


Atlanta Police Department Policy Manual		Standard Operating Procedure
Effective Date: May 15, 2019		APD.SOP.3191 Truant Children
Applicable To: Sworn employees		Review Due: 2023
Approval Authority: Chief Erika Shields		
Signature: Signed by ES		Date Signed: 5/15/2019

1. PURPOSE

This directive provides for effective interaction between the Atlanta Police Department and the Atlanta Public Schools System in relation to truancy from school. The goal is to reduce student participation in criminal acts and to reduce the possibility that students may become victims of crimes.

2. POLICY

The Atlanta Police Department (APD) shall provide effective interaction between the department and the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) in relation to truancy from school. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 44.2.4)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Each zone's commander shall implement this directive.

3.2 Officers shall move aggressively towards the goals of reducing juvenile crime and protecting students by addressing the challenges of truant children.

3.3 Each Truancy Officer shall work between the hours of 0730 and 1600 hours; Monday through Friday.

3.4 Supervisors shall monitor their assigned truant officers to ensure that truancy is enforced in their area of responsibility.

4. ACTION

4.1 Officers contacting children during school hours shall detain suspected truants only long enough to assess the situation (OCGA § 20-2-698).

4.2 All students encountered out of school during school hours without a legal excuse to be absent shall be picked up and escorted to the Atlanta Public School Truancy Center (225 James P. Brawley Drive, NW, Atlanta, Georgia 30314, 404.802.3648/3649) (OCGA § 20-2-699).

4.2.1 Exceptions to the rule stated in section 4.2 are as follows:

1. Students serving as pages in the Georgia General Assembly (OCGA § 20-2-692);
2. Students having written permission from school officials to be out of school (OCGA § 20-2-693);



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3. A student's absence due to an illness (OCGA § 20-2-693); or
4. A student's absence due to observance of a religious holiday (OCGA § 20-2-693).

4.3 If a child is determined to be truant, officers shall:

1. Frisk the child for weapons and contraband (APD.SOP.3020 Search and Seizure);
2. Determine if the child is either missing, or a runaway on ACIC;
3. Document the incident on Form APD 607 Daily Activity Report;
4. Transport the child to the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) Truancy Center (225 James P. Brawley Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30314, 404-802-3648/3649). An officer has the option of transporting the truant child to his/her assigned school if it is after 0900 hours and if the child attends a school within the officer's assigned zone;
5. Keep the child's property (book-bag, backpack, etc.) in the officer's possession during the transport;
6. Prior to releasing the property back to the child, confirm with school officials that no weapons or contraband were present within that property;
7. Complete a APS Police Service Truancy Intake Form for every student (OCGA § 20-2-700); and
8. Input the truant information into Field Contact module. After completion of the Field Contact module, the officer shall pull in to radio with "C-12T."

4.4 The Truancy Officer shall report all of his/her truancy activities to their immediate supervisor by the end of their tour of duty on Friday of each week.

4.5 According to an understanding established between APS and APD, school officials shall determine the status of each student transported by Atlanta Police to the Atlanta Public Schools Truancy Center. School officials shall contact the student's parents and school so arrangements can be made for the child. School officials will provide the Field Operations Division (FOD) Commander with a monthly report of activity and data collected on those children who have been brought in by police.

4.6 Other proactive responsibilities of truancy officers are to:

1. Make regular visits to all schools in the zones;
2. Meet with principals, teachers, school detectives, social workers, and/or counselors to discuss problems or concerns on a weekly basis;
3. Spend at least one hour a week interacting with juveniles and counselors at the Atlanta Public School Truancy Center (225 James P. Brawley Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30314, 404-802-3648/3649); and
4. Participate in truancy sweeps.



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- 4.7 Each zone's commander shall designate a minimum of one officer to work exclusively on the truancy detail. If the Truancy Officer is absent (vacation, sick, etc.) for more than one day, another officer shall be assigned to work the truancy detail in the Truancy Officer's absence. Each zone shall be assigned at least one passenger van to be utilized for the Truancy Program.
- 4.8 On a weekly basis, each section commander in FOD shall report to the FOD Commander the number of suspected truants taken to school officials.
5. DEFINITIONS
- 5.1 Truant child: Any child subject to the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law (OCGA § 20-2-690 to 20-2-703), found away from home and absent from school without lawful authority or a valid written excuse from school officials. Children between the ages of 6 and 16 are subject to the Compulsory School Attendance Law.
- 5.2 Truancy sweeps: A pre-planned collaborative effort between Atlanta Public Schools, The Atlanta Police Department, and officers within the department that are assigned as Truancy Officers, for the purpose of locating and detaining school age children in violation of the Georgia Compulsory School Attendance Law. (OCGA § 20-2-690 to 20-2-703)
6. CANCELLATIONS
- APD.SOP.3191 "Truant Children", effective December 1, 2015.
7. REFERENCES
- Official Code of Georgia (OCGA) sections 20-2-690 to 20-2-703
Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 6th ed. Standard 44.2.4.
8. SIGNIFICANT CHANGES
- No significant changes in this edition.