

Missing Persons

321.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance for handling missing person investigations.

321.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Endangered - A person the Department has confirmed is missing and there is sufficient evidence to indicate that the person is at risk of physical injury or death. Examples include (Minn. Stat. § 299C.52):

- (a) The person is missing because of a confirmed abduction or under circumstances that indicate the person's disappearance was not voluntary.
- (b) The person is missing under known dangerous circumstances.
- (c) The person is missing more than 30 days.
- (d) The person is under the age of 21 and at least one other factor is applicable.
- (e) There is evidence that the person is in need of medical attention or prescription medication such that it will have a serious adverse effect on the person's health if the person does not receive the needed care or medication.
- (f) The person does not have a pattern of running away or disappearing.
- (g) The person is mentally impaired.
- (h) There is evidence that a non-custodial parent may have abducted the person.
- (i) The person has been the subject of past threats or acts of violence.
- (j) There is evidence that the person is lost in the wilderness, backcountry or outdoors where survival is precarious and immediate and effective investigation and search-and-rescue efforts are critical.
- (k) Any other factor the Department deems to indicate the person may be at risk of physical injury or death, including a determination by another law enforcement agency that the person is missing and endangered.
- (l) There is sufficient evidence that a child is with a person who presents a threat of immediate physical injury to the child or physical or sexual abuse of the child.
- (m) Qualify for a state AMBER Alert™ pursuant to Minn. Stat. § 299A.61, Subd. 1.

Child - "Any person under the age of 18 years or any person certified or known to be mentally incompetent."

CJIS - The Criminal Justice Information System.

DNA - Deoxyribonucleic acid from a human biological specimen

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Missing person - Any person who is reported missing to law enforcement when that person's location is unknown. This includes any person under the age of 18 or who is certified or known to be mentally incompetent (Minn. Stat. § 299C.52).

Missing person networks - Databases or computer networks that are available to law enforcement and are suitable for obtaining information related to missing person investigations. This includes the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Minnesota Justice Information Services (MNJIS), the Minnesota Missing and Unidentified Persons Clearinghouse and the Minnesota Crime Alert Network.

Qualified Reporting Person – In order to obtain the proper required information, officers should attempt to speak with a family member or close personal friend

321.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Shakopee Police Department to establish guidelines and responsibilities for the consistent response to, and investigation of, all reports of missing and endangered persons as defined in Minnesota Statute, Chapter 299C.52, Subd 1 (c) and (d) ("Minnesota Missing Children and Endangered Persons' Program" referred to as Brandon's Law").

The Shakopee Police Department recognizes there is a critical need for immediate and consistent response to reports of missing and endangered persons. The decisions made and actions taken during the preliminary stages may have a profound effect on the outcome of the case. Therefore, this agency has established the following responsibilities and guidelines for the investigation of missing and endangered persons.

321.3 REQUIRED FORMS AND BIOLOGICAL SAMPLE COLLECTION KITS

The Investigation Unit supervisor shall ensure the following forms and kits are developed and available:

- Missing person report form
- Missing person investigation checklist that provides investigation guidelines and resources that could be helpful in the early hours of a missing person investigation
- Missing person school notification form
- Medical records release form
- Biological sample collection kits

321.4 INITIAL RESPONSE

Any member encountering a person who wishes to report a missing person or runaway shall render assistance without delay. This can be accomplished by accepting the report via telephone or in person and initiating the investigation. Those members who do not take such reports or who are unable to give immediate assistance shall promptly dispatch or alert a member who can take the report.

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A report shall be accepted in all cases and regardless of where the person was last seen, where the person resides or any question of jurisdiction (Minn. Stat. § 299C.53, Subd.1(a)).

321.4.1 ACCEPTANCE OF MISSING PERSON REPORTS

Law Enforcement shall not refuse to accept a missing person report on the basis that:

- (a) The missing person is an adult.
- (b) The circumstances do not indicate foul play.
- (c) The person has been missing for a short period of time.
- (d) The person has been missing for a long amount of time.
- (e) There is no indication that the missing person was in the jurisdiction served by the law enforcement agency at the time of the disappearance.
- (f) The circumstances suggest that the disappearance may be voluntary.
- (g) The reporting person does not have personal knowledge of the facts.
- (h) The reporting person cannot provide all of the information requested by the law enforcement agency.
- (i) The reporting person lacks a familial or other relationship with the missing person.
- (j) For any other reason, except in cases where the law enforcement agency has direct knowledge that the person is, in fact, not missing, and the whereabouts and welfare of the person are known at the time the report is filed.

321.4.2 MISSING CHILD WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

See attachment: [Checklist for Responding To Missing Children With Special Needs.pdf](#)

- (a) A special-needs condition may be characterized by debilitation physical impairments, social impairments, cognitive impairments, or communication challenges. The behaviors and actions of a missing child with special needs are often much different than those of a missing non-affected child. While the behaviors will differ from child-to-child, missing children with certain special needs may:
 - 1. Wander away, run away, or bolt from a safe environment.
 - 2. Exhibit a diminished sense of fear causing them to engage in high-risk behavior.
 - 3. Elude or hide from search teams.
 - 4. See small or tightly enclosed spaces concealing themselves from search teams.
 - 5. Be unable to respond to rescuers.
- (b) All cases of missing children with special needs shall be treated as critical incidents requiring elevated responses by the first responding officer. Children with autism have an unusually high mortality rate and are especially at risk. Certain exceptions may apply for those special-needs children who are considered high functioning and, therefore, should be assessed accordingly, weighing all risk factors.
- (c) First Responders should refer to the Investigative Checklist for Missing Children with Special Needs. (See Attachment A).

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- (d) The NCMEC Missing Child with Special Needs Questionnaire shall be completed by the Initial Responding Officer to assist in gathering the necessary information for the initial response and investigations. (See Attachment-B).

321.5 INITIAL INVESTIGATION

The investigation of missing person reports will normally be initiated through the Patrol Unit. A patrol officer should meet with the reporting person and determine whether the person is missing and if missing, whether the person is endangered. Once it is determined a person is missing, the officer should have the missing person entered into NCIC via Scott County Dispatch. All information gathered must be maintained in a case file.

Officers or other members conducting the initial investigation of a missing person should take the following investigative actions as applicable:

- (a) Respond to a dispatched call as soon as practicable. Obtain a detailed description of the missing person, as well as a description of any related vehicle and/or abductor.
- (b) Interview the reporting party and any witnesses to determine whether the person qualifies as a missing person and, if so, whether the person may be endangered (Minn. Stat. § 299C.53, Subd. 1(b)). Interviews should be conducted separately, if practicable.
- (c) Consult with the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) if the person is determined to be an endangered missing person (Minn. Stat. § 299C.53, Subd. 1(b)).
- (d) Canvass the last known area where the missing person was seen, if known. A search of the location where the incident took place, if known, should also be conducted and a search warrant obtained if necessary.
- (e) Determine when, where and by whom the missing person was last seen. Interview the person who last had contact with the missing person.
- (f) Notify a supervisor immediately if there is evidence that a missing person is either endangered or may qualify for a public alert, or both (see the Public Alerts Policy).
- (g) Broadcast an "Attempt to Locate" (ATL) or similar alert if the person is under 18 years of age or there is evidence that the missing person is endangered. The alert should be broadcast as soon as practicable but in no event more than one hour after determining the missing person is under 18 years of age or may be endangered.
- (h) Utilize Scott County's CODE Red to issue a local alert.
- (i) Relay known details to all on-duty personnel as well as other local or surrounding law enforcement agencies using local and state databases.
- (j) Ensure that entries are made into the appropriate missing person networks:
 1. Immediately, when the missing person is endangered (Minn. Stat. § 299C.53, Subd. 1(b)).
 2. In all other cases, as soon as practicable, but not later than two hours from the time of the initial report.
- (k) Complete the appropriate report forms accurately and completely and initiate a search as applicable under the facts.

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- (a) As required by 34 U.S.C. 41307, law enforcement shall immediately enter the missing person less than 21 years of age into the NCIC.
 - (a) Juveniles up to 17 YOA – Juveniles are to be entered into the system within two hours upon receiving the minimum data required for entry into NCIC. The two-hour clock shall begin at the time the call is received from the complainant. The call time is documented when the ICR is created.
 - (b) Adults 18-20 years old – Any adults under 21 years of age are to be entered into the system within two hours upon receiving the minimum data required for entry into NCIC. The two-hour clock shall begin at the time the call is received from the complainant. This call time is documented when the ICR is created.

A signed report is not necessary for the immediate entry; however, it is required soon after the entry. The documentation should be from a source such as a parent, legal guardian, next of kin, physician or other authority source including a neighbor or a friend in unusual circumstances. However, when such documentation is not reasonably attainable, a signed report by the investigating officer will suffice.
 - (c) Adults 21 years and older – Adults age 21 and older are required to have signed documentation supporting the stated conditions under which they are being declared missing before entry into the system, UNLESS they are victims of a catastrophe. The documentation should be from a source such as a parent, legal guardian, next of kin, physician or other authority source including a neighbor or friends in unusual circumstances. However when such documentation is not reasonably attainable, a signed report by the investigating officer will suffice.

- (l) Collect and/or review:
 - 1. A photograph and fingerprint card of the missing person, if available (Minn. Stat. § 299C.54, Subd. 2).
 - (a) A voluntarily provided biological sample of the missing person, if available (e.g., toothbrush, hairbrush).
 - 2. Any documents that may assist in the investigation, such as court orders regarding custody.
 - 3. Any other evidence that may assist in the investigation, including personal electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, computers).

- (m) When circumstances permit and if appropriate, attempt to determine the missing person's location through his/her telecommunications carrier.

- (n) Contact the appropriate agency if the report relates to a missing person report previously made to another agency and that agency is actively investigating the report. When this is not practicable, the information should be documented in an appropriate report for transmission to the appropriate agency. If the information relates to an

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endangered missing person, the member should notify a supervisor and proceed with reasonable steps to locate the missing person.

- (o) Implement multi-jurisdictional coordination/mutual aid plan as appropriate such as when:
 - (a) The primary agency has limited resources.
 - (b) The investigation crosses jurisdictional lines.
 - (c) Jurisdictions have pre-established task forces or investigative teams.

321.5.1 CRIME SCENE INVESTIGATION AND MANAGEMENT

If a crime scene is identified, it should be secured and a command post or operation base located at a reasonable distance from the crime scene. Staff and assign the responsibilities for command post supervisor, media specialist, search coordinator, investigative coordinator, communication officer and support unit coordinator. Provide two liaison officers (one at the command post and one at the crime scene). The role of the liaison at the home will include facilitating support and advocacy for the family.

The investigation of the scene and the crime should consider various elements, including:

- (a) Begin setting up the Command Post/Operation Base away from the person's residence. Know the specific responsibilities of the Command Post Supervisor, Media Specialist, Search Coordinator, Investigative Coordinator, Communication Officer, Support Unit Coordinator and two liaison officers (one at the command post and one at the victim's residence). The role of the liaison at the home will include facilitating support and advocacy for the family.
- (b) Establishing the ability to "trap and trace" all incoming calls. Consider setting up a separate telephone line or cellular telephone for department use and follow-up on all leads.
- (c) Compiling a list of known sex offenders in the region.
- (d) In cases of infant abduction, investigating claims of home births made in the area.
- (e) In cases involving children, obtaining child protective agency records for reports of child abuse.
- (f) Reviewing records for previous incidents related to the missing person and prior law enforcement activity in the area, including prowlers, indecent exposure, attempted abductions, etc.
- (g) Obtaining the missing person's medical and dental records, fingerprints and a biological sample when practicable or within 30 days.
- (h) Creating a missing person profile with detailed information obtained from records and interviews with family and friends, describing the missing person's health, relationships, personality, problems, life experiences, plans, equipment, etc.
- (i) Interviewing delivery personnel, employees of gas, water, electric and cable companies, taxi drivers, post office personnel, sanitation workers, etc.

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- (j) Determining if outside help is needed and the merits of utilizing local, state and federal resources related to specialized investigative needs, including:
 - 1. Investigative resources (e.g., search and rescue).
 - 2. Interpretive resources.
 - 3. Telephone services, such as traps, traces and triangulation.
 - 4. Media assistance from local and national sources.
- (k) Using secure electronic communication information, such as the missing person's cellular telephone number, e-mail address and information from social networking sites.
- (l) Appointing an officer to communicate with the family/reporting party or their designee. The officer will be the primary point of contact for the family/reporting party or their designee, and should provide contact information and the family information packet (if available) to the family/reporting party or their designee.
- (m) Providing general information to the family/reporting party or their designee about the handling of the missing person case or about any intended efforts, only to the extent that disclosure would not adversely affect the department's ability to locate or protect the missing person or to apprehend or criminally prosecute any person in connection to the case.

321.5.2 MISSING PERSON FOR OVER 30-DAYS

If the person remains missing after 30 days from entry into NCIC, the local law enforcement agency will be contacted by the BCA Missing and Unidentified Persons Clearinghouse to request the following information (if not already received):

- (a) DNA samples from family members and, if possible, from the missing person.
- (b) Medical records, dental information and x-rays.
- (c) Additional photographs and video that may aid the investigation or identification.
- (d) Fingerprints.
- (e) Other specific identifying information.

The information will be entered into the appropriate databases by the BCA Clearinghouse personnel or records staff. If the person is still missing after 30 days, review the case file to determine whether any additional information received on the missing person indicates that the person is endangered and update the record in NCIC to reflect the status change.

321.5.3 PROLONGED INVESTIGATION

- 1. Develop a profile of the possible abductor.
- 2. Consider the use of a truth verification device for parents, spouse and other key individuals.

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3. Re-read all reports and transcripts of interviews, revisit the crime scene, review all photographs and videotapes, re-interview key individuals and re-examine all physical evidence collected.
4. Review all potential witness-suspect information obtained in the initial investigation, and consider background checks on anyone of interest identified in the investigation.
5. Periodically check pertinent sources of information about the missing person for any activity such as phone, bank, internet or credit card activity.
6. Develop a time-line and other visual exhibits.
7. Critique the results of the on-going investigation with appropriate investigative resources.
8. Arrange for periodic media coverage.
9. Consider utilizing rewards and crime-stoppers programs.
10. Update NCIC Missing Person File information, as necessary. NCIC entry must be verified and updated with medical and dental records within 60 days.
11. Re-contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) for age progression assistance.
12. Maintain contact with the family and/or the reporting party, or designee, as appropriate.

321.6 REPORT PROCEDURES AND ROUTING

Members should complete all missing person reports and forms promptly and advise the appropriate supervisor as soon as a missing person report is ready for review.

321.6.1 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the supervisor shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Reviewing and approving missing person reports upon receipt.
 1. The reports should be promptly sent to the Records Section.
- (b) Ensuring resources are deployed as appropriate.
- (c) Initiating a command post as needed.
- (d) Ensuring applicable notifications and public alerts are made and documented.
- (e) Ensuring that records have been entered into the appropriate missing persons networks.
- (f) Taking reasonable steps to identify and address any jurisdictional issues to ensure cooperation among agencies.
 1. If the case falls within the jurisdiction of another agency, the supervisor should facilitate transfer of the case to the agency of jurisdiction.

321.6.2 RECORDS SECTION RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the Records Section receiving member shall include, but are not limited to:

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- (a) As soon as reasonable under the circumstances, notifying and forwarding a copy of the report to the agency of jurisdiction for the missing person's residence in cases where the missing person is a resident of another jurisdiction.
- (b) Notifying and forwarding a copy of the report to the agency of jurisdiction where the missing person was last seen.
- (c) Notifying and forwarding a copy of the report to the agency of jurisdiction for the missing person's intended or possible destination, if known.
- (d) Forwarding a copy of the report to the Investigation Unit.
- (e) Coordinating with the NCIC Terminal Contractor for Minnesota to have the missing person record in the NCIC computer networks updated with additional information obtained from missing person investigations (34 USC § 41308).

321.7 INVESTIGATION UNIT FOLLOW-UP

In addition to completing or continuing any actions listed above, the investigator assigned to a missing person investigation:

- (a) Should ensure that the missing person's school is notified within 10 days if the missing person is a juvenile.
 - 1. The notice shall be in writing and should also include a photograph.
 - 2. The investigator should meet with school officials as appropriate to stress the importance of including the notice in the child's student file, along with the investigator's contact information if the school receives a call requesting the transfer of the missing child's files to another school.
- (b) Should recontact the reporting person and/or other witnesses within 30 days of the initial report and within 30 days thereafter to determine if any additional information has become available.
- (c) Shall review the case file to determine whether any additional information received on the missing person indicates that the person is endangered, and shall update applicable state or federal databases accordingly (Minn. Stat. § 299C.535(b); Minn. Stat. § 299C.535(c)).
- (d) Shall attempt to obtain the following, if not previously obtained, if the person remains missing after 30 days (Minn. Stat. § 299C.535(a)):
 - 1. Biological samples from family members and, if possible, from the missing person
 - 2. Dental information and X-rays
 - 3. Additional photographs and video that may aid the investigation or identification
 - 4. Fingerprints
 - 5. Any other specific identifying information
- (e) Should consider contacting other agencies involved in the case to determine if any additional information is available.

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- (f) Shall verify and update the Minnesota Justice Information Services (MNJIS), the Minnesota Missing and Unidentified Persons Clearinghouse, NCIC and any other applicable missing person networks within 30 days of the original entry into the networks and every 30 days thereafter until the missing person is located (34 USC § 41308).
- (g) Should continue to make reasonable efforts to locate the missing person and document these efforts at least every 30 days.
- (h) Should consider taking certain actions if a person is missing after a prolonged period, generally exceeding 45 days. Those actions include:
 - 1. Developing a profile of the possible abductor.
 - 2. Using a truth verification device for parents, spouse and other key individuals.
 - 3. Reviewing all reports and transcripts of interviews, revisiting the crime scene, reviewing all photographs and videotapes, reinterviewing key individuals and reexamining all physical evidence collected.
 - 4. Reviewing all potential witness/suspect information obtained in the initial investigation and considering background checks on anyone of interest identified in the investigation.
 - 5. Periodically checking pertinent sources of information about the missing person for any activity, such as telephone, bank, Internet or credit card activity.
 - 6. Developing a time line and other visual exhibits.
 - 7. Critiquing the results of the ongoing investigation with appropriate investigative resources.
 - 8. Arranging for periodic media coverage.
 - 9. Considering the use of rewards and crime-stoppers programs.
 - 10. Maintaining contact with the family and/or the reporting party or designee, as appropriate.
- (i) Shall maintain a close liaison with state and local child welfare systems and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) if the missing person is under the age of 21 and shall promptly notify NCMEC when the person is missing from a foster care family home or childcare institution (34 USC § 41308).
- (j) Should make appropriate inquiry with the Medical Examiner.
- (k) Should obtain and forward medical and dental records, photos, X-rays and biological samples, as applicable.
- (l) Shall attempt to obtain the most recent photograph for persons under 18 years of age if it has not been obtained previously, forward the photograph to BCA (Minn. Stat. § 299C.54) and enter the photograph into applicable missing person networks (34 USC § 41308).
- (m) Should consider making appropriate entries and searches in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs).

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- (n) In the case of an endangered missing person or a person who has been missing for an extended time, should consult with a supervisor regarding seeking federal assistance from the FBI and the U.S. Marshals Service (28 USC § 566).

321.8 WHEN A MISSING PERSON IS FOUND

When any person reported missing is found, the assigned investigator shall document the location of the missing person in the appropriate report, notify the reporting party and other involved agencies and refer the case for additional investigation if warranted.

The Records Supervisor shall ensure that, upon receipt of information that a missing person has been located, the following occurs:

- (a) Notification is made to BCA.
- (b) A missing child's school is notified.
- (c) Entries are made in the applicable missing person networks (Minn. Stat. § 299C.53, Subd. 2).
- (d) When a child is endangered, the fact that the child has been found shall be reported within 24 hours to BCA.
- (e) Notification shall be made to any other law enforcement agency that took the initial report or participated in the investigation.

321.8.1 PERSONS FOUND ALIVE

Additional responsibilities related to missing persons who are found alive include:

- (a) Verifying that the located person is the reported missing person.
- (b) If appropriate, arranging for a comprehensive physical examination of the victim.
- (c) Conducting a careful interview of the person, documenting the results of the interview and involving all appropriate agencies.
- (d) Notifying the family/reporting party that the missing person has been located. In adult cases, if the located adult permits the disclosure of his/her whereabouts and contact information, the family/reporting party may be given this information.
- (e) Depending on the circumstances of the disappearance, considering the need for reunification assistance, intervention, counseling or other services for either the missing person or family/reporting party.
- (f) Performing a constructive post-case critique. Reassessing the procedures used and updating the Department policy and procedures as appropriate.

321.8.2 UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS

Members investigating a case of an unidentified person who is deceased or a living person who cannot assist in identifying him/herself should:

- (a) Obtain a complete description of the person.

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- (b) Enter the unidentified person's description into the NCIC Unidentified Person File.
- (c) Use available resources, such as those related to missing persons, to identify the person.

321.8.3 DECEASED PERSONS

If a deceased person has been identified as a missing person, the Investigation Unit shall attempt to locate family members and inform them of the death and the location of the deceased missing person's remains. All efforts to locate and notify family members shall be recorded in appropriate reports and properly retained (Minn. Stat. § 390.25, Subd. 2).

Additional investigation responsibilities include the following:

- (a) Secure the crime scene if this department has jurisdiction.
- (b) Contact the coroner, medical examiner or forensic anthropologist to arrange for body recovery and examination.
- (c) Collect and preserve any evidence at the scene.
- (d) Depending on the circumstances, consider the need for intervention, counseling or other services for the family/reporting party.
- (e) Cancel alerts and remove the case from NCIC and other information systems; remove posters and other publications from circulation.
- (f) Perform a constructive post-case critique. Reassess the procedures used and update the department policy and procedures as appropriate.

321.9 CASE CLOSURE

The Investigation Unit supervisor may authorize the closure of a missing person case after considering the following:

- (a) Closure is appropriate when the missing person is confirmed returned or evidence matches an unidentified person or body.
- (b) If the missing person is a resident of Shakopee or this department is the lead agency, the case should be kept under active investigation for as long as the person may still be alive. Exhaustion of leads in the investigation should not be a reason for closing a case.
- (c) If this department is not the lead agency, the case can be made inactive if all investigative leads have been exhausted, the lead agency has been notified and entries are made in the applicable missing person networks, as appropriate.
- (d) A missing person case should not be closed or reclassified because the person would have reached a certain age or adulthood or because the person is now the subject of a criminal or civil warrant.

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321.9.1 QUALITY ASSURANCE REVIEW

1. Calls in which it is determined that a child is actually missing or abducted will be forwarded by the Communication and Patrol Supervisor to the Quality Assurance Division for Review.
2. The Quality Assurance Division shall review the call to ensure all the appropriate steps and procedures were followed and provide feedback to those involved in the processing, dispatching, and responding to the incident as well as the respective supervisors.

321.10 TRAINING

Subject to available resources, the Training Sergeant should ensure that members of this department whose duties include missing person investigations and reports receive training that includes:

- (a) The initial investigation:
 1. Assessments and interviews
 2. Use of current resources, such as Mobile Audio Video (MAV)
 3. Confirming missing status and custody status of minors
 4. Evaluating the need for a heightened response
 5. Identifying the zone of safety based on chronological age and developmental stage
- (b) Briefing of department members at the scene.
- (c) Identifying NCIC Missing Person File categories (e.g., disability, endangered, involuntary, juvenile and catastrophe).
- (d) Verifying the accuracy of all descriptive information.
- (e) Initiating a neighborhood investigation.
- (f) Investigating any relevant recent family dynamics.
- (g) Addressing conflicting information.
- (h) Key investigative and coordination steps.
- (i) Managing a missing person case.
- (j) Additional resources and specialized services.
- (k) Update procedures for case information and descriptions.
- (l) Preserving scenes.
- (m) Internet and technology issues (e.g., Internet use, cell phone use).
- (n) Media relations.

Attachments

Checklist for Responding To Missing Children With Special Needs.pdf

Checklist for Responding To Missing Children With Special Needs

The Initial Response

[] Identify hazards in the area where the child was last seen and dispatch personnel to those locations to search for the child, paying special attention to any bodies of water and specific locations of interest to the child such as his or her favorite places.

[] Secure identified hazardous areas near where the child was last seen to prevent the child from entering those areas.

[] Determine if the child was wearing/carrying a tracking device and, if so, immediately initiate tracking measures to locate the child.

[] Determine if the child is frightened by aircraft, dogs, ATVs, or any other resources used to assist in searches. *Remember using search dogs at the onset of the initial response will better ensue successful tracking.*

[] Determine if the child is sensitive to or frightened by noise and how he or she will typically react.

[] Establish containment measures of the child's known routes to prevent him or her from wandering further away from the place last seen, using all appropriate means such as road, bike and air patrol.

[] Contact the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children without delay to request assistance from their search-and-rescue and search-management experts.

[] Ensure the lead agency is using the services of a reverse 911 system, such as A Child Is Missing Alert at www.achildismissing.org. This service helps alert the local community via a rapid-response, neighborhood alert program using high-tech phone systems.

[] Determine if an Endangered Missing Child Alert has been issued to him or her.

Investigative Measures

[] Contact the child's parent/guardian to further assess the child's special-needs condition.

[] Determine if the child has any history of wandering or eloping and, if so, where and what physical features associated with those episodes may have attracted the child.

[] Identify additional physical features the child may be attracted to such as roadways/highways, trains, heavy equipment, fire trucks, park swings, and road signs.

- Determine if the child has any favorite places.
- Determine if the child has a favorite song, toy or character.
- Determine if the child has any dislikes, fears or behavioral triggers and, if so, how he or she will typically react to negative stimuli.
- Determine how the child reacts to sirens, dogs, vehicles used in searches, and people of authority/in uniform. Children with autism will sometimes avoid search teams or attempt to hide in small places.
- Determine the communication abilities of the child regarding verbal versus nonverbal skills.
- Determine if the child will respond to his or her name when being called.
- Determine if the child knows his or her parents' names, home address and phone numbers.
- Determine if the child has any other mental or physical conditions.
- Determine if the child has any dietary issues or requirements.
- Determine if the child is taking any medications and, if so, the type of medications, risks involved with delayed or missed doses, and potential side effects if the medication is not taken as prescribed.
- Determine if the child wears a medical identification bracelet or tag.
- Determine how the child responds to pain or injury.
- Determine the child's response to being touched.
- Determine what methods are used to calm the child.

Search and Rescue Measures

- Preserve the place the child was last seen.
- Use search-and-rescue personnel accustomed to the existing geography, whether urban, suburban or rural.
- Provide a detailed briefing to search-and-rescue personnel arriving on scene about the behaviors of the missing child.
- Consider using Attachment B, "Missing Children with Special Needs Questionnaire" (Page 41-22), from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children.

[] Initiate search-and-rescue efforts with an emphasis on bodies of water, high-hazard areas, travel corridors, routes to favorite places, previous locations visited, and any other areas of interest suggested by those who know the child.

[] Attempt to attract the child by using his or her favorite things such as playing a favorite song or driving a favorite type of vehicle into the search area.

[] Use night-search techniques, if appropriate, such as projected lights and patterns, especially spinning patterns or other types of favorite visuals to attract the missing child. **Note:** Be aware, night searches could be hazardous to the child if the terrain includes dangers such as cliffs, drop offs, mine shafts, or bodies of water. Attempting to draw a child into these areas could lead to tragic consequences if these are not identified by searchers and secured prior to using attraction devices.

[] Extend search duration because the unique behaviors of some children with special needs may have a protective effect, allowing the child to survive longer than what is considered to be a normal survival rate for a child.

[] Evaluate the overall effectiveness of the search operations, in the event of a prolonged search, and adjust as necessary for the next operational phase to include immediate and long-range resources and logistical requirements for deployment of those resources.

[] Determine if there are any gaps in the original search area and make arrangements to search those areas again.

[] Consider using trained search-and-rescue personnel with volunteer searchers to enhance the search capabilities

Recovery and Reunification Measures

The considerations noted below are recommended to deescalate and/or minimize any heightened emotions or anxieties the child may experience at the time of recovery.

■ Maintain a calm and relaxed environment.

■ Contain the child in a passive way to keep him or her from running or bolting, and avoid use of restraints.

■ Bring a parent or guardian immediately to the recovery site, whenever possible, and tell the child that person is on the way.

■ Approach the child at his or her level, kneeling if necessary, and speak in a normal tone of voice using simple phrases.

- Use a task-and-reward process to ease anxiety and enhance compliance, using phrases such as, “First we are going to stay here, and then your father is going to come here.”
- Avoid assuming the child understands everything being said and done at the recovery scene.
- Use communication aids, written instructions, drawings, or prompts if possible.
- Use humor and familiar topics when possible. For instance, if the child is wearing a shirt with a cartoon character on it, talk to the child about the character to help lessen any anxiety the child may be feeling and calm the child if upset.
- Check for any identification such as a medical bracelet or tracking device.

672b

Missing Children with Special Needs Questionnaire

CASE # _____ DATE/TIME _____ OFFICER: _____

Incident Name _____ Interviewed by _____

Reporter’s name and contact information: _____

Missing Child’s Information:

Name (full): _____ DOB: _____ Sex _____

Home Address _____ Zip _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Physical Description:

Height _____ Weight _____ Age _____ Build _____ Eye Color _____

Hair _____ Glasses _____

Distinguishing Marks (scars/moles/tattoos/piercings) _____

Overall Appearance _____

Photo Available Yes No Where is photo? _____

Next of Kin:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Relationship to Missing Child _____

Close Friend:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Close Friend:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Place Last Seen:

Time: _____ Where _____ How _____

Seen by Whom _____

Weather Conditions at Time Last Seen _____

Current Weather Conditions _____

Direction of Travel Last Seen _____

Reason for Leaving _____

Mood (Confident, confused, other) _____

Comments _____

Clothing/Equipment:

Name _____ Style _____ Color _____ Size _____ Other _____

Shirt/Sweater _____

Pants/Belt _____

Rain Gear _____

Gloves _____

Shoes _____

Sole _____

Jacket _____

Additional Clothing _____

Tracking Device / GPS _____

Family Doctor/Pediatrician:

Name _____

Office Address _____

Office Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Other Contact Information _____

Care Giver:

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

School:

Name _____

Address _____

Teacher's Name _____

Phone Number _____

Outdoor Experience:

Familiar with Area _____

Ever Lost Before Yes No When _____

Where _____

Heath/General Conditions

Overall Health _____

Overall Physical Condition _____

Known Medical/Dental Problems _____

Handicaps/Deformities/Prosthetics _____

Known Psychological Problems _____

Medications _____

Dosages _____

Medication Side Effects _____

Witness Information:

Name _____

Home Address _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Relationship _____

Witness Comments _____

Action Taken:

By Family/Friends _____

Results _____

Comments _____

Additional Information for Children with Autism / Address Immediate Life Saving Efforts

Tracking Technology Device Worn/Carried Yes No

If so, how are Tracking Measures Initiated _____?

Child Attracted to Water Yes No

Any Specific Body of Water _____

Child Able to Swim Yes No

Child Attracted to Roadways/Highways Yes No

Please Specify _____

Child Attracted To Trains Heavy Equipment Airplanes Fire Trucks Bridges

Other Vehicles _____

Child Wandered Before Yes No Where Found _____

Child have Siblings with Special Needs _____

Sibling Wandered Before Yes No Where Found _____

Favorite Places _____

Child Is Verbal Child is Nonverbal

Reaction When Name is Called _____

Responds to Voice of Mother Father Other

Favorite Song _____

Favorite Toy _____

Favorite Character _____

Knows Parents Names Home Address Home Phone Number Others _____

Dislikes _____

Fears _____

Behavior Triggers _____

Reaction To:

Sirens _____ Aircraft _____ Canines/Search Dog _____

People in Uniforms _____

Response to Pain / Injury _____

Response to Touch _____

Wears Medical ID Tag _____

Wears A GPS Tracking Bracelet _____

Sensory, Medical, Dietary Issues/Requirements _____

Methods Used to Calm Child Once Upset _____

Special-Needs Conditions _____