

JACKSONVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy: 10-6
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MISSING PERSONS INVESTIGATIONS

PURPOSE: To instruct employees on the proper procedures and importance of accurate, complete, and prompt investigations of a missing person report.

POLICY: It is the policy of the Jacksonville Police Department to methodically investigate reports involving missing persons to include conducting preliminary investigations, communicating such information, conducting subsequent follow-up contacts and investigations, and/or searches, as necessary.

The Jacksonville Police Department will expeditiously respond to and thoroughly investigate all reports of runaways and missing children. A child who is missing under “unusual circumstances” shall be considered “at risk” until sufficient information to the contrary is confirmed.

DEFINITIONS:

- I. MISSING ADULT: as defined in A.C.A. §12-12-205, means any person:
 - A. Who is eighteen (18) years of age or older;
 - B. Whose residence is in Arkansas or is believed to be in Arkansas; and
 - C. Who has been reported to a law enforcement agency as missing under circumstances indicating that:
 1. The individual has a physical or mental disability as evidenced by written documentation;
 2. The individual is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary;
 3. The individual is missing under circumstances indicating that the individual’s safety may be in danger; or
 4. The individual is missing as a result of a natural or intentionally caused catastrophe.
- II. MISSING CHILD: Means any person:
 - A. Who is under the age of eighteen (18) years;
 - B. Whose residence is in Arkansas or is believed to be in Arkansas;
 - C. Whose location is unknown or who has been taken, enticed, or kept from any person entitled by law or a court decree or order to the right of custody; and
 - D. Who has been reported as missing to a law enforcement agency.
- III. RUNAWAY: Any minor (under the age of 18) child who has failed to return to or has left without consent or knowledge of the parent or guardian and has been reported to the authorities as a runaway. Children under the age of ten (10) will be classified as missing and not as a runaway.
- IV. UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES: Any missing child under the age of eight-teen (18) years of age or younger whose disappearance involves circumstances that would cause a reasonable person to conclude that the child should be considered at risk. Those circumstances could include the child being:
 - A. Out of the “zone of safety” for his or her age and developmental stage;
 - B. Mentally incapacitated (e.g. developmentally disabled or emotionally disturbed);
 - C. Medically dependent (e.g. insulin dependent);

- D. Drug involved;
 - E. A potential victim of foul play or sexual exploitation;
 - F. In a life-threatening situation;
 - G. Reported to the police as missing after a delay on the part of the parents, guardians, or other responsible person;
 - H. Believed to be with adults or older juveniles who could endanger his welfare; and/or
 - I. Absent under circumstances inconsistent with established patterns of behavior.
- V. ZONE OF SAFETY: The distance a child could travel from the location where last seen before he or she would most likely be at risk of injury or exploitation based on the child's age, developmental stage or other related matters.

PROCEDURES:

I. ENTERING A MISSING PERSON (7.35)

A missing person record must be entered into ACIC/NCIC for the following: (as according to Arkansas Law)

- A. Missing Adult - According to A.C.A. §12-12-205: Upon receiving notice of a missing adult, a law enforcement agency shall complete a missing person report and immediately enter identifying and descriptive information about the missing adult into the computerized system of the clearinghouse (ACIC/NCIC) provided the entering agency has:
 - 1. Signed documentation from a family member, friend, or other authoritative source (witness statement).
 - 2. Including a signed report by an investigating official when other documentation is not reasonably attainable, stating the conditions under which the person is declared missing (JPD incident report).
- B. Missing Juvenile - According to A.C.A. §12-12-205: Upon receiving notice of a missing child, a law enforcement agency shall complete a missing person report and immediately enter identifying and descriptive information about the missing child into the computerized system of the clearinghouse (ACIC/NCIC).
- C. All Department personnel must be aware that there is no formal waiting period required before this Department will accept a missing persons report.

II. MISSING ADULTS

A. Initial Description and Information Gathering

- 1. The officer upon arrival shall talk to the complainant. The following information should be gathered:
 - a. Name of the person(s) missing;
 - b. Race and sex;
 - c. Date of birth and age;
 - d. Height and weight;
 - e. Hair and eye color;
 - f. Scars, marks, or tattoos;
 - g. Clothing last seen wearing, including any jewelry;
 - h. Mode of transportation;
 - i. Date last seen;
 - j. Person who last saw the missing person;
 - k. Person's relationship to the missing person(s);
 - l. A current photograph of the missing person, if possible;