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Missing Persons Assignment Criteria (Supersedes DB 17-063)

When an officer becomes aware of a report of a missing person (including telephonic reports) or an at-risk missing person (including "runaways"), the officer accepting the report **shall** notify the Department Operations Center (DOC) at (415) 553-1071 **as soon as practical** to ensure the SFPD complies with Department of Justice (DOJ) reporting requirements.

Upon notification, **DOC shall** issue a "MISSING PERSON" department teletype. **DOC shall** enter the name of the missing person and all other required information into the CLETS Missing/Unidentified Persons System (MUPS) within 2-4 hours of accepting the report (see *Penal Code sections 14205(a), 14205(b), and 14205(c)* for further reference). As outlined by the DOJ, cases involving exigent circumstances shall be entered within 2 hours of reporting to the officer, 4 hours in all other cases.

Occasionally, a reported missing person will return but, for a variety of reasons, officers are not notified to make a Found Person report. It is incumbent upon the officers to conduct a record check of the person being reported missing to verify whether the person is already in MUPS. In instances where a missing person is already in MUPS and is later reported as a missing person under a new set of circumstances (i.e. a habitual runaway AWOLs, returns, then AWOL's again prior to police being notified of return), officers and/or PSAs **shall** prepare a new incident report and notify DOC. Officers and/or PSAs shall include in their narrative information relating to the missing person's return prior to the new missing incident. Officers and/or PSAs shall also input the existing missing person case number in the related case number field.

If a found person is reported as "missing" under more than one case number, officers shall write a supplemental Found Person report for the most recent case number and include all other open missing person cases as a related case/s.

If any of the following at-risk or exigent circumstances exist, the SVU-Missing Persons Unit shall be notified and assigned the report for follow up investigation:

- The missing person is under the age of 12. Infants or children in the company of the missing parent do not meet the criteria unless the officer has reason to believe that the safety of the child or the infant is in jeopardy. When Parental abduction is suspected, officers shall take a report and notify the District Attorney's Child Abduction Recovery Unit (CARU) for follow-up investigation.
- The missing person is over the age of 75.
- Circumstances exist to believe the missing person lacks the cognitive abilities to care for themselves.
- The missing person is not able to care for his/her safety based on contemporaneous threats of suicide or harm to self.
- The missing person requires immediate medical attention that, if left untreated, would cause serious risk of death.
- The officer suspects foul play or believes exceptional facts exist.

Per DGO 6.10, II, C, district station personnel are responsible for conducting an immediate and continuous search in cases involving at-risk or exigent circumstances. The duration of a continuous search is at the discretion of the **platoon commander** of the affected station. The officers searching for the missing person shall document in a supplemental report or a chronological of investigation form the steps they have taken to find the missing person. The searching officer/s shall at the end of the officer's watch give the platoon commander the search report i.e. the supplemental report or the chronological of investigation report. The platoon commander shall then reassign the search to another unit until the missing person is found or a determination is made to terminate the search. When the search is terminated the search form shall be forwarded to the lead investigator.

All other missing person reports shall be assigned to the Station Investigative Team (SIT) in the district where the report was made. **SIT investigators shall** create a case file documenting all follow up investigative efforts taken during the initial thirty (30) day time frame and scan and upload contents of the case file into the Department's SharePoint database at <http://pdshare/> periodically. A record jacket **shall** be created in SharePoint within forty-eight (48) hours of being assigned a missing person case for follow up. After thirty (30) days, if the missing person has not been found, the SIT investigator shall forward the complete case file with an up-to-date chronological report to SVU-Missing Persons Unit investigators. The SIT investigator shall also forward all found person case files to SVU.

If a missing person is located, the officer preparing the Found Person report **shall** confirm the identity of found person, conduct a well-being check on person, (and/or if found person is over the age of 75, have person medically assessed) and notify the DOC as soon as practical. **Members shall not use phone calls, emails, texts, social media, etc. to confirm the found person's return or to confirm the found person's identity. Members are required to physically see the found person before writing a Found Person report.** All reports shall be coded to the SVU-Missing Persons unit to ensure tracking.

Additionally, members shall ask the found person if he/she was the victim of any crime. If so, members shall take appropriate law enforcement action and document the details of the crime in a separate incident report and list the Found Person incident report number as a related case.

If an officer locates a missing person during a separate investigation or arrest, that member shall complete a supplemental report/separate found person report using the initial missing person case number. The member shall immediately notify DOC to ensure the missing person is removed from MUPS. If the found person is now part of a new investigation the new investigation shall be documented in a separate report.

The SVU-Missing Persons Unit is available to assist with missing persons investigations, provide assistance and serve as a resource to other investigative units within the SFPD. Investigators assigned to SVU-Missing Persons Unit can be reached at (415) 734-3070 or after hours, through the DOC at (415) 553-1071. SVU-Missing Persons is located at the Hall of Justice, 850 Bryant St., Room 500.

Officers assigned to the Airport Bureau shall follow the San Mateo County guidelines for Missing Persons.


WILLIAM SCOTT
Chief of Police

Per DB 17-080, sworn members are required to electronically acknowledge this Department Bulletin in HRMS.

MISSING PERSONS

This order establishes policy concerning accepting reports of missing persons, outlines procedures regarding inquiries and the preparation of incident reports, and specifies when immediate searches are required.

I. POLICY

Members shall immediately make an incident report in all cases where a concerned individual reports a person missing (including telephonic reports), regardless of the residence address or location of the reportee or missing person, the time reported, the age of the missing person, or the length of absence.

II. PROCEDURES

A. **INQUIRIES.** Prior to preparing an incident report, check with County Jail #1, SFGH and the Medical Examiner's Office to determine if any of these facilities have knowledge of the person. If these checks are negative, prepare an incident report (see below). Before the reportee leaves, tell the reportee to contact local hospitals and immediately notify the Department if the person is located.

B. INCIDENT REPORT

1. **INFORMATION.** When preparing an incident report, include the following information:
 - a. Results of inquiries made to other departments.
 - b. Why the reportee believes the person is missing.
 - c. Circumstances surrounding the person's disappearance.
 - d. Physical description e.g., age, height, weight, eye color, hair color and length, scars, tattoos, physical impairments.
 - e. Any identifying numbers e.g., driver license, social security, SFNO, CII and FBI.
 - f. Verification of personal information through DMV, CABLE, personal papers, or school records.

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- g. Whether dental or skeletal x-rays of the missing person are available and the name, address and telephone number of the doctor or dentist.
 - h. Description of clothing and jewelry.
 - i. Psychological or physical impairments.
 - j. Possible destination and places frequented.
- 2. **REPORTS BY TELEPHONE.** Station personnel shall take missing person reports over the telephone. The district unit will make well being checks when appropriate. If a caller reports that a missing person has returned, a unit shall be dispatched to make a supplemental report.
- 3. **PHOTOGRAPH.** When possible, obtain a current photograph of the missing person and write the person's name, date of birth and the incident case number on the back. Place it in an envelope and forward it to the Missing Person Section.
- 4. **NOTIFICATION.** Notify Operations Center. The Operations Center staff shall enter all missing persons into the MUPS system.

C. EXIGENT CIRCUMSTANCES / IMMEDIATE SEARCHES

- 1. **CRITERIA.** Certain exigent circumstances require an immediate search by officers. The following are examples of exigent circumstances:
 - a. The missing person is under the age of 12. Infants or children in the company of a missing parent do not meet the criteria unless the officer has reason to believe that the safety of the child or infant is in jeopardy.
 - b. The missing person is over the age of 75.
 - c. The missing person is not able to care for his/her safety.
 - d. The missing person requires immediate medical attention.
 - e. The officer suspects foul play or believes exceptional facts exist.
- 2. **NOTIFICATION.** If exigent circumstances exist, immediately notify your field supervisor. Officers should also contact County Jail #1, SFGH, and the Medical Examiner's Office and make an inquiry regarding the missing person. If these inquiries prove negative, immediately notify the Missing Person Section during the hours of 0900 to 1700, or Operations Center during any other hours.

3. **IMMEDIATE SEARCHES.** An immediate search shall be terminated only when the person is located or with the approval of the officer-in-charge of the unit making the search. If the officer-in-charge decides to end the search prior to locating the missing person, he/she shall:
 - a. Have officers periodically check with the reportee to determine if the missing person has returned.
 - b. Notify the oncoming officer-in-charge of the situation.
 - c. Ensure that the Missing Person Section or the Operations Center is notified if the subject has not been located by 0800 hrs the next day.

D. FOUND PERSONS

1. **NOTIFICATION.** Whenever a missing person (adult or juvenile) is located, notify the Operations Center and make a supplemental incident report. If a listed missing person is arrested or detained, add the title "FOUND PERSON" to the report heading and route a copy to Missing Persons. Include the circumstances in the narrative of the report. Operations Center shall remove all entries from the MUPS or NCIC systems once they are notified that the missing person has been located.
2. **JUVENILES.** If the person is a juvenile (under 18 yrs.) and there is no reason for a custodial arrest, you may choose any of the following options:
 - a. Return the juvenile to the juvenile's home, if the juvenile resides in the City.
 - b. Take the juvenile to the district station business office for pickup by a relative or guardian, providing the response is from 30 miles or less and can be made within 2 hours (see DGO 7.01, Juvenile Policies and Procedures).
 - c. If a relative or guardian will not or cannot respond within 2 hours, take the juvenile to Huckleberry House, 1292 Page St. (621-2929).
3. **RETURNED BEFORE REPORTING.** If the missing person returns or is located before you have submitted the report, an incident report is still required. Title the report "Missing Person/Found" and include the circumstances in the narrative.