



# SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS



533.02

## MISSING PERSONS CASES- REPORTING/INVESTIGATING

03-03-15

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this order is to establish procedures for reporting and investigating missing persons

### POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Sacramento Police Department to accept, review, and investigate reports of missing persons.

### PROCEDURE

#### A. DEFINITIONS

1. MISSING PERSON (MP) - An individual whose whereabouts are unknown to the reporting party.
2. REPORTING PARTY - A reporting party may be:
  - a. a parent
  - b. a guardian
  - c. a roommate
  - d. a spouse
  - e. an employer
  - f. a traveling companion
  - g. any person who should reasonably know the MP whereabouts
3. MISSING PERSON "AT RISK" - Those who fall into any one of the following categories:
  - a. Victims of suspected foul play.
  - b. Persons who need medical attention for conditions that may be life threatening.
  - c. Persons who are mentally impaired and unable to care for themselves, or who can be a threat to themselves or others.
  - d. Victims of abduction.
  - e. Persons having no pattern of running away or disappearing, coupled with questionable circumstances.
  - f. Any child 0-15 who is reported missing.
4. Amber Alert – an alert issued with the concurrence of WC when a "at risk" juvenile is reported missing.
  1. Silver Alert – an alert that may be issued with the concurrence of a WC when either a "at risk" person age 65 or older, or a person with a developmental disability or a cognitive impairment is reported missing.
2. NCIC REPORT TYPE - **(NOTE: MPs under 21 or those who are "AT RISK" must be entered into NCIC within 2 hrs per 14205(b) PC)**
3.
  - a. VOLUNTARY MISSING -Adults who are reported missing who have left of their own free will.
  - b. DEPENDENT ADULT - Adults who are reported missing who have physical or mental limitations which restrict their ability to carry out normal activities.
  - c. PARENT/ FAMILY ABDUCTION - Minors who are taken, detained, concealed, enticed away, or retained by a parent or non-parent family member e.g, (277, 278, 278.5, 278.7 PC).
  - d. RUNAWAY - minors who have left of their own free will or have been rejected/abandoned by their families.
  - e. CATASTROPHIC MISSING - Persons who are assumed to be victims of some type of disaster (e.g., flood, earthquake, fire, etc.).
  - f. LOST- Persons who have strayed away and whose whereabouts are unknown.
  - g. STRANGER ABDUCTION - Persons taken against their will by an unknown person or known person who is not a family member.
  - h. SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES - Circumstances which give rise to the belief that foul play may be involved, the person is a danger to self or others (due to mental, physical, or emotional condition), or the disappearance is out of character for the individual and no known



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reasons can be determined.

- i. UNKNOWN MISSING - Insufficient facts to determine the circumstances.

## B. GENERAL

1. Employees shall immediately assist any person attempting to make a report of an MP (14210(a) PC).
  - a. Advise the reporting person of the agency and phone having jurisdiction over the MP's address of residence and the agency jurisdiction where the MP was last seen.
  - b. If the reporting person has not initially contacted the proper jurisdiction, they should be transferred to that agency.
  - c. If the proper jurisdiction refuses to take an MP report, then one shall be taken by the Department regardless of jurisdiction.
2. ALL MP reports shall be entered into the Missing Unidentified Persons System (MUPS).
  - a. A File Control Number (FCN) shall be obtained and documented in the Versadex Reporting System. If a vehicle is associated with the MP, a second FCN shall be obtained and the vehicle entered into the Stolen Vehicle System (SVS).
  - b. Records shall enter all "AT RISK" MP reports into MUPS within 2 hours from the time the MP was reported missing.
  - c. If an MP is located before he/she has been entered into MUPS but after a report number is obtained, an MP report must still be made into the MUPS systems and submitted to the DOJ, per PC 14207(a) and 14205(b).
  - d. If an MP is located after he/she has been entered into MUPS and an FCN is received, employees shall complete the MP report (SPD 136) and cancel the MP FCN.

## C. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Communications Division
  - a. Upon receiving notification of an MP, Communications shall determine the status of the MP (e.g "AT RISK, or not "AT RISK").
  - b. If the MP is identified as "AT RISK," Communications shall:
    - (1) without delay enter a 972 incident for Record Report Writer (RRW) to take the MP report.
    - (2) generate a 972 incident for dispatch, using the "FUP" command.
    - (3) change the priority from a "7" to a "3" and change the "queue" from a "T" to a "R".
    - (4) make an "all" units broadcast and dispatch officers without delay.
    - (5) If RRW are unavailable to take the MP report, generate a 972 incident for Officer(s) to be dispatched. NOTE: When dispatched to a 972 call Officers, shall take the MP report and contact records to do the MUPS entry within 2 hours of when initial contact with the RP was made.
    - (6) notify the District Sergeant of the details of the incident including if the MP has been reported missing in the past.
  - c. If the MP is determined not to be "AT RISK," Communications shall:
    - (1) enter a "972R" incident for RRWs or a call expeditor to take the MP report.
    - (2) dispatch a unit to take the report when a call expeditor or a RRW is unavailable.
  - d. Communications Division personnel shall ensure an MP clear-up is generated when notified of an MP's return by transferring callers to the Records Section Vehicle Update (VU) desk. During the hours that Records is unavailable, communications personnel shall enter a "972R" that will advise Records of the circumstances of the MP locate.
2. Records Section
  - a. RRW shall take MP reports when:
    - (1) a unit is not required to respond.
    - (2) notified via fax by the Children's Receiving Home, Sacramento Children's Home, CPS or any other reporting agency.
    - (3) MP reports that are referred by dispatch.
  - b. If a need for immediate police response is determined (i.e cases of violence abductions or "At



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- Risk” MPs) RRW shall notify communications.
- c. If after starting an MP report, it is determined that the MP is "AT RISK", RRW shall:
- (1) complete page 1 and 2 of the report.
  - (2) enter the MP into MUPS.
  - (3) make the following phone calls:
    - (a) SCMHC
    - (b) Sutter and Sierra Mental facilities
    - (c) UCD
    - (d) Mercy
    - (e) Mercy General
    - (f) Mercy San Juan
    - (g) Sutter General
    - (h) Sutter Memorial
    - (i) Kaiser North and South
    - (j) Methodist Hospital
    - (k) Sierra Vista
    - (l) Sutter Psych Center
    - (m) Heritage Oak
    - (n) Sacramento County Jail
    - (o) Juvenile Hall
    - (p) Children’s Receiving Home (if applicable)
    - (q) Sacramento Coroner’s Office (**Note: call to the coroner’s office shall always be made including cases of “chronic runaways”.**)
  - (4) request Communications dispatch a unit.
- d. When there is a doubt whether the circumstances warrant taking a report, the RRW shall notify their immediate supervisor who will consult with the District Sergeant.
- e. RRWs shall identify the vehicles associated with an MP and enter the vehicles into MUPS and SVS.
- (1) When the MP is “AT RISK”, or under 21, employees shall make these entries within (2) hours of receiving the notice from the Officer.
- f. When a report of a “located” MP is received, the RRW shall:
- (1) advise the District Sergeant. The District Sergeant will make the determination if it is necessary to send a unit to confirm that the MP has been located based on the circumstances.
  - (2) clear all MUPS and SVS entries for MPs with vehicles.
  - (3) send a “locate” notification via teletype if the located MP is from an outside jurisdiction.
- g. Upon receipt of MP reports with photographs attached, the photographs shall be forwarded to the Office of Investigations (OOI) Missing Persons Unit (MPU) with a copy of the report.
- h. In cases where the MP is "AT RISK," within 24 hours employees shall notify and forward a copy of the MP report to the agency having jurisdiction over the MP's place of residence AND the agency having jurisdiction where the MP was last seen.
- i. When an MP is located, the jurisdiction in which the MP was located shall complete the “clear up report” and or “locate” notification.
- j. Personnel working the VU desk shall send a "locate" notification to the outside agency via teletype.
3. Office of Field Services (OFS) - “AT RISK” MPs
- a. Officers dispatched to an MP call shall:
- (1) respond to the scene and contact the RP.
  - (2) obtain the description of the MP and circumstances surrounding the disappearance.
  - (3) with consent, conduct an initial search of the MP’s residence. If the MP is not located after the initial search, broadcast a description of the MP and notify the District Sergeant.
- NOTE: If the RP is anyone other than the child's parents or legal guardian, immediately



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- (4) attempt to contact the child's parents or legal guardian and advise them of the situation.
- (4) contact friends or relatives with whom the MP was last seen.
- (5) contact the Records Section VU desk to ensure the appropriate MUPS and SVS entries are made within two (2) hours from making contact with the RP.
- (6) call all sources listed in section C.2.c.(3). above when Records is not available.
- (7) complete all observations, supplements and update page 2 of the MP report with any additional witness information.
- (8) forward available photographs of MPs to the MPU with the report number attached.
- b. Officers clearing an MP call shall:
  - (1) call Records Section VU desk to cancel the MUPS entry when notified of an MP's return.
  - (2) complete a supplemental report when necessary.
- c. Officers Clearing an Outside agency MP shall:
  - (1) complete an incident/Information Report via Versadex.
  - (2) notify the Records Section Vehicle Update (VU) desk.
- d. When a vehicle associated with an MP is located, officers shall:
  - (1) take appropriate investigative follow-up action based on the circumstances of the MP report and the condition of the vehicle.
  - (2) ensure that the Records Section clears the vehicle by immediately removing it from MUPS and SVS.
  - (3) complete a supplement noting the circumstances under which the vehicle was located.
- e. When available, an expeditor shall take MP reports. Expeditors shall:
  - (1) notify the Communications Division if a unit is needed to respond.
  - (2) complete the initial report.
  - (3) notify the Records Section to make appropriate computer entries and verify that all appropriate phone calls were made.
- f. The District Sergeant shall:
  - (1) monitor the investigation and direct the operation as necessary.
  - (2) notify the Watch Commander (WC) of at "risk" MPs.
  - (3) ensure that all follow up phone calls were made.
  - (4) In cases of "chronic" runaways contacts to the medical facilities shall be made at the discretion of the Sergeant. However, per 14602(a) the coroners shall be contacted by Records. If Records is unavailable, the investigating officer shall make the call.
- g. The investigation shall not be terminated until the District Sergeant has all of the facts and gives approval to do so.
- h. Resources:
  - (1) SPD Air Unit
  - (2) K9
  - (3) Reverse 911 broadcast (used particularly for elderly walk away)
  - (4) Media release - PIO has the ability to send out press releases to numerous news stations and has contacts for local news channels.
  - (5) Supervisors may consider setting up a command post if the search requires large amounts of personnel.
- i. Additional Outside Agency Resources NOTE: **All outside agency requests shall be made through the WC.**
  - (1) SSD/CHP AIR OPS
  - (2) SSD DISPATCH can dispatch the following:
    - (a) SSD Search and Rescue - tracking dogs
    - (b) Drowning Accidents Rescue Dart Team (D.A.R.T) - Search, Rescue and Recovery.
  - (3) CHP 24/7 Amber Alert - **NOTE: The WCs (or their designee) shall confer with the Investigations Lieutenant prior to initiating an Amber Alert.**
  - (4) CHP 24/7 Silver Alert- **NOTE: The WCs (or their designee) shall confer with the Investigations Lieutenant prior to initiating a Silver Alert.**



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- (5) After all field leads are exhausted, the WC (or their designee) may contact the Investigations Division and request their involvement. After being fully briefed, Investigations will assume primary responsibility.
- (6) The Investigations supervisor shall be fully briefed by the WC (or their designee) prior to taking over the investigation.
- (7) Patrol and the MP Unit shall continue to assist the Investigations as requested.
4. Office of Investigations (OOI) Missing Person Investigation
  - a. The MPU detective will conduct follow-up investigations and shall:
    - (1) produce and distribute Information Bulletins on "AT RISK" MPs, when necessary.
    - (2) send "Be-On-The-Look-Out" (BOLO) teletypes, when necessary.
    - (3) send dental and skeletal records when available to the Department of Justice as required by law.
    - (4) clear all MUPS and SVS entries within 24 hours for "AT RISK" MPs or within 72 hours for MPs not "AT RISK". NOTE: "AT RISK" MUPS AND SVS entries may also be cleared by the Records Section.
  - b. A detective within the MPU shall review all cases as soon as possible and provide assistance to OFS when necessary.
  - c. if a reported MP is determined to have legal residence outside the City of Sacramento, the MPU shall:
    - (1) Send a notification letter to the appropriate agency having jurisdiction of the investigation.
    - (2) Make a follow-up phone call to ensure that the proper agency has been advised of the MP.
    - (3) Complete a supplement to the original G.O. or the Information Report identifying the employee of the outside agency who was notified.
  - d. Upon receiving the "locate notification" from the jurisdictional agency, an SPD employee shall attach it to the SPD MP report via Versadex.
5. The MPU shall review all supplemental investigation reports and ensure the appropriate cancellations have been made in MUPS and SVS.

## D. ASSIGNING MISSING REPORTS

1. The MPU detective shall ensure the MP Sergeant is notified when any of the following circumstances are present:
  - a. The MP is at "AT RISK" or 0-15 years of age.
  - b. The MP is a victim of suspected foul play.
  - c. The MP is in need of medical attention for conditions that may be life threatening.
  - d. The MP is mentally impaired and unable to care for themselves, or may pose a threat to themselves or others.
  - e. The MP has no pattern of running away coupled with questionable circumstances.
  - f. The MP is a victim of parental or family abduction. MPs who are victims of parental or family abduction shall be referred to the SACA Unit (Sexual Assault Child Abuse).
  - g. When assistance is requested by a patrol supervisor or Detectives.