

MISSING PERSON REPORT GUIDELINES FOR THE GEORGETOWN LAW COMMUNITY 2010

Members of the Georgetown Law community including the family and friends of our students, faculty and staff concerned about the safety/and or whereabouts of a student, child, or employee should immediately contact the Department of Public Safety at 202-662-9325. In the event the situation involves a potentially missing student, the Director of Public Safety will immediately notify the Dean of Students, the SAOC and the Dean of Georgetown Law.

The following information describing the Department of Public Safety's protocol for responding to missing person situations is being shared with the Georgetown Law community in compliance with the Clery Act.

Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines for the reporting and investigation of the missing persons, to include missing adults and children who may have runaway, been abandoned, abducted or are in some other missing status. This order consists of the following parts:

- A. Policy
- B. Definitions
- C. Procedures for Reporting Non-Critical Missing Adults
- D. Procedures for Reporting Non-Critical Missing Juveniles
- E. Procedures for Reporting Critical Missing Persons
- F. Procedures for Reporting Abducted Juveniles
- G. Abandoned Children Cases
- H. Off-Campus Cases
- I. Locating Competent Out of State Missing Persons
- J. Found Children and Adults
- K. Criteria for Entry in NCIC File
- L. Follow-up Responsibilities
- M. Reporting Located Persons

A. Policy

1. It shall be the policy of the Department of Public Safety to pursue as a high priority all reports of missing or runaway persons, whether children or adult (missing or unidentified) with all sincerity, to ensure the safe return of the missing party and enhance comfort to the concerned complainants.
2. Missing children and those who may be mentally or physically disabled, or others who are unable to care for themselves, shall be

cases that call for particular care in handling.

3. All reports of missing persons will be given full consideration and attention by members, to include careful recording and investigation of factual circumstances surrounding the disappearance, in accordance with this directive.

B. Definitions

1. When used in this directive, the following terms shall have the meaning designated:
 - a. Missing Person – any person missing from his/her lawful place of abode, or persons on campus traveling away from their home who, because of an emergency or a complainant's concern, must be contacted or located.
 - b. Adult – any person 18 years of age or older, or an emancipated minor.
 - c. Juvenile – any person under the age of 18 years unless emancipated by a court.
 - d. Critical Missing Person – the following cases are considered critical:
 - (1) Juveniles under 16 years of age;
 - (2) Elderly persons 60 years of age and over or senile persons;
 - (3) Any other person between the ages of 16 and 60 who, in the opinion of the Director, should be classified as critical.
 - (4) In determining whether a missing person case should be classified as critical, the Director will consider the following unusual circumstances:
 - (a) The missing person is mentally incapacitated;
 - (b) The missing person is drug dependent, including prescribed medication and/or illegal substances, and the dependency is potentially life threatening;
 - (c) A patient missing from a hospital or institution that presents an imminent danger to him/herself or others
 - (d) It is believed that the missing person is in a life-threatening situation;
 - (e) It is believed that the missing person is in the company of someone who could endanger the missing person's welfare;
 - (f) Based on available information, it is believed that there is a real or suspected anger of foul play
 - (g) The absence is inconsistent with the missing person's

established pattern of behavior and the deviation cannot be readily explained; and

(h) Other circumstances involved in the disappearance that would cause the Shift Commander to conclude that the person should be considered “at-risk.”

- e. Abduction – a child is reported to be involuntarily missing from the persons having caregiver responsibilities. There is an eyewitness who states that the child was taken by a person or person(s) for whom there is a physical description, a vehicle description (If one is involved, and a direction of travel from the point last seen. Lacking an eyewitness, there exists articulable evidence that the child’s disappearance was not voluntary.
- f. Emergency Alert System (EAS) – a tool developed by the Metropolitan Council of Governments for police agencies to use to support efforts to recover abducted children and capture the abductor.
- g. The DC AMBER (America’s Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) plan – an early notification tracking system used by law enforcement to alert the general public, via television and radio, when a child has been kidnapped and authorities have reason to believe the child is in physical danger.

C. Procedures for Reporting Non-Critical Missing Adults

- 1. Many DPS missing person reports will involve adult students who have voluntarily left campus for personal reasons, and these reports are often quickly resolved or unfounded. However, there are also instances where persons disappear for unexplained reasons and/or under circumstances where they may be considered at-risk. The roles of the reporting persons and the initial responding officer are critical in identifying the circumstances surrounding the missing person’s disappearance and in identifying those people who may be at-risk.
- 2. Members handling a non-critical missing person case shall interview the reporting person(s) to obtain at a minimum:
 - a. Name, age, date of birth, and the social security number of the missing person;
 - b. The health, habits, history and a description of the missing person, including physical features such as tattoos or scars;
 - c. Names and addresses of friends and relatives where the missing

- person may be located;
- d. The maiden name of the missing person's mother; and
 - e. When possible, a photograph of the missing person, which shall become a part of the missing person folder and be returned to the family upon locating the missing person.
3. Any police officer responding to an adult missing person or runaway call will, upon determining the person is missing, follow the procedures listed below.
- a. Officers shall make a search of the campus and surrounding areas.
 - b. If the individual is a resident student, notify the Office of Residential Life and request assistance from their staff in locating the person(s).
 - c. Contact the campus hospital to see if the person has been admitted or is being treated.
 - d. Request the assistance of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in checking the missing person's name, through their Teletype Unit, against persons listed as deceased or admitted to other D.C. hospitals.
 - e. Prepare and transmit a general broadcast by radio;
 - f. Notify their immediate supervisor, providing periodic updates.
 - g. Complete an Incident Report prior to the end of the reporting officer's assigned shift. Document all notifications (include the date, time, and full name of persons contacted) and canvass activities.
 - (1) There is no minimum time requirement that a person must be missing before a missing person report can be prepared.
 - (2) If the person is found prior to the completion of the report, the report shall not be cancelled. It shall be submitted with the classification of Missing Person Returned; closing the report and indicating where the missing person was located, where he or she stayed while missing, and his/her condition upon return.
 - h. Notify immediate supervisor and dispatcher whenever:
 - (1) Suspicious circumstances are involved;

(2) The person's physical or mental health is in jeopardy.

i. The Shift Supervisor, prior to being relieved from duty when a person/persons is reported missing and is still unaccounted for, will

(1) Ensure that a follow-up investigation will continue upon his or her departure.

(2) Ensure that all local hospitals, detention centers, and MPD Youth Division have been contacted;

(3) Ensure that the Director has been briefed regarding the incident;

(4) After consultation with the director, determine whether the missing person case is classified as critical or noncritical, and, if deemed critical, whether to establish a command post.

D. Procedures for Reporting Noncritical Missing Juveniles

1. Officer shall follow the procedures listed in Part C above.

2. Telephone MPD and request that a member of the Missing Persons Section respond to the scene.

3. The Shift Supervisor, prior to being relieved from duty when any juvenile is reported missing and is still unaccounted for, will:

a. Ensure that a follow-up investigation will continue upon his or her departure;

b. Ensure that the Director has been briefed regarding the incident;

c. After consultation with the Director, determine whether the missing person case is classified as critical or noncritical, and, if deemed critical, whether to establish a command post.

4. In addition, if the incident involves a possible abduction of a juvenile, immediately notify the immediate supervisor to respond to the scene and be guided by Part F of this order.

E. Procedures for Reporting Critical Missing Persons

1. Officers shall follow the procedures listed in Part C above.

2. In addition members shall request an official to respond if one is not already on the scene.

3. The responding official, after consultation with the Director, shall determine whether or not a command post shall be established. If a command post is established and a child is involved, the member shall:

- a. Contact the MPD Youth and Preventive Services Division (YPSD) and request a Missing Person Detective/Officer respond to assist with locating the missing person.
 - b. Prepare a general broadcast for immediate transmittal by radio.
4. If the missing person is under 12 years of age, conduct a full check of the premises, even if the reporting person says they have already checked the premises (check under beds, in closets, under piles of clothing, etc.)
 5. Once a decision has been made to classify a case as critical, the search shall not be called off or the classification changed without the prior approval of the Director unless the missing person has been located. The name of the member who stopped the search or changed the classification shall be listed on the Incident Report.
 6. The responding official shall ensure that the required follow-up on a missing person case is conducted.
 7. Upon closing the case, ensure that MPD's Teletype Unit has removed the information concerning the missing person case.
- F. Procedures for Reporting Abducted Juveniles
1. Members of DPS shall make child abduction the highest priority for response time and investigation purposes, and to provide for the quick and safe return of abducted children.
 2. Amber Alert – Definition – a message that conveys information about a recently abducted person, usually displayed on electronic signs positioned along roadways and broadcast by mass media, intended to enlist the public's help in finding the abducted person and catching the abductor.
 - a. An AMBER Alert is a notification to the general public by various media outlets that a confirmed abduction of a child has happened.
 - b. AMBER Alerts are distributed via commercial radio, satellite radio, broadcast television, electronic traffic-condition signs, and wireless device SMS text messages. The decision to declare an AMBER alert is made by MPD and consists of the name and description of the abudctee, a description of the suspected abductor, and a description and license plate number of the abductor's vehicle, if available.

c. Activation Criteria

(1) MPD is the law enforcement agency in Washington, D.C. that has been authorized to active the D.C. Amber Plan and enters alerts into the appropriate website (www.DCAmberplan.com). MPD will collaborate with local broadcast stations in serious child abduction investigations for the swift and safe return of the missing child. MPD's established criteria for activation of the system:

- (a) MPD must confirm that an abduction has taken place and someone has witnessed it;
- (b) The child is at risk of serious bodily harm or death;
- (c) There is sufficient descriptive information of child, captor or captor's vehicle to issue an Alert and it is likely hat someone provide with a description for the child and/or suspect or vehicle involved, may observe and report their whereabouts to the police;
- (d) The child is 14 years of age or younger, or between the ages of 15 and 17 years of age with consideration as to how his/her behavior/mental capacity may have contributed to his/her disappearance; and
- (e) The suspect and/or child are still likely to be in the Washington Metropolitan broadcast area.

(2) MPD will not activate the Alert System in cases or parental kidnapping where there is no obvious danger to the child, or in the case of runaways or in situations where the child's behavior caused or in some way contributed to his/her disappearance.

3. When a DPS member believes that a child has been abducted they shall request that the immediate supervisor respond to the scene. Officers shall follow the procedures listed in Part C above. Upon verification of abduction, the supervisor shall immediately notify the Director.

4. When MPD responds to assist with a call that a child has been abducted, that responding member will determine whether all the criteria have been met to activate the Emergency Alert System. MPD will then notify their Watch Commander, who notifies Mad's Synchronized Operations Command Center. Once approved, MPD will notify local radio stations to include WMAL Radio and WTOP Radio. These stations will then immediately broadcast the alert over all of the region's radio and television stations every fifteen minutes for two hours.

G. Abandoned Children Cases

1. Members receiving a report of an abandoned child shall first determine if the child is in immediate physical danger.
2. MPD shall be contacted to respond for all children in immediate physical danger and all newborn or young infants, shall be taken to the nearest hospital for examination and treatment.
3. A member of MPD shall be notified to respond to assist with the case investigation.
4. If it is determined that the child is not in immediate physical danger, MPD will transport them to the Child and Family Services Agency.
5. The DPS reporting member will complete an Incident Report outlining the circumstances surrounding the discovery of the child prior to reporting off duty.

H. Off-Campus Cases

Members receiving requests from complainants who desire to file a missing person report for a person missing outside the jurisdiction (off-campus, shall direct them to make a report with MPD.

I. Locating Competent Out of State Missing Persons

1. A competent adult, having left home for personal reasons, cannot be forced to return home.
2. Members locating such persons shall:
 - a. Advise the person that he or she is the subject of a missing person report;
 - b. Ask him/her if he or she desires that the reporting person be made aware of his/her whereabouts;
 - c. If the subject indicates that he or she does not want his/her whereabouts known by the reporting person and upon being satisfied as to his/her safety and well being, notify the reporting person that he or she has been located and are well, but do not wish to disclose his/her whereabouts.
 - d. If the reporting person insists on an explanation as to the whereabouts, inform the reporting person that disclosure would constitute an invasion of privacy;

- e. Notify MPD to cancel the Teletype
- f. Close the case by preparing a Supplemental Report, detailing the recovery.

J. Found Children and Adults

- 1. Members who locate a lost child shall immediately notify an MPD member and request assistance.
- 2. Members who locate a lost adult whose age or infirmity may make identification difficult shall immediately notify an MPD member and request assistance.
- 3. An Incident Report shall be taken for each of the above cases.

K. Criteria for Entry in NCIC File

While MPD handles all entries into NCIC, it is helpful for DPS members who will be first responders to understand the criteria so that sufficient information is obtained from the complainant. The criteria are as follows:

- 1. A person of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting himself/herself or others an immediate danger (Disability Category)
- 2. A person of any age who is missing and in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his/her physical safety is in danger (Endangered Category)
- 3. A person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary (Involuntary Category)
- 4. A person who is missing and declared unemancipated as defined by the laws of his/her state of residence and does not meet any criteria set forth in 2, 3 or 5 (Juvenile Category)
- 5. A person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe.
- 6. Required Documentation for Missing Emancipated Person Entry (Adult)
 - a. A record for a missing person who is declared emancipated as defined by the laws of his/her state of residence may be entered in the Missing Person file provided the entering agency has documentation in its possession supporting the stated conditions

under which the person is declared missing.

- b. This written documentation will aid in the protection of the individuals right to privacy. The documentation must be from a source other than the investigating police agency, such as parent, legal guardian, next of kin, physician, or other authoritative source including friend or neighbor in unusual circumstances.
7. A record for a missing person who is declared unemancipated as defined by the laws of his/her state of residence should be immediately entered into NCIC using one of the appropriate categories.
 8. No documentation is needed on a missing catastrophe victim's entry.
 9. Minimum Requirements to Enter a Missing Person Over Age 18
 - a. Name
 - b. Sex
 - c. Race
 - d. Date of Birth
 - e. Height
 - f. Weight
 - g. Eye Color
 - h. Hair Color
 - i. Date of Last Contact
 - j. Case Number
 10. Minimum Requirements to Enter a Missing Person Under Age 18
 - a. Name (aliases and nicknames may be added to the record)
 - b. Sex
 - c. Race
 - d. Date of Birth
 - e. Date of Emancipation
 - f. Height
 - g. Weight
 - h. Eye Color
 - i. Hair Color
 - j. Date of Last Contact
 - k. Case Number
 - l. Fingerprints Available
 - m. Photo Available
 - n. Dental Records available
 - o. Medication required
 11. Additional Information that should be listed if available:

- a. Resident state, FBI number, skin tone, visible scars or marks, fingerprint classification, miscellaneous numbers, social security number, operators license number, full information on vehicle that missing person may be operating, blood type, circumcision, footprint availability, body x-rays availability, corrective vision prescription, jewelry type, jewelry description, dental records.
- b. If the missing person is a juvenile: name, sex, race of subjects that may be with or were last seen with juvenile.

L. Follow-up Responsibilities

1. During the first week that Noncritical missing persons have been reported the case should be followed up every 24 hours. A Supplemental Report shall be submitted whenever additional information is received or when a missing person is located and the missing person case is closed.
2. As a matter of course, MPD will normally handle the investigation and follow-up of all Critical missing person cases. DPS members shall contact MPD every 24 hours to check on the status of these cases. A Supplemental Report shall be submitted whenever additional information is received or when a missing person is located and the missing person case is closed.

M. Reporting Located Persons

1. When the missing person is located, the officer will complete a supplemental report.
2. The officer will notify MPD to remove the person from NCIC files and cancel the Teletype.

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