

Metropolitan Police Department □ Washington, D.C.



GENERAL ORDER



Subject:

**Truancy Awareness
and Prevention Program
(TAPP)**

Series	Number	Distribution	Change Number
305	2	A	1

Effective Date
November 18, 1994

Revision Date

The purpose of this order is to establish policy and procedures for members of the department with regard to the Truancy Awareness and Prevention Program (TAPP) in the District of Columbia. This order consists of the following parts:

**PART I Responsibilities and Procedures for
Members of the Department**

- A. Definitions.
- B. Student Identification Cards.
- C. Hours of Truancy Enforcement.
- D. Initiating the Truancy Investigation.
- E. D.C. Public School's Student Attendance Service Centers (SAS).
- F. Students Attending Private Schools.
- G. Students from Other Jurisdictions
- H. Students Who Have Been Suspended From Public School.
- I. Students In Transit Between Schools.
- J. Identification and Handling of Habitual Truants.

**PART II Responsibility and Procedures for Special
Assignment Personnel.**

Truancy Coordinator, Youth and Family Services Division.

**PART III Responsibility and Procedures for Supervisory
and Command Personnel.**

- A. District Commanders
- B. Commander, Youth and Family Services Division.

PART I

A. Definitions.

1. Truant Student - Any student of compulsory school age (five through seventeen) who is absent from school without permission of his/her parent, guardian, or legal custodian.

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2. Habitual Truant - Any student of compulsory school age, identified by a D.C. Public School Student Attendance Counselor or by the Metropolitan Police Department, who has been absent from school without permission for a period of ten (10) days within any school month.

3. Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) - Any child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and is habitually truant from school without justification and has committed an offense committable only by children, or who is habitually disobedient of the reasonable and lawful commands of his/her parents, guardian, or other custodian and is ungovernable.

4. Truancy Awareness and Prevention Program (TAPP) - A program designed for city-wide implementation and coordination of efforts between the Metropolitan Police Department, D.C. Public School System, D.C. Superior Court-Family Division and D.C. Department of Human Services, to reduce truancy.

5. D.C. Public School Student Attendance Service Centers (SAS) - Centers established by the D.C. Board of Education to monitor student attendance in all city schools. In addition, SAS Centers assist in efforts to counsel and correct behavior of students who have attendance problems.

B. Student Identification Cards.

1. All secondary school (junior and senior high school) students enrolled in D.C. Public Schools have been issued identification cards by the D.C. Board of Education (Attachment B) and are required to carry them during school hours.

2. Members conducting truancy enforcement stops may ask students to present their student identification cards, to verify the students identity and school where enrolled.

C. Hours of Truancy Enforcement.

1. Police truancy enforcement shall begin at 0930 and terminate at 1400 hours each school day.

2. All D.C. Public Schools have closed campuses during lunch periods, therefore, truancy enforcement shall not be suspended during school lunch periods. Students discovered off-campus during lunch periods are truant.

D. Initiating the Truancy Investigation.

1. It is the responsibility of all uniformed members on patrol to enforce the truancy laws.

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2. A member who observes a juvenile of apparent compulsory school attendance age on public space or in a public place unaccompanied by an adult having a custodial right or lawful interest in the child during periods when the public schools are in session, shall adhere to the following procedures:

- a. The member shall initiate a "stop" of the juvenile as outlined in General Order 304.10 (Police-Citizen Contacts, Stops and Frisks), in order to determine if the child is truant.
- b. The member initiating the stop shall also make a WALES inquiry to determine if the juvenile is wanted on an outstanding custody order, or the subject of a missing person report.

3. Any juvenile who is stopped and questioned on suspicion of truancy shall be asked to present an official document authorizing his/her absence from school.

4. A juvenile unable to provide an official document verifying an authorized absence from school shall be handled in the following manner:

- a. If the juvenile is enrolled in an elementary school within the patrol district of the initiating officer, the juvenile shall be taken directly back to his/her school.
- b. If the juvenile is enrolled in an elementary school outside of the patrol district of the initiating officer, the juvenile shall be taken to the closest SAS Center.
- c. Juveniles enrolled in junior or senior high schools, shall be taken directly to the nearest SAS Center.

5. A PD Form 379-T (Truancy Report) shall be prepared in the following circumstances by the apprehending officer and submitted through channels, by the end of the member's tour of duty, to the Youth and Family Services Division.

- a. Truant students returned to D.C. Public Schools or taken to SAS Centers.
- b. Truant students returned to private schools in the District of Columbia when the schools are in regular session.

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c. All juveniles of compulsory school attendance age arrested for violations of the law during a time when those juveniles were truant from school.

6. A truant may be frisked for concealed weapons or other dangerous instruments when reasonable suspicion exist as outlined in General Order 304.10 (Police-Citizen Contacts, Stops and Frisks), Part IC; however, if he/she has only been stopped for truancy, the juvenile shall not be subjected to a full field search. If concealed weapons or other illegal contraband is discovered during a lawful frisk, appropriate police action is required.

7. As a general rule, a truant shall not be handcuffed unless the juvenile becomes violent during the course of a truancy enforcement investigation.

8. A truant who becomes violent during a truancy investigation shall be transported to the nearest ~~district~~ Youth Services Office and charged with the appropriate violation of the law (e.g., assault on a police officer, destruction of property, etc.).

9. Truants shall not be transported in a patrol wagon unless there is no other transport vehicle available.

E. D.C. Public School Student Attendance Service Centers (SAS).

1. A truant who is apprehended within the District of Columbia shall be transported to the appropriate SAS Center and released to a SAS Center Representative/Counselor, except for those juveniles who shall be returned directly to their school as indicated in Part ID4a.

2. The member responsible for transporting a truant to the SAS Center shall make an entry in the logbook maintained at each center.

3. A truant who is apprehended in an area not served by a SAS Center or the center is not in operation shall be transported to his/her respective school and released to the principal or other person in a position of authority.

F. Students Attending Private Schools.

1. A member initiating a truancy enforcement stop of a juvenile of compulsory school attendance age who claims to be enrolled in a private school shall attempt to ascertain if the private school is in session.

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3. The member initiating the truancy enforcement stop shall prepare a PD Form 76 (Stop or Contact Report) and release the student when the private school is not in regular session and there are no other valid reasons to detain him/her. The P.D. Form 76 shall be submitted to his/her supervisor at the conclusion of the member's tour of duty.

G. Students from Other Jurisdictions.

1. Students who attend schools outside the District of Columbia shall not be returned to their respective schools by members of this department, nor shall they be released to other law enforcement agencies for the purpose of returning them to schools outside the District of Columbia.

2. A PD Form 379-C (Juvenile Incident Report) shall be prepared and the juvenile shall be released, provided that there are no other reasons to detain the juvenile. The PD Form 379-C shall be submitted to a supervisory official by the end of the member's tour of duty and forwarded to the Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator by the next business day.

H. Students Who Have Been Suspended From Public School.

1. When a member initiates a truancy stop of a student who states that he/she has been suspended from public school, the member shall attempt to verify the suspension during the initial stop (e.g., school documents, telephone verification).

2. A student shall be transported to the appropriate SAS Center when his/her suspension from school cannot be verified at the time of the initial stop.

3. The member initiating the truancy enforcement stop shall prepare a PD Form 379-C and release the student, provided that there are no other valid reasons to detain him/her. The completed PD Form 379-C shall be submitted to a supervisory official by the end of the member's tour of duty and forwarded to the Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator on the next business day.

I. Students In Transit Between Schools.

1. Students who are required to travel from one school to another will only have their primary school registration information imprinted on their student identification cards.

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2. A member initiating a truancy enforcement stop of a student allegedly in transit between schools may require the student to produce documentation from their secondary school, or telephonically verify the student's status, by contacting the primary or secondary school.

3. The member initiating the truancy enforcement stop, who cannot verify that a student is legitimately in transit between schools by official documentation or telephone verification, shall arrange to have the student transported to the appropriate SAS Center.

4. The member initiating the truancy enforcement stop shall prepare a PD Form 379-C and release the student when it is verified that the student was legitimately in transit between schools and there are no other valid reasons to detain him/her. The completed PD Form 379-C shall be submitted to a supervisory official at the end of the member's tour of duty and forwarded to the Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator on the next business day.

J. IDENTIFICATION AND HANDLING OF HABITUAL TRUANTS

1. Once a student has been identified as a habitual truant, the department and the D.C. Public Schools will coordinate future truancy prevention efforts involving the student.

2. The SAS Center Counselor will advise the Youth and Family Services Truancy Coordinator of the need for a truancy hearing. The time and date for the truancy hearing shall be agreed upon by the SAS Center Counselor and the Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator.

3. The primary objective of a truancy hearing is to formally notify the parents of children who have been consistently absent from school. The secondary objective shall be to advise the parents of their obligation pursuant to D.C. Law 8-247 (The District of Columbia Compulsory School Attendance Amendment Act of 1990) in order to ensure that their children receive school instruction regularly.

4. A representative from the following agencies shall participate in all truancy hearings:

- a. The Metropolitan Police Department, Youth and Family Services Division.
- b. The D.C. Department of Human Services.
- c. The D.C. Public School System, Attendance Branch.
- d. D.C. Superior Court, Family Division.

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5. At the conclusion of a truancy hearing, the juvenile may be referred to the PINS Center, Early Intervention Program or other juvenile services.

Part II

Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator.

The Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator shall:

1. Be responsible for coordinating the Truancy Awareness and Prevention Program within the Metropolitan Police Department.
2. Act as liaison with the Director, School Attendance Branch, D.C. Public Schools.
3. Establish, maintain and monitor the MPDC transporting officer logbook in each School Attendance Service Center.
4. Establish and maintain a master file on all identified truants in the District of Columbia.
5. Prepare PD Form 380 - (Notification to Parent/Guardian re: Truancy.)
6. Act as liaison between SAS Center Representatives, the District of Columbia Superior Court-Family Division, and the Department of Human Services.
7. Prepare a statistical report each month detailing by district the total number of youths apprehended for truancy by members of this department. A copy of each monthly report shall be distributed as follows:
 - a. Office of the Chief of Police, Patrol Services Officer, Commander Patrol Division, Commander Youth and Family Services Division, Commander Special Operations Division, Commander of each Patrol District.
 - b. Director, School Attendance Branch, D.C. Public Schools.
8. Adhere to the following procedures when conducting a truancy hearing:

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- a. Coordinate each truancy hearing and ensure the attendance of the student, his/her parent/guardian, representatives from the Department of Human Services, D.C. Superior Court-Family Division and the D.C. Public Schools Attendance Branch.
- b. Ensure that a copy of the school attendance record of the habitual truant and any previously documented efforts to eliminate the truancy problem are provided for each truancy hearing by the SAS Center Representative.
- c. Refer any habitual truant to the PINS Center, Early Intervention Program or other juvenile service after consultation and at the conclusion of a truancy hearing, if appropriate.

Part III

A. Commanding Officers, Police Districts

Commanding officers shall:

1. Ensure that all sworn members of their command are made aware of the policy and provisions of the Truancy Awareness and Prevention Program (TAPP) and shall accept responsibility for truancy enforcement in their respective district.
2. Ensure that PD Forms 379-T and all PD Forms 379-C completed during truancy stops, are forwarded to the Youth and Family Services Division on the next business day following their completion.

B. Commanding Officer, Youth and Family Services Division.

Commanding Officer, Youth and Family Services Division shall:

1. Oversee the operation of the city-wide Truancy Awareness and Prevention Program (TAPP).
2. Designate a member to coordinate department-wide truancy prevention efforts and act as a liaison between the Youth and Family Services Division, the D.C. Superior Court Family Division, the D.C. Public School Representatives and the Department of Human Services. The member assigned these duties shall carry the title of Youth and Family Services Division Truancy Coordinator.

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3. Ensure that a MPDC transporting officer logbook is maintained and monitored in each School Attendance Service Center.

THIS GENERAL ORDER COMPLIES WITH THE PROVISIONS OF CALEA STANDARD 44.2.2.


Fred Thomas
Chief of Police

Attachment

FT:SMP:smp

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SCHOOL ATTENDANCE SERVICE CENTERS

The location and service boundaries of the D.C. Public School Attendance Service (SAS) Centers are as follows:

<u>Police District</u>	<u>School Attendance Service Center</u>
First	Penn Center 3rd & R Streets, N.E., 1st Floor
Second	Lincoln Multicultural Middle School 16th & Irving Sts., N.W. 2nd Floor
Third	Lincoln Multicultural Middle School
Fourth	Lincoln Multicultural Middle School
Fifth	Penn Center
Sixth	Weatherless School Burns & C Streets, S.E.
Seventh	Weatherless School

**Attachment
General Order No. 305.2**

Student Identification Card Facsimile

	DC PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
	JANE DOE	
	STUDENT NAME	-----
	STUDENT NUMBER	6666
BIRTH DATE		03/03/73
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		555-55-5555
STUDENT SIGNATURE		1988
		Year of Issue

Attachment "B" to
General Order No. 305.2