



Missing Person

Section: 2.438
Effective Date: March 30, 2011
Amended: July 19, 2016

2.438 Missing Persons

Agency officers will initiate an investigation of missing persons and children (including runaways, abandonment, abducted, or other missing status) and submit missing person reports on all persons reported missing from the agency's primary jurisdiction unless the calls have been deemed unfounded by supervisory or the inquiry assumed by Baltimore Police.

2.438.02 Missing Adults (18 years of age or older)

- A. Missing person investigations will be conducted immediately when adults are:
 - 1. Missing and under proven physical/mental disabilities or are senile, thereby subjecting themselves or others to personal or immediate danger;
 - 2. Missing and in the company of other persons under circumstances indicating their physical safety is in danger; or
 - 3. Missing when the disappearances do not indicate they are voluntary; or
- B. Upon initial complaint, the Police Communication Officer (PCO) will dispatch an officer to meet with the reporting person.
- C. Upon receipt of a missing person complaint, officers will exhaust all leads in order to make a conclusive determination as to the missing status of the individual.

2.438.04 Missing Persons under the age of 18

- A. The Maryland Annotated Code contains statutes that establish criteria and protocols for the investigation of missing children.
- B. There is no waiting period before a law enforcement agency initiates an investigation of a missing person.
- C. Upon initial complaint, a Police Communication Officer (PCO) will dispatch an officer to meet with the reporting person.
- D. Upon receipt of a missing child complaint, officers will immediately determine if:
 - 1. the missing child has not been the subject of prior missing person report;
 - 2. the missing child suffers from mental or physical handicap or illness;
 - 3. the disappearance of the missing child is of a suspicious or dangerous nature;
 - 4. the person filing the report of a missing child has reason to believe that the missing child may have been abducted;

5. the missing child has ever previously been the subject of a child abuse report filed with the State or local law enforcement agency; or
6. the missing child is under 17 years of age.

2.438.06 Missing Person Investigations, Generally

- A. The responsibilities of initial investigating officers include, but are not limited to:
 1. Obtaining an initial description of the missing person;
 2. Conducting thorough preliminary investigations;
 3. If the person is under 17 years of age, their information is to be entered into NCIC as a missing person;
 4. Requesting PCC personnel to broadcast descriptions of missing persons;
 5. The University Police Officer will complete a Miscellaneous Incident report (MI) and notify the Baltimore Police Department of the status of the missing person.
 6. Contacting on-duty Shift supervisors/OIC's to determine what, if any, immediate follow-up investigations will be conducted; and
 7. Obtaining a color photograph of the victim;
 8. Completing required agency reports.
- B. Shift supervisors/OIC's will:
 1. Notify the Lieutenant
 2. Determine, through the best information available, if immediate follow-up investigations are necessary;
 3. Make appropriate notifications; and
 4. Initiate intensive search and/or investigative actions where circumstances dictate.
- C. If missing children have not been located within 24 hours of the filing of missing persons reports and either this agency, BPD or MSP have reason to believe that the missing children may be located outside our jurisdiction, BPD or MSP is required by the Maryland Annotated Code to enter the investigation and, in cooperation with this agency, assist State and national efforts to locate the missing children.
- D. The UYPD officer will follow up on missing persons. Baltimore Police Department's Homicide Detectives are responsible for all follow-up investigations involving missing juveniles when abduction by strangers. The District Detective Unit (DDU) investigates all parental abductions.
- E. Search and follow-up procedures for missing adults and juveniles may include, but are not limited to:
 1. Thoroughly checking residences;
 2. Searching immediate areas;
 3. Checking locations where missing persons are thought to frequent;
 4. Interviewing friends, relatives, and acquaintances of missing persons;
 5. Mobilizing off-duty personnel to assist in searches;
 6. Requesting other law enforcement agencies to search specific locations or question specific persons believed to have relevant knowledge;
 7. Requesting investigative assistance from BPD, MSP, the FBI, or other relevant law enforcement agencies; and
 8. Contacting reporting persons for follow-ups.

- F. Investigating officers are responsible for requesting Police Communication Operators (PCO) enter and/or remove missing person information. PCO's are responsible for ensuring missing person messages are entered and removed consistent with METERS and NCIC protocols.

2.438.08 Amber Alerts

- A. The Maryland State Police are responsible for the state-wide coordination of the AMBER Alert.
 - 1. Radio and Television stations volunteer to immediately interrupt programming and broadcast information about a child abduction by using the Emergency Alert System (EAS).
 - 2. MDOT/SOC will also display information about the alert on DMS signs statewide on all highways.
 - 3. MSP will create an internet post of the missing child, and will also create posters upon request. The color photo of the child is required for this purpose.
- B. AMBER Alert guidelines are set by the State:
 - 1. AMBER Alerts may be requested only by law enforcement;
 - 2. AMBER Alerts are intended only for the most serious, time-critical child abduction cases;
 - 3. AMBER Alerts are not intended for cases involving runaways or parental abductions, except in life-threatening situations.
 - 4. AMBER Alerts are only for juveniles (persons 17 years of age and younger).
- C. Criteria for an AMBER Alert are as follows:
 - 1. Officers verify that the child has been abducted;
 - 2. Officers believe the circumstances surrounding the abduction indicate the child is in serious danger of bodily harm or death;
 - 3. There must be enough descriptive information about the child, and the suspect or the suspect vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast would help.
 - 4. The abductor and/or child are likely to still be in the broadcast area.
- D. When officers reasonably believe a case meets the criteria for an AMBER Alert, they will contact the MSP Headquarters Duty Officer to request an activation of the AMBER Alert. Contact may be made by telephone, facsimile, or METERS.
 - 1. MSP will call back to verify the information from an officer with detailed knowledge of the case to ensure the AMBER Alert is properly broadcast.

2.438.10 Student Housing - Federal Guidelines

- A. The Higher Education Opportunity Act, Public Law 110-315 (Required beginning in the fall of 2010) stipulates that any institution that maintains an on-campus housing facility must establish, for students who reside in an on-campus student housing facility, both a policy and procedures for missing student notification. The statement, to be included in the Annual Security Report, must include the following:
 - 1. A list of titles of the persons or organizations to which individuals should report that a student has been missing for 24 hours.
 - 2. A statement that each student living in an on-campus student housing facility has the option to register a confidential contact person to be notified in the case that the student is determined to

- be missing and that only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers in furtherance of a missing person investigation may have access to this information.
3. A statement that advises all students, even if they have not registered a contact person, that the local law enforcement will be notified that the student is missing.
 4. A statement that advises students less than 18 years of age and not emancipated that their parent or guardian must be notified.
 5. A statement that requires that official missing student reports be referred immediately to an institutional police or campus security department or local law enforcement.
 6. Specific procedures that the institution must follow when a student who resides in an on-campus student housing facility is determined to have been missing for 24 hours.
- B This requirement does not preclude implementing these procedures in less than 24 hours if circumstances warrant a faster implementation.