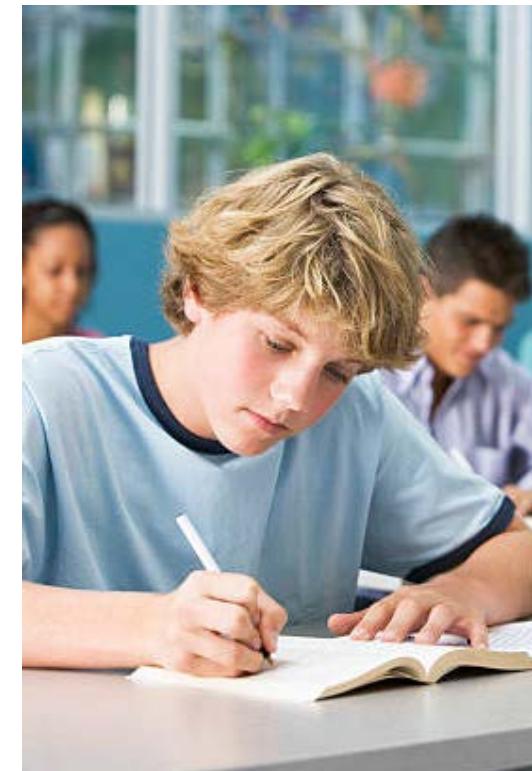
Phone: (320) 632-0246

**Morrison County**

**Social Services**

Phone: (320) 632-2951

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**MORRISON  
COUNTY  
TRUANCY**

*Children deserve an  
education!*

# Plan for Success!

## Students Responsibilities

- Attend school every day and be on time
- Talk to someone at school if you are having problems
- Attend school meetings
- Complete homework on time
- Be involved in groups or activities that interest you
- Know and follow school policies and rules

## Parents Responsibilities

- Send your child to school
- Ensure your child has completed required homework
- Communicate with school and know the attendance policy
- Don't cover for your child's unexcused absence
- Attend school meetings
- Get your child services if problems interfere with school attendance

## Truancy Worker Responsibilities

- Assess students for risk of ongoing truancy, and develop a plan of needed services
- Implement services to address truancy issues
- Conduct follow-up service meetings as needed
- Identify problems accessing services and difficulties in improving attendance, adding or adjusting services as needed
- Coordinate interventions with school and other service providers

## Schools Responsibilities

- Provide a program/schedule that meets the students educational needs
- Address problems identified as barriers to the students ability to attend and learn
- Maintain accurate attendance records and document communication with parents/guardians and students about attendance
- Intervene early to prevent habitual truancy by meeting with the student and/or families after 3 unexcused absences-Refer to AIM
- Refer student to Truancy Diversion Program after 7 unexcused absences

# What is Truancy?

A child is considered "habitual truant" by the state if he/she is between the age of 12 and under the age of 18 years and is absent from school without lawful excuse for seven school days and/ or for one or more class periods on seven school days. Children age 17 will be considered truant if they have not lawfully withdrawn from school with their parents' permission.

Number of Partial and/or Full Days (Unexcused)	School/Contact Person	Goal of Intervention
1-2 Days	School makes contact with student and parents	Address concerns and problem solve
3 Days	School mails <b>MANDATORY</b> 3 day truancy letter	Mandated formal intervention including state statutes; school assesses needs
4 Days	Referral from school for Attendance Intervention Meeting (A.I.M); Families can also voluntarily join Truancy Diversion Program (TDP)	Discuss the potential consequences, identify strengths and needs, make referrals with parent consent
5-6 Days	School attempts personal contact; School contacts AIM regarding additional unexcused absences	Additional intervention efforts to avoid possible court actions
7 Days	Referral from school to Juvenile Justice Program (JJP) for TDP	8 week program to support families in attending school and truancy issues
8+ Days	Notification from school to JJP regarding additional absences; JJP will discuss possible referral to Morrison County Social Services for formal intervention with possible court action	Assess/Facilitate/ Monitor need for services; monitor attendance, JJP, file petition with court if child continues to accumulate unexcused absences



## Truancy Consequences

- Court adjudication as a "child in needs of protection or services"
- Mandatory meetings with social services
- Community service
- Child be removed from the home and placed in a shelter care, foster care, or short term residential facility. Parents/Guardians can be required to pay a fee for placement
- Fines up to \$100
- Suspension or denial of driving privileges (to age 18)
- Counseling for child and parents
- Chemical or Mental Health evaluations/services/programs. The court can also order random drug/alcohol testing
- Parents/Guardians can be required to compel the child's attendance and deliver the child to school at the beginning of each school day for a period of time specified by the court
- Any other activities or treatment programs deemed appropriate by the court, etc.

*REMEMBER - the most significant consequences for truancy are not court sanctions. Children who fail to attend school are more likely to become involved in other negative and illegal activities that severely limit later opportunities in life. Uncorrected truancy is the beginning of a lifetime of unmet potential and failed experiences. Don't let something this preventable happen to you or someone you care about.*