

Truancy Courts

Resource Guide

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Often a special docket within the juvenile or family court, the consolidation of truancy cases results in speedier court dates and more consistent dispositions, making court personnel more attuned to the needs of truant youths and their families. Guidance counselors submit reports on the child's weekly progress throughout the school year that the court uses to enable counseling, special testing, or other necessary services as required. Hearings are often held on school grounds. Truancy problem solving dockets bring together the schools, law enforcement, social service providers, mental and physical health care providers and others to help stabilize families and reengage youth in their education.

Links to related online resources are listed below. Non-digitized publications may be borrowed from the NCSC Library; call numbers are provided.

Featured Links

[Judicially Led Responses to Eliminate School Pathways to the Juvenile Justice System.](#) This 2016 report produced by the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges discusses the effects of zero tolerance policies in schools on the courts and on juveniles and families.

[University of Baltimore School of Law's Center for Families, Children and the Courts.](#) This program aims to address the root causes of truant behavior by linking families who encounter truancy in the courts to needed social services or other community-based supports. A significant and growing body of research demonstrates that truancy is one of the strongest early predictors for teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, crime, dependency, dropout, unemployment, and more.

[Truancy Reform in Texas.](#) (2009). In 2015 the Texas Legislature completely overhauled its previous two-decade-long policy of criminally prosecuting children for truancy. The jurisdiction over children in school attendance cases formerly vested with juvenile courts and justice and municipal courts now belongs exclusively to truancy courts. These truancy courts have countywide jurisdiction and possess sole subject matter jurisdiction over truant conduct. The Judicial Branch website contains flowcharts, commentary, resource manuals and forms.

[Truancy Problem Solving Courts in Colorado.](#) January 2016 Case Study of three Colorado judicial districts that implemented pilot problem solving court models for truancy dockets. The Study details the challenges and the successes.



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