

## SHOULD I GET MY CHILD AN ATTORNEY?

Without knowing the particulars of any individual case, it is hard to determine whether an attorney should be consulted. A general rule, however, is that if there is any reason to believe the police are involved, or may become involved, with a school discipline issue, you should get in touch with an attorney as soon as you can. An attorney can help protect your child's rights and will be the most knowledgeable about developing a legal strategy to address the situation.

If you decide to get an attorney for a suspension hearing, this must be done at your own expense. Advocates, such as counselors, psychologists, retired educators, and parent support organizations, are another resource that may be able to speak with you about your child's rights.



## CONTACT US

[outreach@aclu-mo.org](mailto:outreach@aclu-mo.org)

## FILE A COMPLAINT

 [aclu-mo.org/legal-help](https://aclu-mo.org/legal-help)

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## P.A.U.S.E.

Project Against Unjust  
Suspensions and Expulsions

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: STUDENT DISCIPLINE FOR PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS



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## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS FACING SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND I DON'T AGREE WITH IT?

There are several reasons you may not agree with your child's school discipline. You may think your child is innocent, that your child was denied due process, that the punishment is unfair or inappropriate, that the school rule at issue is unconstitutional, or that your child was unfairly singled out for disciplinary action.

You have the right to appeal disciplinary actions you disagree with, and your child's student handbook should outline the procedure for doing so. If you decide to file an appeal, there are a few immediate steps you should take. First, you should gather all relevant information regarding your child's situation, including both your child's side of the story and the school's version.



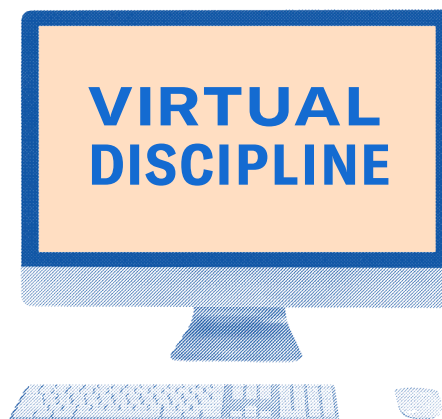
You should also take careful notes of all meetings or conversations with school administrators, keep copies of letters or emails from and to the school, document a timeline of events, and secure a copy of the rule your child is accused of breaking, the evidence against them, and the procedures for filing your appeal.



## IF MY CHILD IS SUSPENDED, WHAT CAN I DO TO KEEP THEM UP TO DATE WITH SCHOOLWORK?

If it is a short-term suspension, then you should be sure to communicate with the school's administration and with your child's teachers about getting make-up assignments and tests so that your child does not fall behind.

If your child is given a long-term suspension, the school is responsible for arranging another way to continue your child's education outside the classroom, which may include an alternative school or community-based program.



On the horizon is the rise of virtual learning as an alternative to out-of-school suspension. Currently, we are monitoring this and will keep you updated as developments occur in this space.

