



COTTAGE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

SUBJECT: **MISSING PERSON REPORTS**

NEW REVISED RESCINDS

APPROVED: *GM*
GEORGIA MILTENBERGER
ACTING CHIEF OF POLICE

Effective Date 8/22/2018

I. POLICY

- A. Any delay in reporting a missing person can hamper a subsequent investigation and negatively impact the effectiveness and perception of the agency within the community. This policy ensures that personnel understand the need for uniform and timely reporting of any missing person reported to this agency.
- B. Individuals may be missing for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to home, employment, or financial stresses or problems, physical or mental illness, juvenile runaways or more serious instances of parental abduction or the victim of a crime. Occasionally, persons, adults, juveniles or young children are found by police officers or others under circumstances and have not been reported as missing, but are in need of some type of supervision or care. On rare occasions, these persons may be unidentified, abandoned, incapacitated or deceased. In these instances all efforts will be expended to identify these individuals, ascertain the circumstances of their discovery, to provide any medical or mental health assistance as may be appropriate and to notify the next of kin or the appropriate care giver.
 - 1. Members of the department will accept, without delay, a report of a missing person whether such report is made in person, by telephone or any other means.
 - 2. Officers shall immediately process a report from anyone reporting a missing person by telephone or other electronic means and to have the person making the report complete the report in person as soon as possible. Members are reminded that there is no mandatory waiting period before filing a missing person report.

3. Officers taking a missing person report shall only utilize the Uniform Maryland Missing Person report form supplied by the department which contains the agency's ORI pre-printed on the upper right-hand corner or a space to include the ORI.
4. Only one (1) person may be reported on the Missing Person form. If there additional persons being reported at the same time, additional report forms shall be used and the cases linked, if necessary.
5. Missing Persons reports shall be classified as either CRITICAL or NON-CRITICAL as determined by the conditions set forth in this order. The appropriate classification code shall be entered in the upper left-hand corner of the report.
6. A Continuation Report shall be used if necessary to include additional information or narrative.
7. The complainant/reporting person is required, under the penalty of perjury, to sign the report form in the space provided.

II. PROCEDURES

- A. After completing a report of a missing person(s), officers shall immediately notify the Prince George's County Public Safety Communications and request the broadcast of the description of the missing person.
- B. Officers shall notify the appropriate investigative unit (CID or District 1 Investigators) of the Prince George's County Police and record the notification, to include the investigator's name and ID number, and any instructions provided on the report.
- C. Officers will conduct a neighborhood canvass and search of any area within the Town known to be frequented by the missing person. Officers shall request, if necessary, the assistance of other units to aid in the search of the missing person.
- D. Officers shall contact the Teletype Section of the Prince George's County Police by telephone at their earliest convenience and request that the missing person's information be entered into the Maryland interagency Law Enforcement System (MILES) and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and record the name and ID number of the person notified in the report.
- E. Officers shall immediately notify the Chief of Police, the Acting Chief of Police or the senior supervisor on duty of any missing person that is classified as CRITICAL, as determined by:
 1. Diminished mental capacity,
 2. Medical concerns,

3. Known or suspected suspicious circumstances,
 4. Any juvenile under the age of 12.
- F. In instances where the missing child is classified as CRITICAL, the investigating officer should, if circumstances warrant, contact the Crisis Intervention Team through the police dispatcher to assist the family members.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES RELATING TO MISSING CHILDREN

- A. Consistent with the Maryland Annotated Code, Family Law Article §9-402, officers will include or be guided by the following when investigating a report of a missing person.
- B. On receipt of a report of a missing child by a law enforcement agency, the law enforcement agency shall immediately determine if:
1. The missing child has been the subject of a prior missing person's report;
 2. The missing child suffers from any 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 missing person report has reason to believe that the missing child may have been abducted;
 5. The missing child has ever been the subject of a child abuse report filed with the State or any local law enforcement agency; or
 6. The missing child is under 14 years of age.
- C. Upon conclusion by the law enforcement agency that of the conditions specified above exists, the law enforcement agency shall immediately:
1. Enter or cause to be entered all necessary and available information into the MILES and NCIC computer networks;
 2. Institute appropriate intensive search procedures including a thorough search of the missing child's residence, if applicable;
 3. Notify the National Missing Children Information and forward to the State Clearinghouse for Missing Children a copy of the missing person's report involving the missing child;
 4. Notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency and, to the extent possible, obtain any information that may assist in locating the missing child; and
 5. Enlist the aid of the State Police, when appropriate, in locating the missing child.
 6. If the disappearance of the child is of a suspicious nature or abduction, contact the Public Safety Communications supervisor's office and cause an AMBER Alert to be issued.

- D. If the conditions specified above in Part A do not exist, the law enforcement agency shall:
 - 1. Immediately seek to determine the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the missing child; and
 - 2. Implement the procedures set forth in Part B.
- E. Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, if a missing child has not been located within 24 hours of filing the missing person report and either the local law enforcement agency or the State Police have reason to believe that the missing child may be located in a jurisdiction other than in the jurisdiction where the missing person's report was filed, the State Police shall enter the investigation and, in cooperation with the appropriate local law enforcement agencies, assist state and national efforts to locate the missing child.
- F. In instances where a minor child or an at-risk person is reported missing, an on duty supervisor shall respond to the scene of the incident to ensure the provisions of this directive and the applicable laws are followed.

IV. FOLLOW UP INVESTIGATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Officers initiating missing persons reports shall in addition to the procedures outlined above, shall check with hospital admissions of the local hospitals and note the results in the narrative section of the report. In certain circumstances, reporting officers shall check with the Medical Examiner's Office.
- B. In instances where the missing person is considered non-critical, reporting officers shall contact the reporting person, or cause contact to be made, to ascertain if there has been any additional information concerning the missing person. A Supplemental Report shall be prepared at any time additional information is obtained, but no later than seven (7) days after preparing the initial report.
- C. If the missing person is classified as CRITICAL, period in contact shall be maintained with the reporting person after twenty four (24) hours and any information that would be useful in locating the individual shall be documented on a Supplemental Report.
- D. When a missing person is located; the missing person shall be interviewed. A report shall be prepared to indicate contact with the missing person and the case closed. The Teletype section of the Prince George's County Police Department shall be contacted by the reporting officer to have the missing person removed from MILES and NCIC. A

notation to the effect shall be included in the report along with the Teletype operator's ID or name and the date/time of notification.

- E. The reporting person shall be contacted and informed the missing person was located. It shall be noted that if the missing person is classified as a non-critical adult and requests his/her whereabouts not be disclosed, that information shall not be related to the reporting person and the whereabouts not be included in the police report.
- F. Upon locating a critical missing person, officers shall attempt to determine the physical and/or mental condition of the individual and render any necessary first aid or have the person transported to a hospital. Every attempt shall be made to determine the missing person's whereabouts and the reason(s) the person was missing.

V. REPORT DISTRIBUTION

The Missing Person Report form, MSP Form 79, is a 4 part form-set that includes a code sheet. The report is available from the Quartermaster, Maryland State Police. Completed missing person reports shall be distributed as follows:

Page 1-Agency copy. This copy shall be duplicated once approved and the original forwarded to the Prince George's County Police Records Section with the duplicated copy retained for our records.

Page 2 - Maryland Center for Missing Persons - To be forwarded to the Prince George's County Police Records along with Page 1 who will forward it to the Maryland Center for Missing Persons.

Page 3 - Investigator's Copy. To be forwarded to the Prince George's County Police Records Section along with Page 1 and 2 who will forward the report to the appropriate investigative unit for follow-up.

Page 4 - Complainant's Copy. To be furnished to the complainant after completion. There is no charge to the complainant or reporting person for a copy of this report.