

## Absences and Excuses

Pupils are required to attend regularly and punctually the school in which they are enrolled. Recording of absences and tardies shall be made in compliance with the requirements of [702 KAR 007:125](#).<sup>1</sup>

### **TRUANCY DEFINED**

Any pupil who has been absent from school without valid excuse for three (3) days or more, or tardy without valid excuse on three (3) days or more, is a truant. A pupil who has been reported as a truant two (2) or more times is a habitual truant. ([KRS 159.150](#))

For the purpose of this policy, the number of absences shall be based on the cumulative number of days of unexcused absences, rather than the number of absence incidents. The numbers of tardies shall be based on the number of tardy incidents.

For the purposes of establishing a student's status as a truant, a student's attendance record is cumulative for an entire school year. When students transfer from one Kentucky district to another, attendance information from the previous district shall become part of their official attendance record for that school year.

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

An excused absence or tardiness, as listed below, is one for which work may be made up if proper documentation is received within three (3) school days of the student's return to school:

1. Death or severe illness in the pupil's immediate family;
2. Illness of the pupil;
3. Student court appearance (only for the student summoned and for the portion of the day required and with documentation from the court);
4. Religious holidays and practices as pre-arranged with Principal/designee;
5. Student doctor or dentist appointments (only for the portion of the day required and with documentation from the physician, dentist, or other appropriate health professional);
6. Student driver's permit or license tests (only for the portion of the day required and with documentation from the examiner);
7. Student participation in school-related activities including, but not limited to, 4H and participation in or attendance at the Kentucky State Fair, as approved by the Principal/designee;
8. Documented military leave;
9. One (1) day prior to departure of parent/guardian called to active military duty;
10. One (1) day upon the return of parent/guardian from active military duty;
11. Visitation for up to ten (10) days with the student's parent, de facto custodian, or person with legal custody who, while on active military duty stationed outside of the country, is granted rest and recuperation leave, or
12. Other valid reasons as determined by the Principal, including trips qualifying as educational enhancement opportunities.

**Absences and Excuses****EXCUSED ABSENCES (CONTINUED)**

Students shall be granted an excused absence for up to ten (10) school days to pursue an educational enhancement opportunity determined by the Principal to be of significant educational value. This opportunity may include, but not be limited to, participation in an educational foreign exchange program or an intensive instructional, experiential, or performance program in one (1) of the core curriculum subjects of English, science, mathematics, social studies, foreign language, and the arts.

Unless the Principal determines that extenuating circumstances exist, requests for date(s) falling within State or District testing periods shall not be granted.

The Principal's determination may be appealed to the Superintendent/designee whose decision may then be appealed to the Board under its grievance policy and procedures.

Students receiving an excused absence under this section shall have the opportunity to make up school work missed and shall not have their class grades adversely affected for lack of class attendance or class participation due to the excused absence.

**WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION**

Written documentation from the student's parent/guardian or verification by a doctor, dentist or other appropriate health professional shall be required for all absences. Documentation is to be presented to the school in order to determine the status of the absence. The validity of all written excuses or statements shall be determined by the Principal or their designee.

The number of accumulated days of absence that may be excused by parent notes shall be five (5) per year. The number of tardies that may be excused by parent notes shall be five (5) per year.

Students who are enrolled or transfer during the second semester will be allowed three (3) parent notes for absences and tardies. These documents may be accepted for illness of the pupil, death or severe illness in the pupil's immediate family, religious holidays and/or family trips. Advanced written notice to the faculty and administration shall be required for family trips, and days missed will constitute a portion of the cumulative absence provision. Parents/guardians must accept the responsibility for helping the student make-up missed work.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to acquire verification from a doctor, dentist or appropriate health professional to help avoid exhausting the allotment of parent/guardian notes. Unless otherwise approved by the Principal, or designee, verification from a doctor/dentist/other appropriate health professional shall be required for absences in excess of the number of parent documents presented.

**OTHER ABSENCES**

- Treatment for Lice - The initial day a student is sent home for contracting lice (first occurrence) will be considered an excused absence. Any further absence(s) will be unexcused.

**Absences and Excuses****OTHER ABSENCES (CONTINUED)**

- Suspension - Suspensions are unexcused absences. However, students may submit assignments made before the suspension and due during the suspension at the first class meeting following the student's return to school. Assignments made during the suspension and due after the suspension will be accepted on the due date.
- Unexpected Illness - If the school nurse, health aide, Principal or designee determines that a student should not be in school, this will be considered an excused absence for the remainder of that day and will not be counted against the parent and/or guardian absence notes.

**SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

It is understood that Principals or designee will be faced with special circumstances and should use their professional judgment in these cases. The age of the student and normal childhood and adolescent illnesses and conditions (e.g., chicken pox, mononucleosis, pneumonia, etc.) must be taken into consideration. Upon the request of the Principal, the DPP may appoint an attendance committee to review any possible misuse/abuse of the attendance policy.

**HOMEBOUND**

For long-term illnesses of five (5) school days or more, the parent/parent may request a doctor's verification for the student to participate in homebound instruction. Upon presentation of a completed homebound application, a committee will determine approval/denial of the physician's recommendation for homebound services.

**MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS**

At each school, the Principal will designate the person(s) responsible for coordinating contacts with parents and/or guardians and maintaining documentation of absence notification and student conferences. Each school shall strive to make contact with the family of truant students regarding concerns related to attendance.

The DPP will be responsible for any possible court action.

**REFERENCES:**

<sup>1</sup>[702 KAR 007:125](#)  
[KRS 36.396](#), [KRS 38.470](#), [KRS 40.366](#)  
[KRS 158.070](#), [KRS 158.183](#), [KRS 158.293](#), [KRS 158.294](#)  
[KRS 159.035](#), [KRS 159.140](#), [KRS 159.150](#), [KRS 159.180](#)  
[702 KAR 007:100](#),  
[OAG 76-566](#), [OAG 77-514](#), [OAG 79-68](#), [OAG 79-539](#), [OAG 91-79](#), [OAG 96-28](#)

**RELATED POLICIES:**

09.111, 09.122, 09.4281

09.126 (re requirements/exceptions for students from military families)

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