

The Legal Consequences of Educational Neglect

- A child maltreatment report could be filed alleging that the child is being educationally neglected. A child protection services assessment is completed and if educational neglect is determined, there could be additional county involvement; including a case plan or legal proceedings.
- Parents/Guardians could be petitioned to court for educational neglect.
- Parents/Guardians could be required to participate in parenting classes, counseling sessions or other services designed to assist them in improving their children's school attendance.
- In extreme cases, children could be removed from their parental home and placed in foster care or with other adult family members.
- If the child is in need of special care or treatment, the court may order that it be provided.



FAQs

What is an excused and unexcused absence?

- Excused absences include a family emergency, illness/medical or mental health appointments and religious holidays.
- Unexcused absences include babysitting, missing the bus, oversleeping and weather.
- Please check with your school for additional guidance.

What is the role of the school in this process?

- Provide a program/schedule that meets the student's educational needs.
- Address problems identified as barriers to the child's ability to attend and learn.
- Maintain accurate attendance records and document communication with parents/guardians and students about attendance.

Contact us with additional questions::



Washington County Community Services
14949 62nd St. N., P.O. Box 30
Stillwater, MN 55082
Phone: 651-430-6523
Fax: 651-430-8340

www.washingtoncountymn.gov/truancy

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A Guide to Educational Neglect Diversion Services in Washington County

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Fax: 651-430-8340

WashingtonCountyMN.gov/Truancy

Early Education

& Educational Neglect

A child's early education is fundamental to their development and academic success.

- Minnesota state law requires all children who attend K-12 schools to be present every day their school is in session.

When a child has multiple unexcused absences, it can impact them in the following ways:

- A child can fall behind academically and fail to meet grade level standards.
- It also impairs their social development.
- A child with multiple absences can fall under the state guidelines for education neglect which could result in a referral to Washington County.

When a child has excessive absences, a school can make a referral for diversion services.

- This voluntary and collaborative diversion service is designed to identify and address barriers that contribute to a child's attendance issues.
- Addressing these concerns on a voluntary basis gives the family an opportunity to make necessary changes without formal Child Protection Services.

The Diversion Process

- A school makes a referral to Washington County when a child's education is impacted by unexcused absences without a legal or valid excuse.
- A diversion meeting will be scheduled with the school and the parent(s)/guardians.
- At the diversion meeting, an Attendance Success Plan is developed in collaboration with parents/guardians and the school to address attendance issues.
- The child's attendance will be monitored by the Washington County Community Services (WCCS) Social Worker for the remainder of the academic school year.
- If attendance continues to be a concern and all efforts to address the issue on a voluntary basis are exhausted, the county social worker can refer the case to Child Protection Services for further intervention.



How to Improve School Attendance

Active participation in your child's education is essential.

- Engagement in your child's education demonstrates it is a priority to you and encourages daily attendance.
- Talk to your child about going to school every day and ask how their day went.
- Set clear and high expectations for attendance, school engagement, and homework.

Having a healthy routine is vital for young children.

- Healthy routines ensure stability, an essential factor in healthy child development. This includes lifelong skill development and encourages personal responsibility.
- Examples of healthy routines include limiting electronics, getting a good night's sleep and establishing a morning routine.

Partner with your child's school.

- Communicate with the school and familiarize yourself with the school's attendance policy.
- If your child has to miss school for a legitimate reason, it is a parental responsibility to notify school staff and provide documentation, if needed.