

Waltham Police Department

MISSING PERSONS

CHAPTER 48

General Order #: GO-01 2014

Effective Date: 02/2014, 05/2017, 09/2020, 01/2023

Accreditation Standard #'s: 41.2.5, 41.2.6, 46.2.5

FORMS:

Amber Alert.pdf

48-1 Missing Person Entry Form.doc

48-2 Located Missing Person Checklist.doc

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Waltham Police Department to ensure that reports of missing persons are promptly recorded, assessed, and investigated in accordance with these procedures.

1. **REPORTS:** A QED Police Report shall be completed, both when a person is reported missing and again when the person is located.
2. **OUTSIDE JURISDICTION:** A report of someone missing from Waltham may be made by someone who resides outside of our jurisdiction. Every effort should be made to confirm the legitimacy of the report.
3. **GROUP HOME:** Officers shall not deviate from normal procedure in taking reports of a missing person from a Group Home. No missing person forms or reports shall be accepted by facsimile, unless authorized by the chief of police.
4. **INITIAL REPORT:** [41.2.5-A, 41.2.6]

Upon receiving a report of a missing person, the following shall be done: [41.2.6f], [41.2.6a], [41.2.6e]

- a. Enter an incident in QED.
- b. A sector car shall be assigned responsibility for the preliminary investigation and incident report.
- c. The Operations Clerk or the investigating officer shall complete a Missing Person's Form (Form 48-1). [41.2.5a]
- d. The Operations Clerk shall enter the information in the CJIS Messenger System

forthwith and send a CJIS Administrative Message where applicable. [41.2.5c]

- e. The Operations Clerk shall enter the information in the DCJIS Share-Folder.
- f. The Operations Clerk shall enter a DHQ blotter item.
- g. The Operations Clerk/Investigating Officer shall prepare information for a BOLO.

5. **DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION:** [41.2.5-B] In order to disseminate information appropriately to personnel:

- a. The ETD or officer shall broadcast a BOLO.
- b. Each subsequent shift shall be notified of the missing person at roll call for a minimum of three days.
- c. The WPD Social Networking Sites should be updated as needed and a Press Release should be considered for distribution to local media outlets.
- d. The WPD webpage should be updated as needed.
- e. For exigencies, the Code-Red Emergency Notification System may be a helpful tool in locating missing persons in certain instances. Contact the ETD supervisor for assistance.

6. **PHOTOGRAPHS:** A photograph should be obtained and scanned into DHQ and QED. The photograph and related paperwork should be forwarded to Detectives. Permission should be obtained from the family prior to disseminating such information outside the department. [41.2.5b]

7. **OIC NOTIFICATION:** In all cases of a missing child under thirteen years of age or any case involving an at-risk individual, the OIC shall be notified and a patrol supervisor shall be assigned to supervise the case. Some of the duties of the supervisor are to ensure that all steps are carried out, that the appropriate assisting agencies [41.2.6C] are called when/if needed, coordinate with officers through a central command post and keep in communication with the OIC. [41.2.6E]

8. **PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION:** The investigating officer should, whenever possible, interview the reporting party who initiated the report to verify information already available and to obtain further facts which may be helpful, including the following information: [41.2.6-E]

- a. Detailed description.
- b. Whether the person has ever been reported missing on previous occasions; if so,

the circumstances and where found.

- c.** Personal habits or interests, places frequented, location of out-of-town relatives or friends.
- d.** Determining whether the person is a potential victim of foul play.
- e.** Any drug dependencies.
- f.** Reason for any delay in reporting the person missing.
- g.** The extent of any search already performed by the reporting or other parties.
- h.** List of individuals already contacted (i.e.: friend, relatives) and list of those not yet contacted.
- i.** Details pertaining to any mental, emotional or physical impairment of the missing person, or whether medication is required.
- j.** Where appropriate, department records should be consulted for any further information about the missing person.
- k.** Whether the person's absence is a significant deviation from established patterns of behavior and cannot be explained. **[41.2.6f]**
- l.** Whether the child may be with adults, including parents and other relatives, who may endanger the welfare of the child. **[41.2.6f]**
- m.** Obtain the name of the school the child attends.
- n.** Expanding the search should be considered after already searching the home or location where the child is missing from. The following places outside the home should be considered when conducting a search for a missing child.
- o.** The last place the child was reported being seen, including interviews of individuals who were present at the actual scene.
- p.** Friends' houses.
- q.** Places frequented by the child.
- r.** Playgrounds.
- s.** Places of employment.

- t. Local hospitals.
 - u. Wooded areas.
 - v. Bodies of water.
 - w. YMCA.
 - x. Boys & Girls Club.
 - y. Library.
 - z. School.
 - aa. Kid's Chill Zone or other like areas of interest.
9. **SCHOOL NOTIFICATION:** Upon the receipt of a report of a missing child, the School Safety Officer shall be notified and shall contact the last known elementary or secondary school, whether public or private, of which the child had been enrolled. When the child has been located, the school will be notified of the return.
10. **VOLUNTARY MISSING:** Voluntary missing children cases focus on the family, friends, school, and lifestyle of the missing youth. Any indication of neglect or abuse in the family should be considered. [41.2.6]
11. **NEMLEC:** NEMLEC is a valuable resource. Depending on the factors of the case, NEMLEC can be called at any stage. Age, circumstance, weather conditions, time of the day, mental and/or physical issues of the missing person, suspected abduction etc. can play a part in calling out NEMLEC. This decision to activate NEMLEC is made by the Chief of Police with input from the OIC and Supervisor on scene. [41.2.6e]
12. **SCOPE OF SEARCH:** [46.2.5] This department shall conduct and coordinate search and rescue operations for lost persons within the limits of its jurisdiction.
13. **LOCAL RESOURCES:**
- a. Sworn Officers.
 - b. Canine Officer (Reference Chapter 75).
 - c. Fire Dept. personnel.
 - d. School employees (if child).

14. EXTRA JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES:

- a. State Police.
- b. Other police agency personnel (State Police).
- c. Mass Environmental Police (bodies of water with joint jurisdiction).
- d. NEMLEC.

15. CONSIDERATIONS:

- a. Weather.
- b. Season of the year.
- c. Temperature, Exposure.
- d. Time of day.
- e. Remaining daylight.
- f. Age of lost person.
- g. Mental state of lost person.
- h. Physical condition of lost person.

16. INITIAL POLICE RESPONSE: Follow procedures set forth in Chapter 48 Missing Persons.

17. LARGE SCALE SEARCHES: In the event that a search becomes large in scope, supervisors should follow the standard Incident Command System (ICS) protocols. NEMLEC should also be activated by the Chief of Police.

18. SEARCHES FOR DECEASED PERSON: If foul play is suspected, supervisors and searchers must be aware of preserving possible crime scenes and evidence. Follow the department's policy on Collection and Preservation of Evidence. Protocol for notification of Investigative Division OIC shall be followed.

19. POST INCIDENT DEBRIEFING: Reference Chapter 1B - post traumatic incidents.

20. PARENTAL KIDNAPPING: A noncustodial parental kidnapping case requires a thorough investigation, as the abducting parent may be in violation of the law.

21. **ABDUCTION:** [41.2.5-1D], [41.2.6d] Abduction cases require that the child be considered in extreme danger and are therefore subject to mobilization of every available resource.

The following procedures shall be followed:

- a. A Command Post (CP) should be established away from the child's house.
- b. An officer should be stationed at the house to maintain communication between the CP and the parents or legal guardian in the event that the child is found or returns home.
- c. Notify a Detective Supervisor, if none are available then contact the Commanding Officer of the Detective Division.
- d. FBI Notification (617-742-5533).

22. **AMBER ALERT:** [41.2.5G], [41.2.6] An Amber Alert shall be activated as expeditiously as possible once it is established that the child has been abducted.

An Amber Alert (**1-508-820-2121**) requires authorization through the Chief of Police and may be authorized under the following criteria:

- a. A child under the age of 18 years has been abducted.
- b. The child is in danger of serious bodily harm, injury or death.
- c. There is enough descriptive information to believe an Amber Alert may help locate the child.

23. **A CHILD IS MISSING PROGRAM:** [46.2.5], [41.2.6] The ACIM Program can be used in the following instances:

- a. Cases involving missing children (ages 2-18).
- b. At risk individuals (Alzheimer's).
- c. Runaways – when foul play is suspected.
- d. Child abductions.
- e. Intellectually or physically challenged – unable to take care of themselves or endangered.

ACIM operates similar to a reverse 911 system. This program can generate 1,000 phone

calls per minute to a certain target area within the city. This target area can also be broadened out, when needed, to reach other points in the city. Target areas shall be determined by the Officer in Charge. The following shall be done:

- a. The OIC will direct the ETD to undertake notifying the ACIM Program. The 24-hour help line 945-763-1288 or 888-875-2246.
- b. If the missing child is located, the OIC shall inform the ETD to notify the ACIM Program to cancel notification.

The following contains useful phone numbers in the event of missing child:

- a. Team Hope (support group): 1-800-305-HOPE (4673)
- b. National Runaway Switchboard (child runaways): 1-800-RUNAWAY (786-2929)
- c. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: 1-800-THE-LOST (1-800-843-5678) **Fax:** 703-224-2122

24. ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: [46.2.5, 41.2.5f] When a person with Alzheimer's disease is reported missing, the following steps shall be taken:

- a. An investigation shall be initiated immediately as such persons are considered at risk.
- b. Safe Return shall be notified at 1-800-572-1122. Safe Return is a national Alzheimer registry available to law enforcement to help resolve lost elder cases.
- c. Patrol officers shall periodically recheck the area where the person was last seen. These individuals are usually found within a mile or two from where they disappeared. They will usually not respond to shouts nor will they cry out for help.
- d. Contact the TRIAD Officer.

25. FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION:

- a. **FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES:** [41.2.5d, e], [41.2.6f]
 - 1. A detective will be assigned a follow up investigation should the individual not be located within a reasonable period of time, not to exceed 24 hours. [41.2.6b, e]
 - 2. The investigator should maintain contact with family members/or the reporting party as to the progress of the investigation. [41.2.5]

b. **MEDICAL/DENTAL RECORDS:** [41.2.5f] In certain cases of a missing person, the investigating officer shall request from the appropriate person:

1. A written authorization for the release of medical/dental records.
2. A copy of the missing person's fingerprints if available.
3. A sample of the missing person's DNA if available.

The following contains useful phone numbers in the event of a prolonged missing person's investigation:

1. Massachusetts State Police Missing Person Clearing House (Fusion Center):

Phone: 978-451-3700 **Toll-free:** 1-800-622-5999 **Fax:** 978-451-3707
E-Mail: MMCC@pol.state.ma.us www.mass.gov/missingchildren

2. FBI: 617-742-5533

c. **EQUIPMENT:** If the investigating officer determines that the aid of outside agencies or special equipment will be helpful, a request for these services shall be made after consultation with a Detective Supervisor. [41.2.6c].

d. **NEWS MEDIA:** News media can be valuable in locating a missing person. A decision to use such resources shall be made after approval by a Detective Supervisor and consultation with the family of the missing person.

26. **LOCATED MISSING PERSON:** When a missing person has been located:

- a. Ensure medical attention is provided, if required.
- b. The party originating the report is to be notified that the person has been located, bearing in mind the missing person's right to privacy. [41.2.5-6d]
- c. Notify the investigator assigned to the case when applicable.
- d. Cancel the missing person from the CJIS Messenger System. [41.2.5-6c]
- e. Notify other agencies and the applicable school where warranted.
- f. Complete the Located Missing Person Form (Form 48-2).
- g. A QED supplemental report shall be written that is attached to the original missing police report narrative, detailing the circumstances surrounding the finding of the

person.

- h.** Update the DCJIS Share-Folder.
- i.** Update DHQ/Police Information Book.