



GENERAL POLICE ORDER CLEVELAND DIVISION OF POLICE



ORIGINAL EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2002	REVISED DATE: June 15, 2012	NO. PAGES: 1 of 15	NUMBER: 6.2.10
SUBJECT: MISSING PERSONS (ADULT)			
ASSOCIATED MANUAL:		RELATED ORDERS: 6.2.17, 9.1.08	
CHIEF OF POLICE: <i>Michael McGrath, Chief</i>			

Revisions in Italics

PURPOSE: To ensure Cleveland Division of Police compliance with Ohio Revised Code sections 2901.41 and 2901.42, reporting and investigating Missing Persons.

POLICY: The Division shall act promptly to locate persons reported missing, complete Record Management System (RMS) reports, and when mandated, enter Missing Person information into LEADS/NCIC within the mandated time period.

The Division shall accept all reports of missing persons from any reporting person.

The nature of many Missing Person reports is such that they require a response that recognizes and demonstrates the Division’s heightened degree of sensitivity to the missing person and those concerned with that person’s absence. The reporting person is often the best source of information to locating a missing person; and as such, Division members aid the investigation by according all due care and concern to the reporting person appropriate to the circumstances.

Other law enforcement agencies operating within the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Cleveland and who maintain authorizing mutual aid agreements with same shall not accept Missing Person reports originating in the City of Cleveland. Only the Cleveland Division of Police shall generate Missing Person reports for missing persons originating within its jurisdictional boundaries.

The Division shall make all attempts as appropriate to utilize all applicable programs such as Ohio’s Missing Adult Alert (Silver Alert), Police and Community Alert, and A Child is Missing program (ACIM is also applicable to elderly and disabled adults).

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The Division shall assign a Missing Person Liaison to the Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center (NEORFC). Each District Commander shall ensure that one detective in their Detective Unit is designated as that district's Missing Person Investigator.

DEFINITIONS:

Elderly: is any person 65 years of age or older.

Endangered (Adult): is any person 18 years of age or older who is missing under circumstances that indicate their physical safety may be in danger.

PROCEDURES:

I. General Guidelines

A. Definition: Missing Person (an adult age 18 years or older)

1. A person who is absent under circumstances inconsistent with well established patterns of behavior (i.e. missing under unexplained circumstances from their normal residence or any other location that the person is reasonably expected to be at such as their workplace, institution of learning, public facility (especially on or near a body of water), entertainment venue, gathering, or such similar place or in transit between such locations).
2. A person who is unaccounted for and *who* is of diminished mental capacity or suffers from a mental illness (treated or untreated) or has a medical condition that *without proper care or medication substantially affects their physical safety* or is otherwise potentially life threatening, even if the absence is known to be voluntary in nature.
3. A person who has been admitted to any medical or mental facility other than through criminal adjudication that has left that facility without proper notification to that facility.
4. A person who is unaccounted for and that has demonstrated a potential for suicide.

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5. A person who is unaccounted for as a result of an accident or disaster whether natural or man-made.
6. A person whose travel to another jurisdiction originated in the City of Cleveland but who has failed to arrive at their intended destination within a reasonable time.
7. A person who is missing from another jurisdiction but there is reason to believe the person may be in or traveled through the jurisdiction of the City of Cleveland.
8. Any incident or circumstance that would lead a reasonable person to believe that another person may be missing and in danger. For instance a witness may report that another person had entered a body of water (either voluntary or involuntary) and has not surfaced, a witness may know of credible threats to an unaccounted for person, or there may exist a reasonable suspicion that a recently occupied watercraft on Cleveland's jurisdictional waters is evidence of a missing boater.

B. General Responsibilities

1. Officers shall accept all reports of Missing Persons that meet the above criteria. If there is any doubt as to the credibility or probability of a Missing Person situation, the officer shall err on the side of making a Missing Person report.
2. Officers shall accept all Missing Persons reports regardless if they originate in a district other than the officers assigned district. If the Missing Person is an endangered or elderly adult, the Communications Control Section (CCS) shall be immediately notified to assign a zone car from the district of occurrence to follow up on the initial report.
3. Reporting persons shall never be advised to wait a specified period of time before the Division of Police will accept a Missing Person report.
4. The reporting person shall be advised to immediately contact the Division of Police to report the return of a Missing Person.

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5. Officers, including supervisors and investigating detectives, shall use the Investigative Checklist for First Responders (Attachment G) to formulate a proper response commensurate with the circumstances involved.
 6. Officers accepting Missing Person reports in person shall complete the Reporting Person Information Sheet (Attachment H) and present original of same to the reporting person.
- C. Reporting Person - Officers shall accept information for a Missing Person report from any of the following:
1. Any family member (adult or juvenile).
 2. Other responsible household member such as a roommate.
 3. A traveling companion.
 4. A medical or mental health professional, government official, or social agency representative who has proximate care or custody of the Missing Person.
 5. A responsible representative of the Missing Person's employer.
 6. Any other such person who had temporary proximate care of the Missing Person such as a chaperone, teacher, caretaker, neighbor, ship captain, taxi or bus driver, or tour operator.
 7. Any person that has good cause to believe that another person may be endangered and missing based on that reporting person's first hand knowledge. Refer to examples referenced in Section I(A)8.

II. Original RMS reports shall include:

- A. The name, age, address, and telephone number of each person interviewed.
- B. The relationship between the reporting person and the Missing Person.
- C. For missing "Endangered/Elderly Adults", names and addresses of other family members and siblings in the area shall be included as appropriate.

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- D. For missing “Endangered Adults”, the name and address of the natural mother and father, and step or foster parents if applicable.
- E. The complete name (as well as any nicknames), date of birth, birthplace, social security number, place of employment, physical and clothing description (note if the person was not appropriately dressed for the weather conditions), including scars, marks, and tattoos. All relevant physical descriptive information must be entered in the appropriate blanks on the RMS report.
- F. A notation if the Missing Person is carrying a cell phone, the number of the cell phone, and any results from attempting to contact the Missing Person via their cell phone.
- G. Information on habits, friends, and places commonly visited by the Missing Person, and persons with whom last seen.
- H. Frequented places, i.e. church, bank, restaurant, store, park, playground etc.
- I. Medical condition/current medication used by the Missing Person. The treating physician’s name and the hospital the person uses, as well as the Missing Person’s dentist.
- J. The year, make, model, color, license plate, and listed owner of the auto used by or associated with the Missing Person. Note any special vehicle locator capabilities such as LoJack or OnStar.
- K. A notation if the NCIC Missing Person Form was completed and the time the officer relayed the NCIC information to the Message Center.
- L. A notation if an all-channels broadcast was made or requested.
- M. A notation if and what relatives or friends of the Missing Person were contacted (and attempted contacts) and results of same if any.
- N. A general description of physical search efforts (i.e. searched home, vehicles, abandoned buildings...)
- O. A notation if any special program is used, such as a Missing Child/Missing Endangered/Elderly Alert, Police and Community Alert, A Child is Missing (ACIM), or *Ohio’s Missing Adult Alert*.

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- P. Report titles shall be appropriately titled, i.e. Missing Person/Adult, Missing Person/Adult/Endangered/Elderly, or Missing Person/Unidentified [in the instance where the full identity of the person is not immediately known]. Report titles for Missing Persons that originate with another law enforcement agency outside the jurisdiction of the City of Cleveland shall be titled Missing Person/Adult/Foreign Agency where the victim is the name of the originating agency and the Missing Person is the subject.

III. When a person is reported missing

- A. For search procedures where the Missing Person is an endangered adult, a supervisor shall be notified to respond to the scene and a physical search shall immediately commence for the Missing Person.
1. The search shall commence in the immediate area in which the person was last seen or expected to be and continue generally outwards in a pattern approximating concentric circles. More extensive searches shall approximate a grid pattern with supervisors assigning officers to particular areas.
 2. Officers involved in search activities shall note the locations they searched and provide same information to the primary investigating officer responsible for the initial RMS report.
 3. Officers shall make a good faith effort to obtain voluntary consent from appropriate responsible persons in connection with the areas searched.
 4. Officers shall rely on their training and experience to identify locations where a Missing Person could possibly be located. A non-exhaustive list includes (as applicable to an endangered adult): closets, behind or under furniture or piles of clothing/drapery, crawl spaces (inside and outside), under stairwells, attics, refrigerators, freezers, ovens, driers, ductwork, fireplaces/chimneys, laundry baskets, laundry rooms, laundry and garbage chutes, bathtubs/shower stalls, storage cabinets, safes, garbage/refuse containers, maintenance/utility closets, public restrooms, boiler rooms, underground vaults or storage containers, roofs, sills/ledges, swimming pools, garages, storage sheds, all manner of motor vehicles including their storage areas (trunks), trees/shrubbery/landscaping,

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bodies of water, culverts, sewers, vacant lots, alleys, construction sites, and abandoned buildings.

5. Every effort shall be made to incorporate redundancy into a search, such as having a different officer search an area already searched by another officer. Officers shall always search firsthand any area that a person (other than a police officer) claims has already been searched.
6. For searches that result in the discovery of contraband, the contraband shall be seized and all normal protocols associated with seized contraband shall be followed including arrest as necessary. Upon first discovery of contraband, and when necessary, a supervisor shall ensure that a search warrant is obtained prior to initiating a search for additional contraband or evidence of a crime. The discovery of contraband does not negate the ongoing search for an endangered Missing Person.

- B. Investigating officers shall have the Communications Control Section (CCS) notify the Coast Guard when a person is last seen aboard a watercraft, swimming or in close proximity to Lake Erie or the Cuyahoga River. CCS shall also contact the Division's Public Safety Marine Patrol Team for assistance as needed.
- C. For non-endangered missing adults, officers taking the initial Missing Person report shall, if possible, during the duration of the officer's tour of duty make a good faith effort to tour the possible whereabouts (work, school, frequented areas...) and follow up on contact information of other persons who may have additional information on the Missing Person.

IV. National Crime Information Center (NCIC) Form (Attachment A)

- A. Officers shall complete an NCIC Form in duplicate when any of the following categories apply:
 1. Disability - A person of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or senility, who thereby subjects oneself or others to personal and immediate danger. This definition is applicable to the "Endangered" designation and includes persons who may be without medication that is prescribed to maintain life and significant daily functionality.

2. Endangered - A person of any age who is missing under circumstances that indicate their physical safety may be in danger.
3. Involuntary - A person of any age who is missing under circumstances that indicate the disappearance may not have been voluntary.
4. Juvenile - A Missing Person under 18 years of age.
5. Catastrophe - A person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe.
6. Young Adult - A person over 18 but less than 21 years of age
7. Other - A person over the age of 21 who is missing and does not meet the criteria above but there is reasonable concern for their safety.

B. Federal law mandates (Title 42 USC, Chapter 72, Section 5780) that NCIC information must be entered into LEADS/NCIC within **2 hours** of an officer obtaining the minimum mandatory data for LEADS/NCIC entry. Officers shall immediately upon receiving the mandatory minimum information call the Message Center at 623-5262 (24 hours/7 days) and relay the required information for NCIC entry.

Officers shall use the following checklist to provide the Message Center with the necessary information as applicable:

Name Race (adult juvenile habitual)
 Sex Age Date of Birth
 Address City/State/Country of Birth Social Security Number
 Driver License Number Vehicle License Plate/Vehicle description
 Reported in company or last seen with Officers contacted relatives

PHYSICAL:

Height Weight Hair Color/Style Eye Color Glasses
 Blood Type Facial Hair (beard moustache chin whisker goatee other)
 Complexion (light medium dark)
 Scars/Markings/Tattoos (face arms hands legs back other)
 Clothing (hat/jacket/coat pants shirt/blouse dress other)
 Clothing – acceptable for weather conditions? yes no
 Jewelry (rings/bracelets/anklets/necklaces/other)
 Cash on person (other valuables) Dental Information

ABNORMALITIES/SPECIAL NEEDS:

Physical Mental Suicidal
 Suspected abuse of: Drugs Alcohol Prescription Medication Other
 Possible Destination

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- C. The Message Center shall give the reporting officer a verbal time stamp of the officer's call. The officer shall note that time in the narrative of the RMS report. The officer shall still complete an NCIC form and attach a copy of same to the RMS report. See section VI(E) regarding routing of the original NCIC form.

V. Release Form (Attachment B)

- A. Officers shall have a spouse, parent, guardian, or other next of kin complete the Release Form (Attachment B) for all missing persons. This multi-purpose form authorizes the release of photographs to the media/public, as well as the release of medical and dental records to the investigating officer.
- B. The original Release Form shall be retained by the district Missing Person Investigator. A copy of the form shall be attached to the RMS report and forwarded to Report Intake and Review Unit.
- C. The Missing Person Liaison in the Northeast Ohio Regional Fusion Center (NEORFC) shall maintain a file of copies of the Release Forms.

VI. Supervisor/Responding Officer Responsibilities

- A. A supervisor shall respond if the Missing Person has shown suicidal behavior or if an NCIC Form must be made (refer to above section IV for parameters). The only exceptions are for non-endangered young adults (18 to 20 years of age). A CCS supervisor shall ensure that the assignment meeting the above criterion is coded a Priority One and that a sector supervisor is responding to the scene. The responding supervisor shall ensure that the applicable program, as outlined in Section VII, is followed. The CCS supervisor shall include such incidents of Missing Persons on the Chief's Items of Interest.
- B. If an endangered/elderly adult is not located within two hours after arrival on scene, the investigating supervisor shall request that CCS contact the District Commander and Public Information Officer (PIO).
- C. A sector supervisor shall assign at least one zone car beyond the original reporting shift to follow up and provide supplements to an endangered/elderly adult Missing Person report with the results of searches and interviews conducted until such time that the Missing Person is located or as directed by the district commander.

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- D. *Officers shall obtain photographs from the reporting person for all missing person reports whenever possible. Officers shall ensure that they obtain a completed Release Form (Attachment B of GPO's 6.2.10 and 6.2.17) when receiving photographs of missing persons. The original photograph(s) shall be routed to the District Detective Unit Missing Person Investigator.*
- E. *The reporting officer shall forward the original NCIC form, along with a copy of a photograph if available, to the NEORFC.*
- F. *The reporting officer shall forward the duplicate NCIC form and original photograph to the District's Missing Person Investigator.*
- G. *District Detective Unit Missing Person Investigators shall ensure that all report supplements become part of that missing juvenile's file and that the original supplements are forwarded to the Report Intake and Review Unit.*
- H. *District Detective Unit Missing Person Investigators shall be responsible for scanning the RMS report, Release Form, and original photograph and sending same to the NEORFC missing person liaison. All documents comprising a single missing person report shall be scanned in as one continuous document so the document appears as one single case. Smaller photographs shall be firmly affixed onto a blank sheet of paper (labeled with the name of the missing person and RMS report number) before being fed through the copier/scanner. In instances where a suitable photograph is not available, district missing person liaisons shall make an effort to use other photograph sources such as those available on-line through OHLEG, other government agencies, and social media such as Facebook.*
- I. *The NEORFC missing person liaison shall be responsible for making entries to and updating the missing person webpage. NEORFC will additionally report the missing person through their normal bulletin reports to Region II and the State Fusion Center (SAIC).*
- J. *District Missing Person Investigators shall also ensure that reports of returned missing persons are also forwarded to NEORFC in a timely manner so that the website may be updated.*
- K. *District Missing Person Investigators Detective Unit supervisors shall ensure that missing person procedures are being followed in a timely manner.*

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- L. Missing Child/Missing Endangered/Elderly Alert Criteria:
1. The local law enforcement agency confirms that the individual is missing.
 2. The disappearance of the individual poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the individual.
 3. There is sufficient descriptive information about the individual and the circumstances surrounding the individual's disappearance to indicate the activation of the alert will help locate the individual.
- M. A Missing Child/Missing Endangered/Elderly Adult Alert Form (Attachment C) and a Police and Community Alert Form (Attachment D) if applicable shall be completed and faxed to CCS.
1. CCS shall initiate a broadcast on all channels and shall fax a copy of the form to each district, along with the Police and Community Alert Form (Attachment D) if applicable, to be read at subsequent roll calls. Each communication channel will receive a copy of the Alert form.
 2. CCS supervisors shall ensure that the description of the missing endangered/elderly adult and any other pertinent information (i.e. vehicle description) is re-broadcast every four hours until the Missing Person is located.
 3. The Commander will consult with the Deputy Chief of Field Operations to determine whether or not the media will be asked to air/print the information contained in the alert. The Deputy Chief of Field Operations shall communicate that decision to the PIO. The Field Operations Deputy Chief or designee shall make further notifications up the chain of command as circumstances dictate.
 4. Deputy Chief of Special Operations shall make the determination to activate the Combined Abduction Response Team (CART) and proceed accordingly (G.P.O. 4.1.14).
- N. *Ohio's Missing Adult Alert(Silver Alert):*
1. *When a local law enforcement agency makes this entry with a special code, the Ohio Attorney Generals Office, Bureau of Criminal*

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Identification & Investigation (BCI&I), Missing Children's Clearing House, and the Ohio State Highway Patrol are notified. The Agency may also call BCI&I to request an alert if they cannot make the NCIC entry in a timely manner.

2. *Activation Criteria:*

- a) *The local law enforcement 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 significant descriptive information about the individual and circumstances surrounding the individual's disappearance to indicate that activation of the alert will help locate the individual.*

3. *The following actions take place when a Missing Adult Alert is activated:*

- a) *An email blast and fax message are sent throughout the state to media outlets.*
- b) *The information is posted on electronic billboards in the local area of the alert.*
- c) *A law enforcement radio broadcast is sent to all law enforcement agencies in the state.*
- d) *A toll free telephone line for tips and information is activated (1-866-693-9171).*
- e) *A Truckers Alert system is activated.*
- f) *The Ohio Lottery will post the information on their lottery terminals.*

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g) *Special law enforcement response teams and programs are offered to assist in the search for the missing person.*

- O. For all reports of Missing Persons the investigating officer shall contact:
1. The Message Center to determine if the Missing Person is in a Cleveland jail, on the Hospital List, or already has an active Missing Person report in RMS. If the officer finds an active Missing Person report, a supplement (returns or locates) shall be made to close the existing report before a new one is made.
 2. The Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office.
 3. CCS, if a vehicle is involved, to determine if the vehicle was towed.
 4. The Alzheimer's Association (AA) if the Missing Person is diagnosed with any form of dementia or Alzheimer's disease or enrolled in the Safety Return Program. Whether or not the individual is actually diagnosed with Alzheimer's, the AA may then advise the appropriate neighboring police departments of the person's absence. Their 24hour/7day/week-telephone number is 1-800-272-3900, or locally (216) 721-8457 or contact CCS for a more current number.
- P. The district Missing Person investigator shall ensure that the Missing Person RMS report contains contact information for whichever detective is assigned to the Missing Person case and that all follow-up is entered into the report in a timely manner.
- Q. The district Missing Person investigator shall maintain a log book or electronic database to enter all reports of Missing Persons in that district. Such book or database shall include at minimum the Missing Person's name, RMS number, date of report, and disposition.
- R. After 29 days, the investigating detective shall obtain the dental records and DNA of the Missing Person (or close blood relative) for open Missing Person reports and forward them to the Missing Person Liaison in NEORFC. The detective shall ensure that the dental records are properly coded prior to forwarding to the Missing Person Liaison.

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- S. The Missing Person Liaison assigned to NEORFC shall ensure that all validation procedures relative to NCIC/LEADS requirements are completed in a timely manner.
 - T. If the validation or follow-up process conducted by the Missing Person Liaison reveals that a Missing Person has returned, the Missing Person Liaison shall notify the appropriate district commander where the returned Missing Person is located to have the return verified and the Missing Person/Returned report completed. The only exception shall be when the Missing Person Liaison has verified the Missing Person returned through a foreign police agency whereupon the Missing Person Liaison shall handle the Missing Person/Returned report.
 - U. District Commanders shall ensure that Missing Person/Returned verification requests received from the Missing Person Liaison are followed up and that Missing Person/Returned procedures are followed as directed in Section (IX)A of this order.
- VII.** A Child is Missing (ACIM) - This program (also applicable to endangered adults) may be activated through a CCS supervisor using the procedures outlined in GPO 9.1.08 (A Child is Missing Program - ACIM).
- VIII.** In instances where there are indications of violence related to a person's absence or if the person has not been located after one year, the appropriate District Commander shall confer with the Deputy Chief of Field Operations who in turn shall determine if the case shall be assigned to the Homicide Unit.
- IX.** Missing Persons returned or located.
- A. Investigating officers shall personally and physically identify the individual upon return and promptly complete an RMS supplement report. Local returns shall never be completed by telephone verification only. Officers shall request foreign police agencies to physically verify the returned Missing Person if the person is located outside of the Division's jurisdiction. The report shall state whether the person returned of their own volition or was located in some other manner and, the place where the person was found. Officers shall note in the RMS report that the returned Missing Person was properly identified as directed above.
 - B. *An exception to the requirement of personally and physically identifying a returned missing person shall be when a reporting person is attempting to*

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make a missing person report but there already exists an open Missing Person report for that person. In this instance, the officer shall close out the open Missing Person report and include in the narrative section the newly acquired information regarding the alleged return. The report title shall be Missing Person/Return/Unconfirmed. The officer shall then proceed with taking information for the subsequent Missing Person report.

- C. When a Missing Person (requiring NCIC entry) is found/returned before the officer has had an opportunity to complete an RMS report, the officer shall contact the Message Center within 2 hours to remove the person from LEADS. However, the officer shall still complete an RMS report and NCIC form to account for the NCIC entry. *The title of the report shall be Missing Person/Combination/Return.* Officers shall ensure that all information provided to the Message Center shall also appear in the RMS report.
- D. CCS shall be immediately notified once a missing “Endangered/Elderly Adult” is located. A CCS supervisor shall write “cancelled” on the Missing Child/Missing Endangered/Elderly Adult Alert Form or other requisite form(s) and fax them to the PIO and all police districts and ensure that the Items of Interest log is updated.
- E. For a located Missing Person who is the subject of a Missing Person/Adult/Foreign Agency, the foreign agency shall be contacted and advised of the location of the Missing Person. An RMS report with the title Missing Person/Adult/Foreign Agency/Returned shall be completed.
- F. An “Endangered/Elderly Adult” found wandering, confused and unable to furnish identification shall be taken to the nearest hospital, where hospital records may have information from prior visits for evaluation and treatment. The Message Center shall be contacted and provided with all available information to place the person on the Hospital List.