
Child Abduction/Endangered Missing Children

344.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy established guidelines for and responsibilities of officers investigating reports of abduction/kidnapping of a child 17 years old or younger or circumstances in which a child 17 years or younger is missing and in imminent danger of sexual abuse, serious bodily injury, or death.

344.2 INITIAL INVESTIGATION

1. Responding officers should immediately respond to the scene of the report to:

- (a) Interview the reporting party and confirm the incident involves child abduction/kidnapping or another circumstance in which the child is in imminent danger of sexual abuse, serious bodily injury, or death.
- (b) identify and interview the person who last had contact with the missing child, along with other witnesses at the scene.
- (c) Identify the parameters of the initial search.
- (d) Obtain comprehensive information on the suspect, including suspect vehicle information.

2. If the reporting party is not a parent or legal guardian, an officer should contact the missing child's parents or a legal guardian as soon as possible to:

- (a) Verify the child is missing.
- (b) Obtain a description of the missing child, including recent photographs and video.
- (c) Confirm the child's custody status.
- (d) Determine if the child has access to a cellular telephone, other electronic communications devices, an online computer, an e-mail account, or any internet social networking accounts.
- (e) Ascertain if the child has a passport and the passport's location.

3. One of the responding officers shall make the following notifications:

- (a) Contact SHASCOM to make a local broadcast to law enforcement agencies regarding the incident. Update the broadcast as needed.
- (b) Notify the on-duty Field Operations supervisor of the incident.
- (c) Contact the Services Division and request an immediate "at-risk missing person" entry into the NCIC Missing Persons File.
- (d) If there is an identified suspect, notify the Services Division and request an immediate entry in the NCIC Wanted Person File, using the Child Abduction flag if appropriate.
- (e) Consider use of the Communicator system at SHASCOM, if appropriate.
- (f) Conduct a thorough search of the scene. If necessary, secure the location of the disappearance as a potential crime scene. Conduct a search of the child's home, even

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if the child was reported missing at another location. Secure items which might have evidentiary value, including items which can be used to track the victim's scent or items which may contain the child's DNA.

344.3 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) The Field Operations supervisor should respond to the scene and obtain a briefing from the primary officer or other officers at the scene.
- (b) Determine if additional personnel and resources are needed to assist in the investigation.
- (c) Consider use of the AMBER Alert System or Endangered Missing Advisory (EMA) and follow the procedures listed in Instruction 11-02 (AMBER ALERT SYSTEM).
- (d) Notify an Investigations Division supervisor.
- (e) Establish a command post.
- (f) Organize and coordinate search efforts.
- (g) Assign a liaison officer and chaplain to the victim family.
- (h) Assign a temporary Press Information Officer (PIO) if necessary. Have the PIO meet with any members of the media away from the command post.

344.4 INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) Investigations Division personnel shall be called out for cases of child abduction/kidnapping or other circumstances in which a child is missing and in imminent danger of sexual abuse, serious bodily injury, or death.
- (b) The lead investigator and/or Investigations Division supervisor should obtain a briefing from Field Operations personnel at the scene.
- (c) The Investigations Division supervisor should relieve the Field Operations supervisor of command of the investigation, if possible.
- (d) Establish a PIO at a location away from the command post. The PIO will coordinate the release of any information to the media or the public with the lead investigator, including information distributed through Critical Reach or the RPD website.
- (e) Investigations Division personnel will coordinate the investigation, including taking the following investigative actions:
 - 1. Conduct a canvass of people, vehicles, and surveillance systems in the area of disappearance.
 - 2. Conduct in-depth interviews of the victim's family members.
 - 3. Review and analyze the information gathered from the beginning of the investigation.
 - 4. If appropriate, identify sex crime registrants who live or work in the area of the disappearance.

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5. If an AMBER Alert, EMA, or other media outreach is initiated, establish phone numbers for incoming tips and assessing staff to handle the calls.
 6. Update the NCIC Missing Person File and Wanted Person File entries as needed.
 7. Coordinate the preparation and distribution of flyers, including on the Redding Police Department website, if necessary.
- (f) Notify the following agencies of the incident, request assistance as necessary, and coordinate their response:
1. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
 2. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), Project ALERT/ Team Adam.
 3. California Highway Patrol (CHP), including Air Operations.
 4. Shasta County Sheriff's Department, including the Search and Rescue Team.
 5. Shasta County District Attorney's Office, Child Abduction Unit.
 6. Northern California Regional CART (Child Abduction Response Team).

344.5 REPORTING/INVESTIGATIVE CHECKLIST

- (a) The personnel responsible for completing reports in these cases shall follow the Missing Persons Policy requirements.
- (b) Officers, investigators, and supervisors shall carry and utilize the **NCMEC Investigative Checklist for First Responders** issued by the Redding Police Department.

344.6 RECOVERY/RETURN OF A CHILD

- (a) In cases investigated under this policy, an officer or investigator shall personally verify the return or recovery of any missing child.
- (b) If investigations Division personnel have been called out, an investigator will conduct an interview of the returned child.
- (c) The officer or investigator who interviews the returned child will evaluate whether medical examination or support services are needed, including for the family. The officer or investigator will arrange for such services, as appropriate.

344.7 REFERENCES

- RPD Missing Persons Policy
- RPD Instruction 11-02 AMBER Alert System
- NCMEC Law Enforcement Policy and Procedures for the Reports of Missing and Abducted Children (Model Policy)

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- NCMEC investigative Checklist for First Responders
- NCMEC/OJJDP Missing and Abducted Children: A Law Enforcement Guide to Case Investigation and Program Management
- FBI Child Abduction Response Plan: An Investigative Guide