

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN
DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES
WEST HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06516

ORDER NO.: G.O. 7.5

DATE: MAY 19, 2016

POLICY TITLE: MISSING PERSONS

RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: UNHPD

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Chief of Police

DISTRIBUTION: ALL

AMENDED:

10/21/2021

SUPERSEDES:

05/19/16

ACCREDITATION REFERENCES:

CTPOST: 1.7.10, 1.7.11

IACLEA: 9.2.4, 9.2.5

GENERAL ORDER 7.5

PURPOSE/SCOPE

The purpose of this order is to establish uniform and consistent procedures to ensure the expeditious processing and proper investigation of persons reported missing and to specify the responsibilities regarding a report of a missing student.

POLICY STATEMENT

It shall be the policy of the UNHPD to investigate to the fullest all reports of missing persons. We shall immediately assist any person who is attempting to make a report of a missing person or runaway, regardless of jurisdiction, in conformance with POST guidelines. (1.7.11a)

The UNHPD may request the WHPD for investigative assistance and may request activation of the Everbridge emergency notification system if we receive a report of a missing child that has gone missing for the first time, is under the age of 18, a missing college student, or a missing elderly person with some debilitating disease such as Alzheimer's disease.

The UNHPD may request the WHPD activate an AMBER alert when a child under 18, or with other special circumstances is abducted and is in danger of serious bodily harm or death. An accurate description of either the child, the suspect or the vehicle is necessary. (1.7.11c)

Within 24 hours of the determination that a student who lives in on-campus housing is missing, the following parties will be notified:

- the parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student under the age of 18 and not emancipated;
- The student's emergency and/or confidential contact
- The WHPD

DEFINITIONS

Missing Person- any person who is reported missing to a law enforcement unit until the person is located or determined to be a voluntarily missing adult. It also includes any child who is missing voluntarily or involuntarily, or under circumstances not conforming to his/her habits or behavior who may be in need of assistance per CGS Section 46b-120.

Adult Missing Person- means an individual who has attained the age of 18 years.

Missing Child- any person who is under the age of 18 years, whose temporary or permanent residence is in Connecticut or is believed to be in Connecticut, whose location has not been determined, and who has been reported as missing to a law enforcement agency CGS 29-1e(b)(1).

Missing Child Report- a report prepared on a form designated by the Department of Public Safety for the use by private citizens and law enforcement agencies to report missing children information to the Missing Children Information Clearinghouse. (CGS Sec 29-1e).

The DPS 81 C, *AMBER ALERT/MISSING CHILD/SILVER ALERT REQUEST* form must be immediately transmitted to the State Police Message Center to request alert activation. This form is for use by private citizens and law enforcement agencies to report missing children information to the Missing Person Clearinghouse (CGS Sec 29-1e). Any municipal police department which receives a report of a missing child under 18 years of age shall immediately accept such report for filing and inform all on-duty police officers of the existence of the missing child report and communicate the report to other appropriate law enforcement agencies. (Sec. 7-282c CGS).

Reporting Myth- means it is an incorrect assumption that 24 hours, or any other time frame, must pass before a law enforcement unit will accept a missing person report. There is NO waiting period for acceptance of a report of a missing person.

Evidence that a Missing Person is "At Risk"- "At Risk" means regardless of age, a missing person is at risk when missing under circumstances in which the individual is in danger of serious physical injury or death. This policy presumes that every missing person or missing adult person will be considered at **high risk** until a reasonable and articulable basis to conclude otherwise exists.

Missing/NOT At-Risk Adult- an adult will NOT be considered At-Risk if any of the following criteria are met:

1. Absent Spouse: An absent spouse has committed no crime and is legally free to come and go. Caution should be exercised both in preserving the privacy rights of the spouse in their wish to keep their whereabouts unknown and in making sure that the “absent spouse” is not, in fact, the victim of foul play related to domestic abuse.
2. An adult who has left a note and/or told a credible person that they are leaving. An exception would be a suicide note.
3. An adult who simply has not been in touch with the reporting party for an extended period of time, unless extenuating circumstances exist.
4. Fugitives from justice including AWOL service personnel.
5. Adult who is being sought for business or social purposes such as debt collections or school reunions.

Family with Service Needs- means a family that includes a child who is at least seven years of age and is under eighteen years of age who:

1. Has without just cause run away from the parental home or other properly authorized and lawful place of abode
2. Is beyond the control of the child’s or youth’s parent, parents, guardian, or other custodian
3. Has engaged in indecent or immoral conduct
4. Is a truant or habitual truant or who, while in school, has been continuously and overtly defiant of school rules and regulation, or
5. Is thirteen years of age or older and has engaged in sexual intercourse with another person and such other person is thirteen years of age or older and not more than two years older or younger than such child or youth (Effective 10/1/12).

Everbridge Emergency Notification System- this service allows authorized users to create and rapidly disseminate time sensitive messages to every telephone number stored in the notification database. With the Everbridge service, authorized users can send thousands of messages in minutes. The Chief, Assistant Chief or Associate Vice President of Public Safety must be notified for approval to access this system.

AMBER Alert- defined as “America’s Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response” Alert, it is a nationally recognized program used by law enforcement to help find children under the most **serious life-threatening** conditions. This is a rapid notification to the public, which utilizes all available technology during the critical period after a child/missing person has been abducted. The State Police Message Center is the clearinghouse for all AMBER Alert information and there is a set procedure for activating, broadcasting and deactivating the system. Amber Alert creates an emergency notification system for law enforcement agencies to broadcast local, regional, or statewide public alerts via radio, television and electronic highway signs. The specific criteria of AMBER are:

- The child must be under 18 years of age, unless there are special circumstances such as a proven mental or physical disability.

- Law enforcement must believe the circumstances surrounding the abduction indicate that the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.
- There must be enough descriptive information to believe a broadcast will help.
- The information must be received in a timely manner.

SILVER Alert- is an alert system for persons who are under the age of 18 but do not meet the criteria of AMBER, adult persons with a mental impairment or medical condition, and any person over the age of 65. The request for activation of a silver alert is the same procedure as AMBER, utilizing DPS 81-C. Once the criteria has been determined to meet the standard, the information is disseminated to media outlets in the state of Connecticut in an effort to public for assistance in locating the missing person. The plan alerts the public as quickly as possible to the disappearance so everyone may assist in the search for the safe return of the individual.

Runaway- any child who is voluntarily missing.

Stranger Abduction- a missing person taken/kidnapped by a stranger (includes cases of a known abductor who is not a family member).

Lost- a missing person who has strayed away and whose whereabouts are unknown.

Alzheimer’s Disease- a progressive, degenerative disease of the brain in which brain cells die and are not replaced. It results in impaired memory, thinking, and behavior.

Suspicious Circumstances- circumstances which give rise to the belief that “foul play” may have been involved; the disappearance is out of character for the individual and no known reason can be determined.

Parent/Family Abduction- a child who has been taken, detained, concealed, enticed away, or retained by a parent or non-parent family member.

Dependent Adult- adult who has physical or mental limitations which restrict his/her ability to carry out normal activities (e.g., Alzheimer’s disease, mentally handicapped).

Voluntary Missing Adult- missing adult who has left on his/her own free will.

Unknown Missing- child or adult who is reported missing, but there are insufficient fact to determine the circumstances.

Catastrophic Missing- missing person is possibly a victim of a disaster (i.e., boating accident, plane crash, earthquake, flood, fire, terrorist act, etc.).

TRAK- Technology to Recover Abducted Kids is operated by the Connecticut Missing Person Clearing house, which is organized to assist with missing person investigations and to do research and planning. The clearing house can create, retrieve and distribute missing person color posters electronically through the TRAK system (CGS 29-1e). Another major resource is

the National Missing Children Hotline and the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) also offers the Lost Child Alert Technology Resource (LOCATER) which is also available to law enforcement at no cost.

MISSING PERSON PROCEDURE

1. Upon receipt of a missing person complaint, the Dispatcher will take all necessary information and immediately dispatch the initial responding officer(s) to the complaint and ensure that a broadcast to all units is made immediately upon receipt of the information concerning the person reported missing. If the person being reported missing is a child that has gone missing for the first time and who is under the age of 18, a missing college student, or a missing elderly person with some debilitating disease such as Alzheimer's disease, then the investigating officer can request on-campus and off-campus notifications as may be appropriate.

A file photo of the missing student may be used to assist as needed in the investigation. Information Services will be asked to assist in checking email accounts and card key access records.

Information will be distributed to all on-duty personnel and a campus-wide search for the student will be conducted. The Dean of Students will be notified.

If the person reported missing is a resident student the Dean of Students will notify the Office of Residential Life. Resident Assistants and Resident Directors will assist as instructed.

Once the reported missing student has been located appropriate notifications will be made by the UNHPD.

2. The Dispatcher shall enter the missing person complaint into the dispatch computer as soon as possible.
 - a. The investigating officer assigned to the missing person shall obtain a complete description, and if possible the following other relevant information:
 - A recent photograph
 - Determine the extent of the search already performed
 - Determine the time/place the missing person was last seen
 - Obtain important relevant medical information (diabetes, epilepsy)
 - Electronic Contact Information (i.e. cell phone, e-mail address, social media pages, etc.)
 - Determine other relevant information concerning the missing person including vehicle description, places he/she might have gone, habits, etc.
 - Ascertain possible suicide risk, emotional upheaval, dependence on drugs or alcohol.
 - b. When an Officer has completed the missing person report he/she shall immediately bring the report to UNHPD and WHPD.
 - c. Whenever a photo is obtained, the photo shall be distributed to appropriate sources to assist with location of the missing person.

3. It will be the responsibility of the Supervisor to make an immediate assessment of the complaint to determine the most effective and appropriate response. Factors that determine such response include the age of the missing person, physical and mental condition, circumstances surrounding the matter (i.e. family dispute, illness, etc.) and other information. (1.7.10c)
 - a. If the Supervisor determines that the missing person has possibly been abducted, he/she shall use the following criteria to determine if the AMBER Alert Plan should be utilized:
 - The abducted child must be under 18 years of age, unless there are special circumstances such as a mental or physical disability.
 - The child must be in danger of serious bodily harm or death.
 - There must be enough descriptive information to believe a broadcast will help.

Should the Supervisor believe that the AMBER Alert Plan should be activated, then he/she shall notify the Chief of Police or his/her designee and request investigative assistance from the WHPD. (1.7.10c, 1.7.11b, d)

- b. The supervisor and/or the investigating Officer shall use the following criteria to determine if an Everbridge emergency notification should be requested:
 - Missing child, that has gone missing for the first time and who is under the age of 18
 - Missing college student
 - Missing elderly person with some debilitating disease such as Alzheimer's disease

The supervisor and/or the investigating Officer may request that the Everbridge emergency notification system be activated through the UNHPD Chief and/or Assistant Chief. The investigating Officer should have the following information ready prior to making the alert request:

- Name of person missing
- Date of Birth
- Gender
- Nationality
- Height and Weight
- Hair and Eye color
- Clothing description
- Any scars or other physical characteristics
- Any medical/psychological conditions to be aware of
- Home address including zip code
- Location last seen with zip code if different than residence
- Police department phone number for the public to call to report information
- Case # assigned to the incident
- If there is any water or wooded area in the vicinity
- Have friends and family been contacted?
- Has the person gone missing before?

- Is there foul play, kidnapping or parental abduction suspected?
- If the missing is a child, is the agency aware of any sexual predators within 1 mile of the last seen address?

Once all of the above information is obtained and a search of the residence and the surrounding area has been completed, the primary officer will give out a broadcast over the radio with all of the pertinent information so that the support officers can continue searching the area.

After Everbridge emergency notification has been approved, the primary officer will complete the missing Person incident report, noting that the system has been activated, and submit it to WHPD dispatch to be entered into COLLECT / NCIC. (1.7.10a)

As calls are received from the public with information about the missing person, the call-taker (sworn or civilian) will determine if the information is credible and if so they will relay the information to the patrol units using the radio. (1.7.11e)

If information is received through dispatch that the search area needs to be broadened, they will notify other agencies as needed.

It will be the responsibility of the UNHPD to coordinate cancellation of a COLLECT/NCIC and a follow-up and validation of missing person's reports with WHPD. (1.7.10b, d, 1.7.11f)

Adam L. Brown
Chief of Police