

## Missing Persons

### 307.1 MISSING PERSON INITIAL INVESTIGATIONS

**Agency Content**

The Department will immediately accept an investigate reports of missing persons. There shall be no required waiting period.

If the subject is a school aged child, contact the SIRP officer at the school the child attends and/or school officials to request they flag the child's school records and search the child's locker for leads.

Investigations of missing persons shall be initially conducted by the Patrol Division. Upon receiving a complaint of a missing person, officers shall:

- (a) Respond to the scene without delay.
- (b) Verify that the person is, in fact, missing.
- (c) If the missing person is a child, priority should be given to the thorough search of the residence and the place the child was last seen.
- (d) If the missing person is identified as Autistic any body of water in the vicinity should be given immediate priority. Evidence indicates that some Autistic persons have a fascination with water and thus may be susceptible to drowning.
- (e) Interview the person(s) who made the initial report and last had contact with the missing person.
- (f) Identify the circumstances of the disappearance.
- (g) Based on the available information, an initial determination of the type of incident (e.g. runaway, lost, non-family or family abduction, injured, vulnerable adult, etc.).
- (h) Obtain a detailed description of the missing person (e.g. name, date of birth, clothing worn, physical appearance, nickname, etc.), abductor, vehicles, etc.
- (i) Broadcast known details on all police communications systems, including an entry in the e-Justice Integrated Portal (e.g. Point of Information, General Message).
- (j) Check the Sex Offender Registry to determine if any registered offenders live in proximity to the point where the person was last seen. If so, assign personnel to investigate including an in-person check/interview.
- (k) When applicable, make all notifications and/or request additional personnel or resources if needed.
- (l) If an abduction is confirmed, notify CID supervisor to coordinate activation of an abduction alert program broadcast (e.g. AMBER Alert).
- (m) If the criteria for a missing vulnerable adult/college student/missing child are met, notify a CID supervisor to coordinate additional alert program broadcasts.
- (n) If there is an identifiable locations, including the person's bedroom, thats could possibly classified as a crime scene, or at least a site where contents should not

# Syracuse Police Department

## Supplemental Manual

### *Missing Persons*

---

be disturbed, secure the location to preserve possible items of evidence. All cellular phone and computer devices should be preserved for examination.

- (o) Obtain a recent photograph or fingerprints of the subject whenever possible.
- (p) Complete the Missing Persons page in a CNYLEADS report.
- (q) Consider the use of Air 1 if applicable.

When conducting interviews of the person making the report (e.g. parents, friends, family, neighbors, or other witnesses) officers should attempt to determine:

- (a) Who last saw the subject.
- (b) Where the subject was last seen.
- (c) When the subject was noticed to be missing.
- (d) The names of the subject's friend and their addresses.
- (e) If there are any unusual circumstances surrounding the disappearance.
- (f) If the subject talked about running away or committing suicide.
- (g) Places the subject frequented.
- (h) If there were any family problems affecting the subject.
- (i) If the subject uses drugs or alcohol.
- (j) If the subject recently experienced problems at work or school.
- (k) When and where each person interviewed last saw the subject.
- (l) The name and address or description of anyone last seen with the subject.
- (m) Who has custody of the subject, if the subject is a child.
- (n) If the subject has a history of mental illness, serious medical conditions, cognitive disorders, mental disabilities, brain disorders, or other handicaps.
- (o) If the subject has recently demonstrated any abnormal behavior.
- (p) Officers may utilize the DCJS Missing Persons Data Collection Guide. This guide can be found on the NYS Missing Persons Clearinghouse website [www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/missing](http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov/missing) under the publications menu.

### **307.2 MISSING PERSON REPORT REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Agency Content**

An incident report must be prepared for any of the following:

- (a) Missing persons who are residents of the City of Syracuse, including college students living on campus, residents of foster care and group home, non-secure detention centers, and anyone involuntarily housed at a hospital within the City of Syracuse.
- (b) Missing persons reported to this Department who have already been entered into NCIC or the e-Justice Integrated Portal by an outside agency. This report will be listed under the incident type category as "miscellaneous" (MISC).

# Syracuse Police Department

## Supplemental Manual

### Missing Persons

---

- (c) When the investigating officer is unable to ascertain the identity of a found person.
- (d) When the out of service time on a missing person complaint is over sixty minutes.

#### **307.3 MISSING PERSON REPORT**

##### **Agency Content**

The investigating officer will complete the incident report accurately and completely. The narrative portion will be utilized for additional pertinent information not listed on the missing/found supplement page. This information includes, but is not limited to:

- (a) Locations where the missing person could be located.
- (b) All locations that have been checked.
- (c) Any other physical characteristics that would help identify the person.

#### **307.4 MISSING PERSON E-JUSTICE INTEGRATED PORTAL MESSAGES**

##### **Agency Content**

File 6 missing person entries are authorized by the e-Justice Integrated Portal whenever:

- (a) A person of any age is missing and has proven physical or mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting himself or others to personal and immediate danger.
- (b) A person of any age is missing and in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his physical safety is in danger.
- (c) A person of any age is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary.
- (d) A person is less than eighteen (<18) years of age.
- (e) A person is considered a missing vulnerable adult.

A File 11A e-Justice Integrated Portal message (abduction message shall be generated if an abduction has been confirmed to ensure that other law enforcement agencies are aware of the abduction and related details. Statewide distribution (and if deemed to be appropriate, dissemination to adjoining states) is required. This will assist in coordinating the involvement of other police agencies and will ensure that they are prepared to effectively handle telephone calls received in response to any broadcast abduction alert (Onondaga County or New York State).

A File 25 "attempt to locate" message shall be entered into the e-Justice Integrated Portal in all other cases.

#### **307.5 INVESTIGATION OF MISSING CHILDREN OR INCAPACITATED PERSONS**

##### **Agency Content**

If a missing person is determined to be a child under the age of twelve (12), elderly (age 65 or older or an Alzheimer's/Dementia patient), or disabled (physically or mentally) the reporting officer will immediately notify a supervisor regarding the incident. If a supervisor is not available, the officer will follow the chain of command until notification is made.

# Syracuse Police Department

## Supplemental Manual

### *Missing Persons*

---

The residence of a missing person and the surrounding area must be thoroughly checked by the investigating officer(s). This includes attics, basements, closets, under beds, storage sheds, swimming pools, motor vehicles, etc.

If a search is necessary, a patrol supervisor will take charge of the investigation, establish a command post if necessary, and notify the Emergency 9-1-1 Center of its location.

The Emergency 9-1-1 Center will notify the Watch Commanding Officer, Criminal Investigations Division supervisor and the Duty Chief.

If a missing person is not located by the end of a shift, it is the Watch Commanding Officer's responsibility to notify the next Watch Commanding Officer coming on duty, of the circumstances and status of the incident. The Watch Commanding Officer coming on duty will assign officers from his/her watch to the call. These officers will continue the search until the missing person is found, the search is discontinued, or they are relieved.

All search information must be documented in an incident or supplemental report(s). The Commanding Officer that orders the discontinuation of a search, will prepare an Inter-Departmental-Memo (Form 10.1) which will include the reason(s) why the search was stopped.

Notifications made to outside agencies will include, if applicable, any information relating to special medical problems where the need for medication and/or medical services may be essential to sustain the life or health of a missing person.

A records check will be made to ascertain any previous history and/or behavioral patterns of a missing person.

The officer handling the initial investigation of a missing person will not return to service until properly relieved by a supervisor, another unit, or until enough facts have been gathered to complete the investigation.

Unless extenuating circumstances exist, the above procedures do not apply to a person who has been reported as "escaped" or "missing" from medical facilities providing psychiatric treatment where the individual was admitted on an involuntary status.

In cases where a child, seventeen years of age or younger (<17), is reported missing and the preliminary investigation reveals that an AMBER Alert is necessary, Departmental procedures will be followed as set forth in the Public Alerts policy.

Officers should instruct the family to notify all relatives, particularly those living out of state, of the subject's disappearance, providing them with the name of the officer/detective assigned to the investigation and the phone numbers for contacting the Department.

### **307.6 FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION FOR UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS/INCOMPETENT PERSONS**

**Agency Content**

Detective(s) conducting follow-up investigations of unidentified children or incompetent shall:

# Syracuse Police Department

## Supplemental Manual

### *Missing Persons*

---

- (a) Complete the “Unidentified Person Data Collection Guide” (form DCJS-1507).
- (b) Fingerprint and photograph the subject.
- (c) Have the Central Records Division send a File 6 message via the e-Justice Integrated Portal system.
- (d) Forward the “Unidentified Person Data Collection Guide” (form DCJS-1507), fingerprints and photographs to the Division of Criminal Justice Services.
- (e) Searches using VICAP and NYS VICAP should be considered as investigative tools. In addition, an NCIC “Offline Search” can be utilized to obtain information not available through an online inquiry (searches by geographical area, etc.)

Whenever an unidentified child is not reunited with his parents the missing person’s detective/investigating officer shall contact Onondaga County Child Protective Services and arrange for the temporary placement of the child.

- (a) If the unidentified child has attempted or threatened suicide, the missing person’s detective/investigating officer shall transport the unidentified child to St. Joseph’s Hospital (if injuries were sustained), or CPEP (if suicide was threatened) for further evaluation and treatment.

Detective(s) conducting follow-up investigations of incompetent persons shall:

- (a) Complete the “Unidentified Person Data Collection Guide” (form DCJS-1507).
- (b) Fingerprint and photograph the subject.
- (c) Have the Central Records Division send a File 6 message via the e-Justice Integrated Portal system.
- (d) Forward the “Unidentified Person Data Collection Guide” (form DCJS-1507), fingerprints and photographs to the Division of Criminal Justice Services.
- (e) Searches using VICAP and NYS VICAP should be considered as investigative tools. In addition, an NCIC “Offline Search” can be utilized to obtain information not available through an online inquiry (searches by geographical area, etc.)

Whenever an unidentified incompetent person is not returned to his/her home or to his/her guardian the missing person detective/investigating officer shall transport the subject to St. Joseph’s Hospital for examination and psychiatric evaluation.

### **307.7 LOCATED MISSING PERSONS**

#### **Agency Content**

When a person who has been reported missing is located, a follow up report must be completed and the investigating officer will:

- (a) Verify the return of the person.
- (b) Inquire as to why the person was missing.
- (c) Inquire where he/she was located.
- (d) Determine who located the individual.

# Syracuse Police Department

## Supplemental Manual

### *Missing Persons*

---

When this information has been obtained, the officer will:

- (a) Include the information in the incident report if the responding officer had the original complaint and the report has not yet been completed or,
- (b) Complete a follow up report under the original D.R. number, and
- (c) Notify the Central Records Division that the missing person has been located, provide the necessary information and request that the missing person general message/teletypes be canceled, including the "A child is Missing" @ 1-888-875-2246, (954)-763-1288 ([www.achildismissing.org](http://www.achildismissing.org)) if the service was utilized.

If the Syracuse Police Department receives notification that another agency has located a missing person from the City of Syracuse, this Department will perform the functions of the agency of jurisdiction (ORI) as set forth in the Runaways section of the Missing Persons policy.

### **307.8 JUVENILES WITH WARRANTS**

#### **Agency Content**

Upon receiving information that a juvenile is possibly wanted, the teletype operator will send a teletype message to the agency (ORI) that issued the warrant to verify that it is still active.

If the warrant is active, the teletype operator will notify the officer assigned to the call.

The officer will arrest the juvenile based on the verified teletype, and will follow Departmental procedures for arresting juveniles as set forth in the Juvenile Operations policy.

The teletype operator will inform the originating agency that the wanted juvenile is in custody, and will be held pending arrangements by that agency for the juvenile's return to their jurisdiction.

Departmental arrest procedures will be completed in the Youth Enforcement Unit office. The arresting officer will then contact the Hillbrook Detention Home, advise them of the situation and determine if they will accept the juvenile at their facility.

If the officer takes the juvenile to the Hillbrook Detention Home, a copy of the temporary detention form and a copy of the arrest report must be turned over to Hillbrook employees along with the juvenile.

All aspects of the investigation and arrest procedures will be documented in the incident report.

### **307.9 LOCATED MISSING PERSONS (OUTSIDE AGENCIES)**

#### **Agency Content**

When a police officer receives information that a juvenile has been reported missing from another jurisdiction, the officer will have the teletype operator contact the originating agency (ORI), and inform them that the missing juvenile has been located in the City of Syracuse.

The teletype will include a request that the originating agency contact a parent or guardian, inform them that the juvenile has been located and advise them to make arrangements for his/her return transport.

# Syracuse Police Department

## Supplemental Manual

### *Missing Persons*

---

If the originating agency replies and advises that the parent/guardian is unable to provide transportation, the following procedures shall apply:

- (a) If the missing juvenile is between 12 and 17 years of age, the investigating officer shall transport that missing juvenile to Booth House. Booth House will make arrangements for the safe transfer of the juvenile to their parent or guardian, per the Interstate Compact for Juveniles. Booth House can be contacted at (315) 471-7628.
- (b) If the missing juvenile is less than 12 years old, the investigating officer shall contact the CPS hotline at (315) 422-9701. A CPS case worker will respond, take custody of the juvenile, and make arrangements for the safe transfer of the juvenile to their parent or guardian, per the Interstate Compact for Juveniles.
- (c) In both cases, a teletype message shall be sent to the originating agency, indicating that the missing juvenile has either been transported to Booth House or turned over to a CPS case worker. A name and telephone number for the appropriate representative with those agencies shall be included in the teletype so that appropriate arrangements can be made for the transfer of the juvenile to the parent or guardian.

The officer will complete an incident or follow up report documenting all aspects of the investigation.