

Procedure

3.12

**EFFECTIVE
DATE
9-15-99**

Eugene Police Department



Runaway Missing Juveniles

3.12.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

We must enter the information about missing juveniles into state (LEDS) and federal (NCIC) systems within 12 hours from the time of receipt of the information. Oregon State Police maintain a missing children clearing house to receive and provide information on missing children. The clearing house phone number is 1.800.282.7155.

PART I - Responsibilities and Procedures for All Personnel

- A. Runaways generally
- B. In-state runaways
- C. Out-of-state runaways
- D. Unauthorized absence
- E. Protective custody
- F. Clearance reports
- G. Runaway reports from other agencies

PART II - Responsibilities and Procedures for Special Assignment Personnel

- A. Call/Report taker
- B. Records
- C. Forensic Evidence Unit
- D. Follow-up

3.12.2 RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES ALL PERSONNEL

- A. Runaways generally
 - 1. "Runaway", for purposes of this policy, refers to a juvenile over 10 years of age who has voluntarily left from the custody of his/her parent or legal guardian. If the child is 10 years of age or under, he or she should be treated as a missing person.
 - 2. You should take a report on a juvenile runaway as soon as the incident is reported to us and promptly deliver the report to Records for data entry. A

person responding to City Hall to report a runaway will be asked to complete a self-report form, which will then be reviewed and submitted by the officer or CSO assigned the call.

3. If call load permits, an officer will normally be dispatched to a location where there is probable cause to believe that a runaway juvenile currently is located.

B. In-state runaways

1. You may take a runaway into custody if:
 - a. it reasonably appears that he or she has run away from home, or
 - b. He or she is in a situation which appears to jeopardize his or her welfare (see paragraph 3.12.2-E), or
 - c. Pursuant to an order of the Juvenile Court.
2. When a runaway juvenile is taken into protective custody under authority of *ORS 419B.150*, you must either:
 - a. release him/her to a parent or guardian, or
 - b. take him/her to a shelter facility designated by the Juvenile Court; or
 - c. follow custody procedures outlined in Policy 324 for juveniles.
3. You must, if possible, determine the preferences of the child and the child's parent/guardian as to whether the child's best interests are better served by placement in a shelter facility, or by release to his/her parent/guardian.
4. If it reasonably appears that the child would not willingly remain at home, place the child in an appropriate shelter facility.
 - a. Station 2 will have a list of available options.
 - b. One shelter care option is Looking Glass Station 7. Station 7 should be contacted first to ensure that they have space available (689.3111).
5. If there is no alternative but to lodge a runaway juvenile at the juvenile detention facility, you must be able to articulate and include in your report why you had "probable cause to believe that the welfare of the child or others may be immediately endangered by the release of the child" (*ORS 419B.165*.)

C. Out-of-state runaways

1. If the runaway is from outside Oregon, you may:
 - a. take him or her to the juvenile detention facility; or

- b. use the Greyhound/Trailways “Home-Free” program (described below), which will provide transportation for an out-of-state runaway if certain criteria are met.

2. Grehound/Trailways “Home-Free” Program

- a. To qualify, the juvenile must want to return home, and must be at least 12 years old, and less than 21 years of age. There must have been a runaway report made to a police agency by the juvenile’s parent(s) within a few days of the juvenile’s departure. (Approval to use the program will not be given by the National Runaway Switchboard if there has been an unreasonable delay in filing the report.)
- b. Request permission from the Watch Commander to use the program.
- c. Advise the out-of-state runaway of the Greyhound program. If s/he chooses to participate, s/he must call the National Runaway Safeline at 1-800-RUNAWAY or see www.1800runaway.org/2016/03/free-greyhound. Personnel there must authorize use of the program. They will talk with the juvenile and the juvenile’s parent(s), and try to facilitate a conference call prior to authorizing the transportation.
- d. If use of the program is authorized, they will authorize issuance of a ticket and advise of transportation arrangements. Accompany the juvenile to the bus station to pick up his/her ticket (as a police officer must be there for the ticket to be issued.)
- e. After that, you may leave the juvenile at the bus depot and return to service. Complete a custody report.
- f. If the runaway refuses to cooperate or if the schedule is not convenient, take the runaway to the juvenile detention facility.

D. Unauthorized absence

- 1. This means the juvenile has left a group home, shelter home, or private residence while under a court order to remain there.
- 2. Take such a juvenile back to the facility s/he left only with the approval of the person in charge at the facility.
- 3. If the facility declines to accept the juvenile, take him/her to the juvenile detention facility if the court order is based on a delinquency petition. (Some court orders are based on a dependency petition. In these cases, a juvenile can be taken to the juvenile detention facility only if there is some other basis for the custody.)

E. Protective custody

1. *ORS 419B.150* authorizes you to take a juvenile into custody “where the child’s condition or surroundings reasonably appear to be such as to jeopardize the child’s welfare.”
2. You have these options to care for the child:
 - a. When possible, release the child to a non-offending parent or other responsible adult.
 - b. You may take the juvenile to Looking Glass Station 7 by arranging in advance with them. (They will need to attempt to contact the parents to get authorization for the juvenile to stay there. Notify Looking Glass staff if there is some reason you feel the parent should not be called.)
 - c. You may take the juvenile to the juvenile detention facility.
3. If you are transporting the juvenile simply for protective custody, and there are no criminal charges, you may elect not to handcuff the child.
4. You should prepare a custody report, including the circumstances warranting the protective custody (e.g., weather, surroundings). In the “charges” section, indicate “Protective Custody.” If there is also a charge for which custody would not otherwise be authorized, you can list that as well (e.g., “MIP/Protective Custody.”)

F. Clearance reports

1. Submit a Supplemental or Custody Report to clear runaways and missing juveniles returned to parents or Looking Glass Shelter.
2. Submit a Custody Report to clear runaways you take to the juvenile detention facility.
3. Submit a Custody Report to clear an unauthorized absence.
4. Unless cleared by a report, the runaway status will remain until the juvenile reaches age 18. At that point, if there has been no clearance report, the runaway status will be cleared and the person entered into LEDS and NCIC as a missing person.

G. Runaway reports from other agencies

1. Court approved agencies will be provided with EPD Incident/ Supplemental report forms. The agency must complete the forms and return them to us within 24 hours after discovering the incident. The agencies with the forms are:
 - Services for Children and Families (SCF)
 - Lane County Juvenile Department
 - Stepping Stone Lodge
 - Looking Glass Shelter

2. When the report is received, Records will make the QA computer entry, assign a case number, and enter the information into LEDS and NCIC.
3. The report should then be forwarded to a supervisor for approval and routing.

3.12.3 RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT PERSONNEL

A. Call/Report Taker

1. Assess incoming information in accordance with criteria established in this procedure and so entitle reports of the incident. Circumstances of the call may dictate immediate patrol or investigative attention. If immediate attention is needed, notify the Watch Commander.
2. Inquire of the caller if there are photographs of the absent juvenile available. If so, they should be brought to City Hall for investigative use.
3. If the absent juvenile is 10 years of age or younger and the leaving was voluntary, title the incident "Runaway Juvenile/ Missing Juvenile."

B. Records

1. Review details in report to ensure title reflects appropriate evaluation of information, as noted above.
2. Enter all missing juveniles, runaways, and unauthorized absences fitting the criteria spelled out above.

C. Forensic Evidence Unit

If parents are able to provide fingerprints for the missing juvenile, FEU personnel will classify them and forward the results to Records for subsequent entry into LEDS and NCIC.

D. Follow-up

If follow-up is assigned, the assigned officer should call the reporting party within two working days to determine the current status of the juvenile, to learn any additional information, and confirm any need for reclassifying the individual or the case.