




ARLINGTON COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE MANUAL

Chapter: 5 Procedures	Effective Date: October 6, 2017	Amends/Supersedes: August 1, 2012 August 8, 2005 July 7, 2005	By Authority of the Chief of Police  Charles A. Penn
Accreditation Standard(s): ADM.25.07			

522.08 Missing Person Report

I. Policy

A missing person report will be taken as soon as it is determined to be necessary; there is no waiting period before completing such report. No missing person report will be taken by telephone except as provided in this directive. (See Section III.A). Walk-in reports may be taken by sworn personnel assigned to the Customer Service Counter if staffing levels permit.

II. Definitions

- A. Arlington County Resident - An individual residing, or temporarily housed, in Arlington County.
- B. Metropolitan Area – In Virginia, the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park, and the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William. In Maryland, all jurisdictions within the counties of Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George's, and Charles. The District of Columbia.
- C. Missing Person – Any missing person, adult or child, as defined in this section:
 1. Missing Adult – Any person 21 years of age or older, other than a Critically Missing Adult or Missing Senior Adult, whose disappearance or absence has caused someone to notify the Police Department but for whom there is no known credible threat to their health and safety. Missing Adults shall be documented as detailed in this Manual section, but do not meet the criteria for VCIN/NCIC entry.
 2. Critically Missing Adult – Any Missing Adult, other than a Missing Senior Adult, whose disappearance indicates a credible threat to the health and safety of the adult, as determined by a law-enforcement agency, and under such other circumstances as deemed appropriate after consideration of all known circumstances ([Code of Virginia §15.2-1718.2](#)). Critically Missing Adults must be reported to VSP and entered into VCIN/NCIC using the appropriate VSP form within two hours of being reported to ACPD.
 3. Missing Senior Adult – Any Missing Adult over 60 years of age who suffers a cognitive impairment to the extent that he is unable to provide care to himself without assistance from a caregiver, including a diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease or dementia, and whose disappearance poses a credible threat as determined by a law-enforcement agency to the health

and safety of the adult and under such other circumstances as deemed appropriate by VSP ([Code of Virginia §52-34.4](#)). Missing Senior Adults must be reported to VSP and entered into VCIN/NCIC using the appropriate VSP form within two hours of being reported to ACPD.

4. Missing Child - Any person under 21 years of age whose temporary or permanent residence is in Virginia, or is believed to be in Virginia, whose whereabouts are unknown to any parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person standing in loco parentis of the child, and who has been reported as missing to a law-enforcement agency within the Commonwealth ([Code of Virginia §52-32](#)). Missing Children must be reported to VSP and entered into VCIN/NCIC using the appropriate VSP form within two hours of being reported to ACPD.
- D. Non-resident - An individual residing, or temporarily housed, someplace other than in Arlington County.
- E. NCIC - [National Crime Information Center](#).
- F. VCIN - [Virginia Criminal Information Network](#).

III. Procedures - The procedures listed here are only those which are unique to missing persons or that need special attention. Unless otherwise noted, operational and investigative procedures as used in other incidents are applicable.

- A. A Missing Person report will be taken for:
1. Any Arlington County resident who is reported missing in the Metropolitan Area.
 2. Any non-resident who is reported missing from Arlington County when the Missing Person's jurisdiction of residence will not take the report.
 3. If a resident of the Metropolitan Area other than Arlington County is reported as a Missing Person from Arlington County, the Missing Person's jurisdiction of residence will be contacted to determine if that jurisdiction will complete the report. If so, the complainant will be referred to that jurisdiction. If not, this department will complete the report.
 4. If a child who is committed to a shelter care facility outside of Arlington under the purview of an Arlington court leaves that facility without authority, the responsibility for a Missing Child report and follow-up investigation is with this department. The report for a child missing under these circumstances may be taken over the telephone.
 5. A Missing Person report may be taken over the telephone if the complainant lives outside the Metropolitan Area.
 6. If there is any doubt as to who should take a Missing Person report, this department will take it.
 7. If the Missing Person is a participant in the Project Lifesaver program, that program's [Standard Operating Procedure](#) shall be followed.

B. Reporting Requirements

1. A Missing Person shall be documented in a case report. Missing Persons who are believed to be together may be documented in one case report.
2. For a Missing Child, a [Virginia Missing Children Information Clearinghouse Report \(SP-183\)](#), including the affidavit (Part III), must be completed and faxed or emailed to the Virginia State Police (VSP) by the officer taking the report, within 2 hours of the child being reported missing. A copy of the SP-183 shall also be submitted with the case report.
3. For a Critically Missing Adult or a Missing Senior Adult, a [Virginia Missing Person Information Clearinghouse Report \(SP-67\)](#), including the affidavit (Part III), must be completed and faxed or emailed, by the officer taking the report, to the VSP within 2 hours of the person being reported missing. A copy of the SP-67 shall be submitted with the case report.
4. A recent image of the Missing Person should be obtained, if available, and submitted to the VSP and with the case report.
5. For a Missing Child, Critically Missing Adult, or Missing Senior Adult, a copy of the SP-183 or SP-67 shall be submitted to the Teletype operator in the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) for entry into NCIC and VCIN. ECC maintains copies of these forms (SP-67 or SP-183) for entry documentation.
6. The reporting officer shall note in the case report narrative that the subject was entered into VCIN/NCIC and that the appropriate VSP form, if applicable, was completed and submitted.

C. Affidavit for Missing Person - A Missing Person cannot be entered into VCIN/NCIC unless there is a completed affidavit (Part III of the SP-183 or SP-67).

1. The only affidavit that may be used is the one included in the VSP form (Part III of the SP-183 or SP-67).
2. The affidavit is to be signed by the reporting party, parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in loco parentis of the child.
3. For a Missing Adult, if the reporting party is unavailable to sign the affidavit, a supervisor may sign.
4. For a Missing Child affidavit, every effort should be made to obtain the signature of the parent, guardian, legal custodian, or other person standing in loco parentis of the child. If this is unattainable within 2 hours of the child being reported missing, a supervisor may sign the affidavit.

D. Taking a Child into Custody - The [Code of Virginia §16.1-246](#) outlines when and how a child may be taken into custody and [§16.1-247](#) lists the duties of the person who is taking a child into custody.

- E. Found Missing Adult - There is no authority for detaining an adult who is safe and of sound mind, who has not committed a crime, and who presents no danger to themselves or others. The following steps shall be taken when a Missing Adult is located:
1. The person will be told a Missing Adult report was made and who the reporting party was.
 2. The reporting party will be notified that the Missing Adult has been found and was told of the report.
 3. A located Missing Adult reported by this department shall be documented in a supplement to the original case report.
 4. If entered by this department, a Missing Person will be cleared from VCIN/NCIC. It is the responsibility of the officer documenting the located Missing Adult to ensure this is done. This action shall be documented in the narrative of the case supplement.
 5. When a Missing Person has been located, a teletype message indicating the person has been located will be sent to jurisdictions that received the initial Missing Person teletype.
 6. Additional information given to the reporting party will be at the discretion of the officer or a supervisor, depending upon the person's age, location where found, and the circumstances.
- F. Virginia Amber Alert Plan Activation - Activation of the [Virginia Amber Alert Plan](#) will be initiated through the Virginia State Police, only after consultation with and at the direction of the Special Victims Unit (SVU) supervisor and must meet the following criteria:
1. The abducted child must be 17 years of age or younger or currently enrolled in a secondary school in the Commonwealth, regardless of age, and the law enforcement agency believes the child has been abducted (unwillingly taken from his/her environment without permission from the child's parent or legal guardian).
 2. The law enforcement agency believes the abducted child is in imminent danger of serious bodily harm or death.
 3. A law enforcement investigation has taken place that verified the abduction and/or eliminated alternative explanations.
 4. Sufficient information is available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the child, suspect, and/or the suspect's vehicle.
 5. The child must be entered into VCIN/NCIC missing person files.
- If all of the aforementioned criteria are not met, the Virginia Amber Alert Plan will not be activated. However, the Endangered Missing Child Media Alert, a viable alternative for those incidents that do not meet all the criteria for an Amber Alert, may be used.

Agencies wishing to utilize the Endangered Missing Child Media Alert will be required to follow the same protocols as an Amber Alert for submission of information. When an incident is not authorized for an Amber Alert activation, the requesting agency will be informed that the VSP may issue an Endangered Missing Child Media Alert.

- G. Virginia Senior Alert Plan Activation – The Virginia State Police administer the [Virginia Senior Alert Plan](#). The Virginia Senior Alert Plan may be activated for any Missing Senior Adult, only after consultation with and at the direction of the Special Victims Unit (SVU) supervisor and must meet the following criteria:
1. A law enforcement investigation has taken place that verified the Missing Senior Adult and eliminated alternative explanations by a thorough search of the immediate area if vehicular travel is not involved as a mode of travel for the adult.
 2. Sufficient information regarding the missing senior adult is available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the Missing Senior Adult or his/her vehicle.
 3. The Missing Senior Adult must be entered into VCIN/NCIC and an SP-67 submitted to VSP with a photograph.

If all of the aforementioned criteria are not met, the Virginia Senior Alert Plan will not be activated. However, information can still be provided to the media by the department.