Truancy

THE COMPULSORY EDUCATION LAW (N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 THROUGH 31) REQUIRES ALL CHILDREN BETWEEN THE AGES OF 6-16 TO ATTEND SCHOOL.

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NJ Truancy Terms and Requirements

10 or more unexcused absences in a school year.

A student missing 10% of the school year (excused or unexcused) is chronically absent.

What is unexcused?

Anything not covered by state law (illness, death in family, religious observance, medical appointments with notes, court, etc).

Districts define specific procedures for notes and valid reasons, often requiring a doctor's note for extended absences.

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General Response System

First 4 days- School will communicate (notifying parents of each absence and early intervention.

Days 5-9- Schools develop a Comprehensive Action Plan, potentially involving the Intervention & Referral Services (I&RS) team.

Over 10 Days- Student is officially truant; courts or juvenile-family crisis units may get involved.

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Parent/Guardian Involvement

Schools must try to contact parents for each absence to determine the cause and involve them in solutions.

If unexcused absences persist, the district must follow state statutes (N.J.S.A. 18A:38-28 through 31) for intervention.

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Aims for early intervention and support, but has clear thresholds for official truancy (10 absences) that trigger mandatory legal and support system involvement.

State law mandates efforts to intervene, support families, and resolve issues, potentially involving community agencies or court systems if a student remains truant, with penalties for parents possible for repeated offenses.

For more information visit, NJ Student Attendance.

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