

**POLICY  
332**

**Effective  
Date  
7-6-18**

**Eugene  
Police Department**



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## **Missing Person Reporting**

### **332.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

This policy describes the procedure for acceptance, reporting, documenting, and investigating missing persons and compliance with the reporting requirements of 42 USC 5779(a), 42 USC 5780(3), and applicable Oregon laws.

#### **332.1.1 DEFINITIONS**

**Missing Person:** Any person whose whereabouts are unknown to the reporting party, including, but not limited to, a child taken, detained, concealed, enticed away, or retained by a parent in violation of ORS 163.245 or ORS 163.257.

Missing person also includes any child who is missing voluntarily, involuntarily, or under circumstances not conforming to his or her ordinary habits or behavior and who may be in need of assistance.

**At Risk:** Includes, but is not limited to, evidence or indications of any of the following:

- (a) The person is missing under suspicious circumstances and may be victim of a crime or foul play.
- (b) The person missing is in need of medical attention or medication without which s/he may experience serious medical problems.
- (c) The person missing may be the victim of a parental abduction or is otherwise believed to be in the company of a person considered to be dangerous to the missing person.
- (d) The person missing is mentally impaired or considered to be a danger to self or others.
- (e) The person is likely to have been the victim of a boating, swimming, or other similar accident, or may be a victim of a natural disaster.

**Child:** While Oregon considers a child to be a person under eighteen years of age, for purposes of this policy federal law considers any person under the age of twenty-one years to be a child.

**Missing Person Networks:** Databases or computer networks that are available to law enforcement and are suitable for obtaining information related to missing person investigations. This include the National Crime Information Center (NCIC), the Oregon Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) and the Oregon State Police Missing Children Clearinghouse. LEDS automatically reports to the Oregon State Police Missing Children Clearinghouse.

### **332.2 REPORT ACCEPTANCE**

There is no waiting period. All personnel will accept any report, including any telephone report, of

a missing person, including runaways, without delay and will give priority to the handling of these reports. Reports will be taken on missing persons regardless of jurisdiction if the reporting person is in Eugene, or if the person being reported missing was last believed to be in Eugene. In other cases, the person will be assisted in contacting the appropriate agency of jurisdiction. If there is a question of whether or not to take a report, a report should be taken. If requested to do so by another law enforcement agency, we will take a "courtesy report" and forward a copy of the report to that agency.

Patrol personnel should handle the initial missing person report. Department personnel will promptly assist any person who is attempting to make a report of a missing person or runaway. A report on a missing person may not be held.

### **332.2.1 INITIAL INVESTIGATION**

The employee handling the missing person report should request from the reporting party information or material likely to be useful in identifying the missing person including but not limited to:

- a. The relationship to the reporting party and why the reporting party believes the person is missing.
- b. Information on the missing person, including alternate names the person uses, the person's date of birth, physical appearance, clothing, identifying marks, physical anomalies, surgical implants, and any prosthesis used by the missing person.
- c. The blood type of the missing person.
- d. The driver's license number and Social Security number of the missing person.
- e. A description of items believed to be in the possession of the missing person and the description of any vehicle the missing person may have been driving or riding in at the time of disappearance.
- f. Time and place of the missing person's last known location and the identity of anyone believed to be in the company of the missing person.
- g. History of prior missing incidents and the extent to which this incident is a departure from established behavior patterns, habits, or plans.
- h. The physical and mental condition of the missing person and whether s/he is taking, and currently has with him/her, any medications.
- i. The name and address of the missing person's doctor and dentist.
- j. Any personal, family history, or relationship issues that may be a factor in the person's absence, including the names and addresses of any people the missing person might visit.
- k. Any circumstances that indicate that the missing person may be at risk of injury or death.
- l. Any circumstances that may indicate that the disappearance is not voluntary.
- m. Obtain recent photographs, fingerprints, and/or DNA samples (such as hair) that might be available.
- n. Attempt to identify the types and account numbers of any credit cards the missing person might have access to, and the location of any bank accounts or other financial resources.
- o. The name and addresses of the place of employment, schools, and other places frequented by the missing person.
- p. If the incident involves a person younger than 21 years of age, an elderly person, a person with physical, mental or intellectual disability, a person who is reliant on life-sustaining medications or a college student missing under suspicious circumstances, consideration should be given to issuance of A Child is Missing Alert (refer to Policy Manual 335).
- q. Ensure that entries are made into the appropriate missing person networks, as follows:
  - a. Immediately, when the missing person is at risk.
  - b. In all other cases, as soon as practicable, but no later than two hours from the time

of the initial report.

### **332.2.2 "AT RISK" PERSON OR CHILD UNDER 13**

In cases where this agency has jurisdiction for the missing person investigation and the missing person is a person at risk, or a child less than thirteen years of age, the following additional steps will be taken:

- a. A supervisor will be notified.
- b. The name, physical description, clothing, and any suspected vehicle that may be involved will be broadcast to other officers on duty. The locate information may also be disseminated to other agencies as appropriate.
- c. A preliminary search for the missing person should be initiated based on the circumstances present.
- d. Obtain consent and conduct a complete search of the residence, curtilage, outbuildings, vehicles, and other likely places of concealment.
- e. Detectives will be notified, including after hours, if the initial search efforts fail to locate the missing person, and will begin an investigation.
- f. If the incident involves a child younger than 18 years of age, consideration should be given to issuance of an Amber Alert (refer Policy Manual 334).

If such a case is within the investigative responsibility of another jurisdiction and is reported to this agency, the employee receiving the report will ensure that the appropriate law enforcement agency is immediately notified and will coordinate with that agency as is reasonably necessary to promptly transfer the case.

### **332.2.3 CONTINUING INVESTIGATION**

If the Eugene Police Department has jurisdiction for the missing person investigation, it will be assigned for follow up. Ongoing investigations of missing persons should include, but not be limited to, the following actions:

- a. Obtain releases for dental and medical records, and subpoenas for credit card transactions, bank records, or other financial records as necessary. Copies of dental records and skeletal x-rays, if available, should be obtained and filed.
- b. Check hospitals and the State Medical Examiner's Office for information on deceased persons matching the description of the missing person.
- c. Consider the need for more extensive area searches and obtain sufficient resources to assist in that effort.
- d. Conduct interviews with friends, relatives, coworkers, and persons in the vicinity of the location where the missing person was last seen.
- e. If the missing person is a child, comply with the reporting guidelines for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.
- f. Maintain regular contact with the relatives of the missing person and/or reporting party. Request immediate notification if they should have any contact with the missing person.
- g. Consider the need for additional locate notices to be sent to other jurisdictions.
- h. Consider using the local media to locate the missing person with approval of the Chief of Police or designee, and consultation with the family.
- i. When a person reported missing to this department has not been located within 30 days after the missing person report is made, the assigned investigator will attempt to obtain a DNA sample of the missing person or from family members of the missing person, and prepare any documentation necessary for use of the samples in conducting searches of DNA databases.

### **332.3 REPORT HANDLING**

Missing person reports require special handling and timely notifications.

#### **332.3.1 TRANSMITTING REPORTS TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS**

When the Eugene Police Department takes a missing person report on a person who lives outside of this jurisdiction, the Records Section will promptly notify and forward a copy of the report to the agencies having jurisdiction over the missing person's residence and where the missing person was last seen. If the missing person is under 16 or there is evidence that the person may be at risk, the reports must also be forwarded within no more than 24 hours to the jurisdiction of the agency where the missing person was last seen.

#### **332.3.2 STATE AND FEDERAL NOTIFICATION**

If the missing person is under the age of 21, Records Section personnel will enter the missing person into the LEDS and NCIC Missing Person Files within two hours after accepting the report (42 USC 5779[a], 42 USC 5780[3]).

The entry should also note if the missing person is at risk or under sixteen years of age, if that information is available.

### **332.4 MISSING PERSONS LOCATED**

The investigation may be concluded when the missing person is located or when another agency accepts the case and formally assumes the investigative responsibilities.

When missing persons are located, the assigned investigator will ensure, in all cases, that all necessary clearances are submitted to remove the missing person from local information systems, LEDS, and NCIC, within 12 hours, and will prepare a report documenting the clearance. The reporting party and the family of the missing person will be notified.

- a. Responsible and competent adults who have left home voluntarily cannot be forced to return home. In all cases, the reporting party and/or family will be notified of the well-being of located missing persons. Unless criminal matters require otherwise, the desires of competent adult missing persons not to reveal their whereabouts should be honored.
- b. Investigators will question the missing person sufficiently to positively confirm the person's identity and determine whether criminal activity was involved in the disappearance.
- c. If the missing person is a juvenile, the parents, guardians, and/or reporting party should be notified as soon as practical. The handling officer should inquire into the circumstances to determine the criminal involvement of any persons, including whether an abusive or neglectful home environment was a factor in the disappearance. Child Welfare should also be notified if appropriate.
- d. Unless required for further investigation or prosecution, all information and materials obtained for the purpose of identifying the missing person will be destroyed if the person is discovered to be living, or sealed if the person is found to be no longer living (ORS 146.189[2]).

### **332.5 SCHOOL NOTIFICATION**

Investigators should notify the school/region SRO in which the missing child is enrolled and enlist their assistance in locating the child.

### **332.6 FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION**

If the missing person is not located during the initial investigation, investigators should ensure that photographs, dental records, fingerprints, DNA samples, and x-rays are collected and retained for future comparison to assist in the identification process. Investigators should also inform the parents or the appropriate relatives that they may give a voluntary sample for DNA testing.

If the missing person has not been located within 30 days, the investigator will ensure that a DNA sample, if available, is forwarded as directed to the Oregon State Police (ORS 146.187).

**Chris Skinner**  
**Chief of Police**

(OAA 2.2.4)