

WINDSOR COUNTY TRUANCY RESPONSE PROTOCOL

I. SCHOOL BOARD

- A. Shall appoint a truant officer annually and record the appointment with the clerk of the school district by July 3 of each year. 16 VSA 1125
- B. Notify DCF, the State's Attorney, and local law enforcement of the appointment

II. TEACHER/PRINCIPAL/SCHOOL

- A. Identify students of concern ages 6 to 16 with excessive unexcused absences
- B. Students of concern shall also include students older than 16 who have enrolled in school
- C. Excessive unexcused absences shall be defined by the school but shall not be defined to allow for more than 5 days of unexcused absences. Unexcused absences shall also be interpreted to mean a pattern of concerning tardiness or early school departures or failure to attend classes as defined by the school.
- D. The school shall make personal contact with the parents or guardian of any student identified as having excessive unexcused absences to express the school's concern. This personal contact may be followed with a letter from the school to the student's parents or guardians.
- E. Notify superintendent or school directors about the student of concern 16 VSA 1126
- F. Notify truant officer about the student of concern 16 VSA 1126
- G. After 10 days of unexcused absences, the school shall arrange a Coordinated Services Plan ("CSP") meeting (Act 264).
- H. If the CSP is not successful and more formal state intervention is deemed necessary, make a formal referral to DCF Central Intake. 16 VSA 1127(c)

III. TRUANT OFFICER

- A. Investigate issue of excessive unexcused absences
- B. If a student is absent without cause, provide written notice to parent of the concern about non-attendance and provide notice of the need for the child to attend school. 16 VSA 1127 (a). Copies of the written notice to the parent shall be provided to DCF, the Hartford or Springfield Justice Center, and the State's Attorney
- C. If a parent alleges a medical/mental health reason for the student's non-attendance, superintendent (or truant officer as designee) shall contact outside medical/mental health providers to verify/refute allegation of a medical/mental health reason for the absences 16 VSA 1124
- D. After 7 days of unexcused absences explore in collaboration with the justice center, the student of concern, and the family, community based restorative strategies for rectifying the problem.
- E. Maintain an on-going record of unexcused absences

IV. DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (DCF)

- A. DCF Centralized Intake reviews report and refers matter if appropriate to local DCF office for assessment
- B. Review case and prepare affidavit in support of filing court case if appropriate
- C. Provide all documentation for State's Attorney review

V. STATE'S ATTORNEY

- A. Review all materials
- B. Initiate court process to include one or more of the following:
 - i. Criminal prosecution in the Criminal Division under 16 VSA 1127
 - ii. CHINS B alleging educational neglect in the Family Division under Title 33
 - iii. CHINS D alleging habitual and unjustified truancy in the Family Division under Title 33
- C. Notify Truant Officer of decision as allowed by law

Truancy Response Protocol Contact Numbers

DCF – Hartford	802-295-8840
DCF – Springfield	802-885-8900
DCF – Central intake	800-649-5285
Windsor County State’s Attorney	802-295-8870
Hartford Area Justice Center	802-478-1900
Springfield Area Justice Center	802-885-8707
Health Care and Rehabilitation Services	802-886-4500

Windsor County Truancy Response Protocol
Participating Agencies

The following agencies agree to work cooperatively to address issues of truancy within Windsor County and agree to follow the Windsor County Truancy Response Protocol

Windsor County State's Attorney's Office, Robert L. Sand, State's Attorney
Department of Children and Families- Hartford District, Linda James, District Director
Department of Children and Families- Springfield District, Brenda Pellerin, District Director
Springfield Justice Center, Wendi Germain, Director
Hartford Area Justice Center, Martha McLafferty, Director
Windsor Central Supervisory Union
Hartford Area School District