

41.2.5 Adult Missing Persons

It is the policy of this agency that all reports of missing persons be given full consideration and attention by members of this agency to include careful recording and investigation of factual circumstances surrounding the disappearance in accordance with this policy

A. Reporting of Adult Missing Persons

1. There is no waiting period for reporting a missing person. Missing person reports shall be taken in-person in conformance with the criteria of this policy
2. As it relates to missing adults, "Missing Person" is defined as an individual who is eighteen years of age or older, whose temporary or permanent residence is in Ohio and who meets one of the following characteristics:
 - a. The individual has a physical or mental disability.
 - b. The individual is missing under circumstances indicating that the individual's safety may be in danger.
 - c. The individual is missing under circumstances indicating that the individual's disappearance was not voluntary.
(ORC 2901.41)
3. A person may also be declared "missing" when his/her whereabouts are unknown and unexplainable for a period of time that is regarded by knowledgeable parties as highly unusual or suspicious in consideration of the subject's behavior patterns, plans or routines.
4. Officers will complete an incident report for all missing adults. The incident report will include the following information:
 - a. A complete physical description of the missing adult;
 - b. The location(s) the missing adult was last seen or locations frequented;
 - c. Know personal habits such as drug/alcohol use;
 - d. Know medical, mental, or physical conditions and any prescribed medications;
 - e. Description of any vehicles involved, if any;
 - f. Associates or individuals who may be in the company of the missing adult;
 - g. A narrative detailing the circumstances behind the disappearance of the missing adult;
 - h. Any and all information that may assist in locating the missing adult.
5. Officers may use the OPOTA Uniform Missing Person Report Form to assist in gathering the necessary information. The form is on the network in the General Orders folder and can also be accessed by clicking the following link: <Y:\General Orders\Forms by Name\OPOTA Uniform Missing Person Form.pdf>

B. Disseminating Missing Adult Information

1. After gathering the appropriate information, the reporting officer will ensure a description of the missing adult and any pertinent information is relayed to other on-duty officers as soon as possible.
2. If information is obtained that the missing adult is within the City of Strongsville, officers will check those locations as soon as possible.
3. If information is obtained that the missing adult is at a location in another jurisdiction, that jurisdiction will be contacted to check for the missing adult.

C. Entering Missing Adults/Alerts

1. Missing adults will be entered into NCIC as follows:
 - a. Missing adults at least 18 years of age but less than 21 years of age will be entered into NCIC immediately (ORC 2901.42).
 - b. Missing adults who are 21 years of age or older will be entered into NCIC as soon as possible and in compliance with section 2901.42 ORC.
2. Missing/Endangered Adult Alert/Senior Alert
There is an alert system developed to quickly notify the public and media outlets about endangered missing adults, age 65 or older, or those with mental impairments. In order to activate this alert, all of the following criteria must be met:
 - a. The agency confirms that the individual is missing;
 - b. The individual is 65 years of age or older or has a mental impairment;
 - c. The disappearance of the individual poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the individual;
 - d. There is sufficient descriptive information about the individual and the circumstances surrounding the individual's disappearance to indicate activation of the alert will help locate the individual.
 - e. Should all of the above criteria be met, dispatch will enter the appropriate information to send the alert.
3. Attempt to Locate Teletypes
Should an officer take a missing adult report that does not meet all of the criteria above, however, there is information that the missing adult may be at-risk due to conditions such as suspected foul play, suspected of being suicidal, or any other information that raises a concern for the missing adult's safety, the shift supervisor may authorize an "attempt to locate" bulletin be sent via teletype to surrounding agencies.
4. Removal from NCIC
 - a. Officers will inform complainants to contact the police department should they locate the missing adult or the person returns home.
 - b. Upon receiving information that the missing adult has been found, dispatch shall remove the adult from the NCIC database.

D. Follow-Up Investigation

1. Initial follow up activities such as following initial leads or making initial contacts should be handled by the reporting officer.
2. Additional follow up, especially for individuals who remain missing, will be handled by the detective bureau.

41.2.6 Missing Children

It is the policy of this agency to promptly respond to and thoroughly investigate all reports of missing, runaway, abandoned, abducted or other "missing status" children.

A. Reporting of Missing Children

1. Dispatchers receiving reports of a missing child shall obtain as much information from the caller to make a preliminary assessment about the level of risk to the missing

- child. This will assist the dispatcher in determining the proper initial resources to dispatch to the call.
2. Officers shall respond without undue delay to a report of a missing child.
 3. If appropriate, based on the information received by dispatch, additional officers can be used to conduct a search of the area for the child.
 4. Officers taking a missing juvenile report will obtain the following information:
 - a. The last known location of the child;
 - b. The age of the child;
 - c. A complete physical description of the child including clothing, if known;
 - d. Any physical or mental conditions of the child;
 - e. The circumstances of the disappearance;
 - f. The child's custody status;
 - g. A recent photograph of the child.
 5. Missing juveniles should be classified in the following manner:
 - a. Runaway
 - b. Abducted
 - c. Abandonment
 - d. Unknown
 6. In cases of runaways, officers should obtain addresses/phone numbers for friends and relatives as possible locations of the child.
 7. In cases of abduction, officers shall obtain a description of the suspected abductor(s), any vehicle information, if known, and any other pertinent information.
 8. After gathering the appropriate information, the reporting officer will ensure a description of the missing child and any pertinent information is relayed to other on-duty officers as soon as possible.
 9. If information is obtained that the missing child is within the City of Strongsville, officers will check those locations as soon as possible.
 10. If information is obtained that the missing child is at a location in another jurisdiction, that jurisdiction will be contacted to check for the missing child.
 11. Officers will conduct a thorough search of the last know location of the child and may have to secure and protect the area as a potential crime scene.
 12. In certain cases of a child missing in a known area/neighborhood, saturation patrol of the area is recommended.
 13. Officers will ensure that the shift supervisor is notified of any reported missing child.
 14. The shift supervisor will ensure that the proper resources are put into service based upon the information known at the time.
 15. All missing juveniles will be entered into LEADS and NCIC by dispatch.

B. AMBER Alerts

1. AMBER alerts are for abducted children and only when the following criteria are met:
 - a. The child is confirmed to be under 18 years old
 - b. The abduction poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the child

- c. There is sufficient descriptive information about the child, the suspect, and/or the circumstances surrounding the abduction to believe that activation of the alert will help locate the child.
 - d. It is determined that the child is not a runaway and has not been abducted as a result of a family abduction, unless the investigation determines that the child is in immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death.
2. If the AMBER alert criteria are met, the shift supervisor should ensure that dispatch immediately enters the appropriate information for transmission to CECOMS who will activate the alert.
 3. The shift supervisor will notify the Field Operations Deputy Chief anytime an AMBER alert is activated.

C. Other Methods of Dissemination

If the criteria for an AMBER alert are not met, but the officer or shift supervisor still wishes to disseminate information about the missing child, the following are additional methods for sending out the information:

1. Sending a LEADS teletype with the pertinent information;
2. Send a National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) broadcast message to adjacent states;
3. Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children 24 hour hotline to the report the case at 1-800-843-5678;
4. Contact "A Child is Missing" at 1-888-875-2246 with the child's last known location. ACIM can place thousands of calls to residences in a specified area to assist with locating the child.
5. Work with the local media to get the information out pursuant to General Order 54.

D. Return of a Missing Child

1. Officers will inform complainants to contact the police department should they locate the missing child or the child returns home.
2. Upon receiving information that the missing child has been found, dispatch shall remove the child from the NCIC database.
3. If any alerts were sent or other contact made concerning the missing child, the appropriate contacts will be made with information about the child being located.

E. Follow-Up Investigation

1. Initial follow up activities such as following initial leads or making initial contacts should be handled by the reporting officer.
2. Additional follow up, especially for children who remain missing, will be handled by the detective bureau.