


# **GAINESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## **GENERAL ORDER**

	<b>TITLE</b> Missing Persons		<b>ACCREDITATION</b> 41.2.5.a.b.c.d.e.f.g and 41.2.6.a.b.c.d.e.f
	<b>PROPONENT UNIT</b> Criminal Investigations Division  <i>Rescinds: 40.5 Addendum- Missing Persons Checklist</i>		<b>PRIOR REVISIONS</b> 11/25/02; 03/13/03; 12/05/08; 12/27/10, 02/17/20, 06/09/22 <b>ATTACHMENT:</b> Missing Persons Checklist
<b>NUMBER</b> 40.5	<b>ISSUE DATE</b> 07/01/1998	<b>REVISION DATE</b> 07/19/2023	<b>TOTAL PAGES</b> 34

I. **PURPOSE:** This Order establishes policy and procedures for reporting and investigating missing persons.

II. **POLICY:** Because of the difficulty in determining the degree of danger to a person based on the initial facts reported and because of the Department's duty to protect potential victims, Department members shall thoroughly investigate all missing person complaints

### III. **DEFINITIONS:**

A. **Missing Person:** A person whose location cannot be determined and whose disappearance indicates that he/she may be in danger and/or the victim of a crime.

B. **Vulnerable Groups:** Certain people, such as children, the elderly and the mentally or physically challenged are, by virtue of their age and/or condition, considered vulnerable, and therefore in danger any time they are missing, and certainly more so if they are potentially a victim of a crime. [CALEA 41.2.6.a]

C. **Complainants:** The complainant can be anyone in a position to provide knowledge as to why he/she believes the alleged missing person is missing and/or in danger.

1. For a missing juvenile, the complainant can be the parent or guardian; in the case of a juvenile who has been placed at a facility, a person of authority at the facility

2. For a missing adult, the complainant can be a family member, friend, caretaker, neighbor, or roommate, although this list is not meant to be limiting or exhaustive.

### IV. **PROCEDURE:**

A. **Extent of Investigation:** The Department considers all missing person cases important; however, the particular circumstances of each case should dictate the extent of the investigative actions to be taken. Department members unsure about the amount of activity to devote to a case should consult a supervisor. [CALEA 41.2.6.b]

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1. Missing person cases involving known or suspected criminal acts, vulnerable adults (elderly with reduced mental capacity, or disabled adults) or juveniles-usually under 13 years old shall receive immediate and full attention by the Department member(s) assigned to investigate the case.[CALEA 41.2.5.g]

Field units shall be dispatched regarding these cases.

2. Missing adults and juvenile runaways, whether reported by an agency (e.g., Interface) or a parent/ guardian, and where the disappearance appears voluntary, and no foul play is suspected, shall receive due attention. [CALEA 41.2.6.a]
  - i. If a child is at least 13 years old, or an adult is missing, a report may be taken over the phone from a legitimate complainant only if:
    - a. The juvenile has a history of running away, or
    - b. The juvenile voluntarily left a facility such as Interface or the Job Corps;
    - c. There is no evidence or information to indicate that foul play or suspicious circumstances are involved;
    - d. A phone report is acceptable to the complainant.
  - ii. A reasonably current digital photo must accompany the report if available. This may be an existing digital photo, or a hard copy scanned in to digital format. These photographs may be obtained via means such as a portable digital memory device, email or text message, and should be attached to the associated incident report in RMS.

**B. Members' Responsibilities When Foul Play Suspected / Known or Imminent Peril Exists:** For all involuntary missing persons cases, especially young children, time is a critical factor in obtaining the safe retrieval of the person. Members will initiate the proper response, immediately notify a supervisor and ensure timely notification of resource agencies when: [CALEA 41.2.6.e]

1. Conducting a missing persons investigation in which foul play is suspected or known, or

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2. When the missing person is in imminent peril, such as when small children or adults who are not self-sufficient are believed to have wandered off.
3. Unless the program is child-specific, many of the resources listed in Section **G**, "Missing Children Alert, Notification and Support Resources" can provide assistance with a missing adult. For example: A Child is Missing, Inc. 1-888-875-2246, provides a phone messaging system. Besides children, this organization, having no set criteria other than that decided by the investigating law enforcement agency, serves missing adults who are disabled and/or elderly [like those disoriented by Alzheimer's]. [CALEA 41.2.6.d]

**C. Investigative Activity:** After a complaint of a missing person has been received, the Department member(s) investigating the incident shall proceed as follows: [CALEA 41.2.5 f] [CALEA 41.2.6.f]

1. Verify jurisdiction based on where person was last seen.
2. Interview the complainant.
3. Obtain preliminary information to establish the type of incident or crime to include: [CALEA 41.2.5.a]
  - i. The circumstances under which the person is believed to be missing (signs or information about a struggle/altercation, vehicle abandoned, person depressed, unsupervised child/ non self-sufficient elderly, etc.);
  - ii. The last known date and time seen;
  - iii. The last known location (determine zip code for automated phone messaging purposes);
  - iv. The last known person to see the victim (whether or not this occurred at the location of incident);
  - v. Who the person was with, if known or applicable;
  - vi. Possible alternate locations or destinations, if known;
  - vii. Any known mental, medical, physical or other pertinent condition(s);
  - viii. Whether the person has been missing before;
  - ix. Whether the person's background (e.g., substance abuse, mental condition) could have contributed to the disappearance.

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4. Obtain the description(s) of the victim, and, when provided, any suspect, and vehicle; to include the following: (CALEA 41.2.5.a, d)
  - i. A full physical description of the victim(s) and suspect(s), to include race, gender, nationality, date of birth, age, height, weight, clothing, hair and eye color, hair length/style, glasses, facial hair, scars, marks, piercings, tattoos, and other physical identifiers.
  - ii. Recent digital photograph [color preferable] of victims and suspects (when known) should be obtained as soon as possible for distribution and entry into F/NCIC, NamUs. [CALEA 41.2.5.c]  
Include in your report the date the picture was taken, location in the image, and the names of any known associates in the photo (if applicable).
  - iii. Full descriptions of any vehicles in which a suspect may have been seen or in which the victim may be.  
Include the year, make, model, exact color, and any special or identifying features (sunroof, custom wheels, no windows in van, rusted fenders, primer on left quarter panel, tow hitch, etc.)  
For children on scooters, bicycles, etc., include a full description of the item, if not recovered at the scene.
5. Decide if the circumstances/ evidence best supports treatment of the case as a runaway, custodial taking, or predatory abduction. [CALEA 41.2.6.a]  
Unless there is clear evidence to the contrary, cases involving prepubescent children who are not clearly runaways should be treated as predatory abductions. [CALEA 41.2.6.a]
6. Obtain the name, address, and phone number of each parent or guardian AND assigned case worker (when applicable) of missing/ runaway juveniles.
7. As applicable, obtain names, addresses, telephone/contact numbers of associates, friends, relatives, school, dentists, doctors, etc.
8. Contact the: (CALEA 41.2.6.f)
  - i. Investigations Bureau for detective and forensic support.
  - ii. PIO for media support.

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9. Secure any potential or verified crimescene.
  - i. Identify, secure and protect any evidence or items with potential information, for example items:
    - a. With the victim's or suspect's hair, blood or other bodily fluid (possible **DNA**),
    - b. With fingerprints / footprints,
    - c. Pertinent information (such as runaway notes, ransom demands, diaries, personal journals, computers, disks, or other items) composed or used by the victim (or suspect).
  - ii. Evaluate contents and appearance of the person's room and home; determine, with assistance from the caretaker, parent, spouse, etc., if personal items are missing.
  - iii. Preserve bedding, clothes worn, shoes, etc., for [bloodhound] scent material and as evidence.
10. Interview subjects in the immediate area to determine if they saw or heard anything suspicious.
  - i. This should include a door-to- door neighborhood / business check.
  - ii. Determine if anyone was taking photos or video of any event in the area (even if unrelated to the missing person) around the time the person went missing.
11. Interview person(s) who last saw the missing person.
12. Especially in cases involving young and adolescent children, ascertain if any adult (known or stranger) has recently paid them particular attention/interest;
13. Determine the locations of sexual offenders / predators in **all** the neighborhood(s) affected (child's home, school, babysitter, relatives, etc.)
14. Contact and involve the child's school, when applicable.
15. Issue a BOLO to Department members and surrounding law enforcement agencies, updated as additional information is obtained. [CALEA 41.2.6.c] [CALEA 41.2.5.b]
  - i. The Department BOLO form and/or the broadcast teletype will be used, and via the Combined Communications Center, shall be

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distributed immediately to the following law enforcement agencies (when applicable to the case: **a),b)and c)** are required by State law in all cases):

- a. All field units;
- b. All county law enforcement agencies;
- c. Regional law enforcement agencies via FCIC, NamUs;
- d. The NE Florida Investigative Support Center (NeFISC),  
phone 904-256-5901; email: [nefisc-intell@flcjin.net](mailto:nefisc-intell@flcjin.net)

For expansive cases, NeFISC will immediately broadcast an e-mail to all law enforcement agencies via CJNet within the NE Florida area and can provide case support and intelligence information.

- e. Statewide law enforcement agencies;
- f. Southeast U.S. regional law enforcement agencies, to include more expansive national coverage via NLETS when indicated by case information.

- ii. The BOLO form and/or teletype shall accompany the original report, and shall be copied for distribution within the Department via the Records Section.

- 16. Contact an agency (the Combined Communications Center or the 'A-Child-Is-Missing' Program) to activate the phone messaging service (similar to 'Reverse 911') so a timely public announcement is made in the area where the person went missing. (See Section IV.G.2.v.b.2).iv).b))

- i. Each program auto-dials a custom recorded message (from information provided by the investigating officer) to people in the vicinity of the missing person / abduction so they learn about it and can report back to law enforcement.
  - a. A Child is Missing' can generate 1,000 calls within 5 minutes of being notified (anywhere in Florida);
  - b. The Combined Communications Center's Dialogic system can generate 16 calls at a time anywhere in Alachua County.
- ii. The investigating member will provide comprehensive information for the message, such as case, agency, complete victim

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description, complete suspect and/or vehicle information (when applicable), the location, date and time the person was last seen, and the circumstances under which the person is missing.

Include a phone number (with instructions for using it) for people to report sightings or provide information.

- iii. A recorded message will be constructed and automatically dialed out to a specified geographical area (by zip code) that includes residences and/or businesses.

17. When a child is reported missing, notify the FDLE Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MCIC) 1-888-356-4774. (See Section IV.G.1.) [CALEA 41.2.6.d]

Have MCIC activate the Florida AMBER Plan (and/or Levi's Call) if program criteria are met (see Section IV.G.2.ii and iv for details).

18. Coordinate and conduct a preliminary search, or a more organized search, as applicable (See Searches, Section IV.G.5 of this Order); [CALEA 41.2.5.f]

- i. For missing children of unknown cause, additionally search the residence, yard, car trunks or other locations to see if child is hiding, asleep, or trapped.
- ii. Have responding units search surrounding areas as they arrive; make and track assignments to minimize duplication of effort.
- iii. Summon air and/or ground support for assistance, when needed.
- iv. For applicable cases, request that [the nearest] well-trained bloodhounds be brought to where person was last seen.

19. Determine availability of modes of victim identification.

- i. For children, this may include social media presence (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.), child safety kits where fingerprints / photos / videos were taken, or homemade photos/videos.
- ii. For adults, this may include social media presence (same as above) home videos, photos, or arrest, job application, and other fingerprint records.

20. Obtain the name, and verify the location, of both their dentist and primary care doctor. In the case of a missing or runaway juvenile where their

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guardian is the reporting party, print and have them sign Page 1 of the Dental History Information packet, which authorizes law enforcement to obtain their dental records. Attach this page to the original report.

- i. Medical records, such as x-rays, surgery or other information that may identify past fractures, scars, etc., could also assist in identification.
- ii. FSS 937 requires that, when a reported missing person (non-age specific) has not been located within 30 days of the initial report, the investigating law enforcement agency request written consent (from the family or next of kin) to contact the missing person's dentist for the purpose of obtaining the person's dental records.
  - a. The dentist, upon receipt of proof of written consent, shall:
    - 1). Release a copy of the dental records of the missing person to the requesting law enforcement agency, and
    - 2). Provide or encode the dental records in a form requested by the Department of Law Enforcement (available through the Records Coordinator).
  - b. The law enforcement agency shall then enter the dental records into FCIC and NamUs to compare against those of unidentified deceased persons.
- iii. FSS 937.021 states if a missing child or missing adult is not located within 90 days after the missing child or missing adult report is filed, an attempt shall be made to obtain a biological specimen for DNA analysis from the missing child or missing adult or from appropriate family members in addition to documenting proper chain of custody. This does not prevent a member from attempting to obtain information or approved biological specimens for DNA analysis before the expiration of the 90-day period. Upon receipt of Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA), the Criminal Investigations Division shall:
  - a. Complete a written supplement to document the biological sample obtained.
  - b. Provide Records Division the following DNA information obtained for modification of the missing person records in F/NCIC, NamUS: The name of the lab that analyzed the DNA sample, lab contact person, type of DNA specimen submitted, and



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the lab case ID number and other information deemed appropriate.

21. For missing persons meeting F/NCIC, NamUs criteria, forward the completed entry form [GPD 180] to Records without delay. [CALEA 41.2.5.c]

i. State law requires the information to be entered into the FCIC/NCIC and the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System databases (NamUs) <https://digitpol.com/missing-people-database/> 'immediately' or within **2 hours** after receipt of the report FSS937021.

ii. See Section IV.G.7 of this Order for criteria.

A digital photo of the victim and suspect (if available) shall accompany the 180 for entry into the F/NCIC, NamUs systems.

iii. Records personnel will make the entry upon receiving the form/photo. A Records personnel will also enter into NCIC any subsequent information, such as a dental chart, upon receipt. Records personnel will also enter into FCIC, and NamUS any subsequent information, such as a dental chart, upon receipt.

22. Give the complainant(s) the case report number.

23. Instruct the complainant and anyone else involved to contact the Department if the missing person is located or if new information is developed.

**D. Verified Criminal Abductions:** If it is suspected that a person has been abducted, the following additional procedures shall apply: [CALEA 41.2.5.f] [CALEA 41.2.6.f]

1. Determine if a ransom has been demanded or if the abductors have contacted anyone:

2. Notify the Federal Bureau of Investigations immediately [local FBI office, 372-9600, or, after hours at (904) 721-1211 (in Jacksonville): [CALEA 41.2.6.c]

i. For investigative assistance if a juvenile- usually 13 and under is the confirmed victim of a non-custodial abduction; Custodial abductions should be reported to the FBI if the abducting parent is suspected of intending to harm or kill the child.

ii. Depending on the content and/or intent of any written, recorded, etc., ransom note or demand, for assistance or to take the investigative lead;

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- iii. To take the jurisdictional lead if the missing person is believed to have been taken to another state, or if some other federal law has been violated.

3. Activate the appropriate resources (see Section IV.G) for qualifying cases.

**E. Parental Abduction:** If a parental abduction is reported, determine if the child may be in danger. If the child may be or is in danger, treat as a criminal abduction. [CALEA 41.2.6.e)

1. The member's investigation should determine the nature of the case. The following are guidelines:

i. Incidents are normally considered abductions when a child is taken:

a. By an unauthorized parent (the parent has either no visitation or no custodial rights),

b. Is not returned after an agreed upon or scheduled visitation.

ii. Circumstances where a child is taken by an authorized parent (one with visitation rights, and possibly some custody rights) at an unauthorized time (i.e.), the parent did not arrange this visit with the custodial or residential parent) may or may not be an abduction, depending on the court decree, the circumstances of the incident, etc.

iii. Usually, children who are returned to a custodial parent a little late from scheduled visitation would not be considered abducted, especially if this is the non-custodial parent's pattern. In situations where the child is returned late, refer the complainant to his/her attorney.

2. Even though a child may be with a natural parent, the child is not necessarily safe. When feasible, attempt to contact the 'abducting' parent to determine what has happened to the child.

3. Review relevant court documents (if any) to determine custody rights and limitations of visitation, if any. If the complainant has the necessary legal documents granting custody:

i. Complete an Investigative Report to include the abductor's name, address, phone number, social security number, date of birth, physical description, and vehicle description;

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- ii. Include the abducting parent's name in the remarks field of the FCIC/NCIC/NamUs Entry Form. [CALEA 41.2.5.c]
- 4. If the parent making the complaint does not have the necessary legal documents and the:
  - i. Child is not in danger;
    - a. Direct the parent to an attorney or legal service (but not to a particular attorney by name);
    - b. Complete an Investigative Report.
  - ii. Child is in danger and there is sufficient information or evidence to indicate that the child is in danger, the case shall be handled accordingly.

**F. Mentally-Impaired Runaways:** A mentally impaired client placed at a residential facility (e.g., Tacachale) pursuant to a court order who subsequently leaves the facility shall be considered a runaway. [CALEA 41.2.5.g]  
Department members may return the client to the facility against the person's will, but shall use the minimum force necessary to do so.

**G. Missing Children (Person) Alert, Notification and Support Resources:** The first 24-48 hours are the most critical to the safety of an abducted child. It is crucial that members are familiar with resources available to assist in locating the child. [CALEA 41.2.6.c,d][CALEA 41.2.5.d]

- 1. **Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPIC):**  
Sponsored by the State of Florida and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the MEPIC is an information clearinghouse that gathers and stores information to facilitate investigating missing children cases. It is only an information source, not an investigative agency.
  - i. The MEPIC defines a missing child as a person:
    - a. Under the age of 18 whose temporary or permanent residence is in, or is believed to be in, Florida;
    - b. Whose location has not been determined, and
    - c. Who has been reported missing to a law enforcement agency.
  - ii. MEPIC Form/Report: MEPIC requires the receipt (usually by mail or e-mail) of a completed and signed MEPIC form (normally with the

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child's picture) before they can enter a child's name into their system.

- a. The parents usually sign the form; however, law enforcement personnel may complete and sign it if a parent is unable to or unavailable for some reason.
- b. Members may send a completed form by email, which may suffice for sending a signed form by regular [US] mail.
- iii. Member Responsibilities: A Department member (officer or detective) who investigates a missing child incident shall: [CALEA 41.2.5.f][CALEA 41.2.6.f]
  - a. Ask the parents / guardians if they have filed a report with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (1-800-843-5678).  
If the child's information has not yet been entered into the NCMEC system, the member shall ensure that this is accomplished (See proceeding section 2), above).
  - b. Instruct the parents they must notify both the Department and NCMEC of any new information about the child's location and/or return.
  - c. Activate the AMBER alert if the criteria for the program have been met. [See next section].

**2. Emergency Broadcast Alert Plans:** Are established to ensure the timely broadcast of critical information to the general public (via radio, television, and DOT's emergency broadcast systems) regarding a missing or abducted child believed to be endangered.

- i. Alert Information: The investigating officer provides basic, complete information on the locations of the abduction and most recent sighting(s), descriptions of the child, suspect, and vehicle, and a law enforcement contact number.

In the event someone sees the child, the abductor, and/or the vehicle, or has knowledge of the abduction, he/she can immediately report information to the investigating law enforcement agency via the phone number provided.

- ii. AMBER (America's Missing Broadcast Emergency Response) Plan: The "AMBER" Plan is coordinated through Florida's Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MGIC).

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Florida's AMBER Plan: Florida's AMBER Plan is also known as the Florida Emergency Missing Child Alert (FEMCA). Criteria for Activation of Florida's Amber Plan: The following five (5) criteria must be met (Note: The Plan is not to be activated for runways of family abductions, unless investigation determines the child's life is in immediate danger): (FDLE website: <https://www.fdle.state.fl.us/AMBER-Plan/Amber-Alert>)

- a. The child must be under 18 years of age.
  - b. There must be a clear indication of an abduction.
  - c. The child must be in immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death.
  - d. There must be a detailed description of the child, abductor and/or vehicle to broadcast to the public.
  - e. The activation must be recommended by the local law enforcement agency of jurisdiction.
- iii. The Activation Process: Once an abduction has been confirmed and AMBER criteria have been met, notify the FDLE Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MCIC) at 1-888-356-4774 anytime, 24 hours a day; 7 days a week. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement will:
- a. Work with the investigating agency to:
    - 1). Collect the appropriate information (i.e. child, suspect(s), photographs, vehicle(s), and contact information) for public distribution.
    - 2). Determine the broadcast range (regionally, statewide, etc.).
  - b. Ensure that the information is broadcast through the Emergency Alert System (radio and television).
    - 1). Their goal is to activate the broadcast within 30 minutes of receipt of the information.
    - 2). When a vehicle is involved and enough information is available, MCIC will notify the Florida Department of Transportation to include highway signage announcements.

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- iv. Levi's Call: Coordinated by the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Georgia's Missing Child Alert Plan is known as Levi's Call. If a case indicates that a child may be headed to Georgia, or that he/she was taken over the Florida/Georgia border, after ensuring that program criteria are met, the investigating member may request activation of Levi's Call as follows:
  - a. Program Criteria: The following criteria must be met to request Levi's Call activation.
    - 1). There must be a confirmed child abduction;
    - 2). The circumstances surrounding the abduction must indicate that the child is in danger of harm or death;
    - 3). The child must be 17 years old or younger;
    - 4). There must be enough descriptive information to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help;
    - 5). The case information must be entered into the NCIC/NamUs database.
  - b. Activation: Florida law enforcement agencies must activate Levi's Call ONLY through FDLE's Missing Children Information Clearinghouse.
- v. Variable Messaging Trailer: Coordinated by the City of Gainesville's Traffic Division. Once abduction has been confirmed, notify ASO-Combined Communication Center to contact the City Traffic Division and request to utilize their variable messaging trailers. There are three signs available and the requesting member will need to identify which intersection will be most effective.
  - a. Alert Information: The investigating officer provides basic, complete information on the locations of the abduction and most recent sighting(s), descriptions of the child, suspect, and vehicle, and a law enforcement contact number.
  - b. Broadcast Messaging: Broadcast messaging can reach different audiences, through a variety of media, for the distribution of information, whether or not a picture is included.
    - 1). To the Public:

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- i). FDLE Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MCIC) 1-888-356-4774 (to notify them and to activate the Florida AMBER Plan when criteria are met).
  - ii). Local News Media: Via the PIO/designee, local media outlets can assist in getting the information out via TV, radio, newspaper.
  - iii). GPD Internet web pages can be used for informing the general public so that persons can receive information, view the photo(s), and contact the PD when they have relevant information.
- 2). To Law Enforcement:
- i). The Alachua County Sheriff's Office Combined Communication Center or the GPD Records Section will issue information to other law enforcement agencies (county, regional, or statewide BOLOS) via FCIC (range will depend on case information). [CALEA 41.2.6.c]
  - ii). Northeast Florida Investigative Support Center (NeFISC) 904-256-5901; email: [nefisc-intell@flcin.net](mailto:nefisc-intell@flcin.net). For expansive cases, NeFISC will immediately broadcast an e-mail to all law enforcement agencies via CJNet within the NE Florida area and can provide case support and intelligence information.
  - iii). GPD Intranet can be used to post victim and/or suspect information and to provide resource information to Department personnel.
  - iv). Telephone Messaging: The investigator provides comprehensive information, such as case, agency, victim, suspect, and vehicle information, as well as the location, date and time they were last seen and a number through which citizen sightings can be reported. A recorded message will be constructed and automatically dialed out to a specified geographical area that includes residences and

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/ or businesses. Additional areas may be targeted, as needed.

- a). The Alachua County Sheriff's Office Combined Communications Center. The CCC will activate the 'Dialogic' program (similar to the 'Reverse 911' system), which auto-dials residents and businesses within Alachua County over 16 phone lines.
- b). A Child is Missing, Inc. 1-888-875-2246. This organization can send out at least 1,000 phone calls at a time to the area of the abduction, search, escape route, etc., anywhere in Florida within 5 minutes of notification. Include zip code(s) of the areas to be notified.
  - (1). Qualifying Cases: For children, disabled, and elderly [likethose disoriented by Alzheimer's] who are missing, this service has no set criteria other than that decided by the investigating law enforcement agency.
  - (2). Web site address: <http://www.achildismissing.org> (click on the state of Florida).
- c). Poster/ Photo Distribution Resources: The following entities can assist in making posters/flyers and distributing them (or photographs) to the public.
- v). AMBER Plan via MEPIC's resources.
- vi). Local News Media: Via the PIO/designee, local media outlets can assist in getting the information out via TV, radio, newspaper.
- vii). Child Watch (Orlando) 1-800-928-2445. Currently sponsored by Shell and Texaco Oil. Web site: <http://www.childwatch.org>



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Posters and Pictures: LEA sends a photo and description of the child and/or abductor by e-mail, and Child Watch constructs a poster for immediate distribution to all its sponsors (Shell and Texaco stations) in the area of the abduction and/or along any routes taken/ believed to be taken;

- viii). National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC): 1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678), Florida Branch 1-561-848-1900. NCMEC can produce posters and distribute within certain areas. (website <http://www.missingkids.com>)

c. Bloodhounds: Bloodhounds have superior scent detection, are the best tracking resource, and should be the first choice. They can detect scent even when the trail is old, goes through water, or is otherwise compromised.

- 1). Department of Corrections: The DOC bloodhounds can be requested for tracking purposes, if needed, and for cases not meeting the criteria of the Jimmy Ryce Center. [CALEA 41.2.6.c]

- i). The closest DOC K-9 Team is available through Union Correctional Institute. Their Control Room is staffed 24/7, and can be contacted directly by phoning (386) 431-2000.

UCI's shift sergeants are authorized to provide assistance and can be reached at (386) 431- 4001.

- ii). If UCI's team is busy, a request to Lake Butler Reception Center or Baker County may be made for either of their teams.

- a). Contact the Department of Correction's Emergency Action Center, 24/7 for contact information at 1-850-922-6867.

- b). Jimmy Ryce Center for Victims of Predatory Abductions: 1-800-JIM-Ryce (546-7923). This center has contacts to

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quickly obtain bloodhounds and other search dogs for cases where the child is suspected of being taken by a predator.

c. Other:

- 1). Sexual Predators Program: 1-888-357-7332. Provides the names and addresses of all sexual predators and sexual offenders known to be in the area.
- 2). Alachua County Crime Stoppers 352-372-STOP (7867) for citizens to report criminal activity anonymously.

### **3. Investigative Support Resources (Additional Information/ Services):** [CALEA 41.2.6.c]

i. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC): 1-800-THE Lost (843-5678), Florida Branch 1-561-848-1900. <http://www.missingkids.com>. NCMEC has a 24-hr tip line and access to FBI forensic labs and testing facilities.

a. Liaison Required: Federal mandate (National Child Search Assistance Act of 1990) requires that law enforcement personnel maintain close liaison with the NCMEC for the exchange of information and technical assistance in missing children cases.

NCMEC receives missing children information on all children entered into F/NCIC, so direct law enforcement notification is not necessary in these cases.

b. Support Personnel: Upon request, NCMEC will send retired law enforcement volunteers to assist with phone banks, leg-work or other tasks to support an investigation.

ii. Child Watch (Orlando) 1-888-244-5392 Web site - <http://www.childwatch.org>

Abduction Response Team: Upon request, a trained person / team can be deployed to assist law enforcement, to organize and efficiently use the volunteers, and to work with the media and the family.

4. **Point of Contact/ Family Members:** When possible, ensure that the family complainant is supported by a victim advocate. When warranted,

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establish a system to ensure the ongoing ability to communicate with family members and/or the complainant. [CALEA 41.2.5.e]

- i. Request a victim advocate, through the Investigations Bureau, to assist with the family during the investigation.
- ii. Set up a constant point of contact, usually at a family residence, so that someone is always available;
- iii. If possible, maintain a clear phone line at the residence in case the victim attempts to call;

If applicable, suggest that the family establish an alternate phone line so the primary line can remain clear.

- a. The telephone company could install a second line, or
  - b. A cell phone may be used as the secondary mode of communication.
- iv. Have family members keep paper by the phone for keeping a log of calls by date, time, caller and content;
- v. Suggest the installation of a phone with caller ID;
- vi. Should they leave the house, encourage family members to be constantly available by pager or cell phone;
- vii. Members should inform parents, guardians, and other family members that the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), publishes a helpful guide, titled "When Your Child is Missing: A Family Survival Guide".

This guide [available in the Investigations Bureau or by requesting one from the publisher] provides support, and explains processes, feelings, options, law enforcement perspectives and other issues involved in missing child cases.

5. **Searches:** The earlier assistance is obtained for support and organization of the search, the better the search effort will be. The types and extents of searches are identified in the following sections. Nothing precludes members from combining or structuring a search using information from each section. Searches should be established based on the circumstances of the case rather than solely on progression of tasks. [CALEA 41.2.6.f] [CALEA 41.2.5.e]

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- i. Command Post: When a command post is necessary, it shall be established within a proximate area large enough (e.g., parking areas) to accommodate vehicles, trailers, restrooms, and, when feasible, helicopters.
  - a. If possible, establish phones at the command post; one number should be used only to receive calls from search personnel in case the victim is located or the search team is in need of non-emergency assistance.
  - b. The Incident Commander should assign a Search Coordinator, to ensure efficient management of the search effort. [CALEA 41.2.6.e]
- ii. Initial Searches: Unless there is knowledge that the person has been taken out of the area, the following initial steps should be taken: [CALEA 41.2.6.e]
  - a. Search the immediate area (house, yard, neighborhood etc.) near the last known location of the missing person.
    - 1). Use persons who are familiar with the area and who have access to keys for locked areas.
    - 2). Be sure to check all items/structures, such as vehicles, including trunks and spare tire holders, appliances, compartments, boxes, sheds, etc. that could contain crawl space, hiding space, or other space into which a child could fit.

Be sure to think from the child's size/perspective of what a good hiding place might be (i.e. fort)
  - b. If approved by a supervisor, use vehicle loudspeakers to call the victim's name in the search area;
  - c. Search in a methodical, systematic, and thorough manner.

The method (pairs, teams, line, etc.), will depend on the number of personnel available to conduct the search and the area(s) to be searched.
  - d. Search in places where the victim could hide, such as closets, A/C vents, vehicles, elevator rooms and shafts, roofs, basements, under beds, or in cabinets;

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- e. Expand the search area to a five to ten square block area if the victim is not found near the location where last seen;
  - f. Request canine teams to assist in the search;
  - g. Contact relatives, non-custodial parents, or friends who may know the whereabouts of the victim;
  - h. With supervisory approval, maintain the continuous presence of someone at the missing person's residence and/or any location(s) where the victim is likely to go or be.
- iii. Requesting Additional Resources: If the missing person is not located during the initial search, the shift commander shall decide whether the facts justify administrative notifications and the summoning of additional ground and aerial resources, to include assistance from groups and agencies, such as: [CALEA 41.2.6.c]
- a. GPD K-9 and/or Mounted Units;
  - b. K-9 Search Teams of Florida;
  - c. Florida Search Dogs Association;
  - d. Jimmy Ryce Center or the Union Correctional Institute (to obtain bloodhounds).  
Bloodhounds have the best natural equipment to track/locate people, especially if any length of time has passed or the terrain is varied).
  - e. Civil Air Patrol;
  - f. Fresh Water Fish and Game;
  - g. Red Cross;
  - h. ASO Dive Search and Rescue Team (Combined Communications Center);
  - i. Joint Aviation Unit;
  - j. Gainesville Fire Rescue Association (Fire Dispatcher);
  - k. Tax Appraiser's Office, which can provide aerial photos;
  - l. Emergency personnel allocation;

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m. Citizen volunteer organizations;

n. News media.

iv. Search Coordination: Resources shall be summoned in consideration of the available information, the area(s) to be searched; the ground units available to establish the perimeter; and the skills, capabilities and limitations of the identified resources. Prior to any search, briefings should be conducted to provide instruction to participants and coordinators (when indicated).

a. General Caveats:

- 1). The tactical deployment of resources shall be as organized, cooperative and efficient as possible to maximize results and minimize fatigue.
- 2). Teams should be deployed in a linear or grid search pattern, terrain permitting, and, when indicated, supported by aerial search teams.
- 3). Areas searched and the methods used shall be documented so that relief command and teams can immediately identify the progress made in the search effort.

b. Specific Tasks: The Search Coordinator shall:

- 1). Create a checklist to document the date, time, and names/IDs of the persons performing the search of each area;
- 2). Deploy search teams of no less than two persons; more if linear searches are conducted;
- 3). Identify the persons, agencies and equipment involved in the search;
  - i). Record the ID numbers, names and agencies of all law enforcement members;
  - ii). Record the names, addresses, and phone numbers of each volunteer;
  - iii). Identify any vehicle / equipment assigned to each team;

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4). Use aerial photos or maps to coordinate the search;

5). Instruct all searchers (law enforcement and volunteers) to:

i). Eat sufficient food, drink plenty of liquids, and take breaks;

ii). Report any findings, or anything suspicious, extraordinary, or unusual to the law enforcement command.

iii). Return and/or check-in after assigned areas are searched;

iv). Avoid disturbing any crime scenes or items / areas that may be evidentiary in nature.

6). Instruct volunteers to:

i). Avoid calling 911, unless for medical or other emergency incidents;

ii). Obtain permission prior to searching private property because of the safety issue, as well as the fact that searchers may be considered agents of the Department by a court of law, which could lead to evidence being suppressed;

iii). Avoid confronting suspects. Have them relay a suspect's description and direction and mode of travel to law enforcement.

v. Searches - Shopping Center or Mall:

a. Request the assistance of security personnel (if any) and station them near mall entrances/exits;

b. Determine if there are any video cameras/taping systems in any store or other location that may have captured information useful to the investigation.

Collect the media as evidence.

c. Make and distribute the missing person's photograph to those persons involved in the search;

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- d. Use the public address system to call the missing person's name to make other announcements;
  - e. Notify store employees, especially in the stores located near entrances, and request their assistance in watching for the missing person;
  - f. Establish a command post to coordinate information.
- vi. Search Effort Documentation: The member assigned as the Search Coordinator shall document in his/her Incident Report all resources used and efforts directed toward a search.

Members who are significantly involved in the search effort, make specific contributions, conduct specific tasks, or discover significant information or evidence during the search process shall write a Supplemental Report detailing their involvement.
- 6. **Documentation:** The following reports shall be completed for a missing person incident: [CALEA 41.2.6.e]
  - i. Investigative Report (with attached photo(s) when available);
- 7. BOLO (with attached photo (s) when available);
- 8. FCIC/NCIC, NamUs Entry Form, if entry criteria exists;
- 9. Crime Scene Report, if applicable;
- 10. Supplemental Reports shall be completed when assisting officers have a significant role, additional investigative information is obtained, and/or when case resolution is determined;
- 11. Copy of the completed MCIC form and any other forms required by resource agencies used in the case.
- 12. **FCIC/NCIC/NamUs:** [CALEA 41.2.6.c] [CALEA 41.2.5.c]
  - i. Entry Criteria: If not immediately located pursuant to the initial investigation, the missing person's information shall be entered into the NCIC/FCIC/NamUs computer system if he/she is missing and:
    - a. Has a verified physical or mental disability that is likely to pose a threat or immediate danger to himself/herself or to others.



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- b. Is in the company of another person under circumstances that indicate that the missing person is in physical danger.
- c. Circumstances indicate the disappearance was not voluntary, i.e., abduction or kidnapping.
- d. Is not emancipated as defined by the law of the state in which the person resides (a single person under 18 years of age for Florida residents).
- e. It is post-catastrophe.

### ii. Requirements for NCIC/FCIC/NamUs Entries:

- a. The person/situation must meet entry criteria listed in IV.G.7.i (above).
- b. Only the originating agency can make an FCIC/NCIC/NamUs entry.
- c. No waiting period is necessary for reporting or entering a missing person.
- d. The status of missing persons' dental records must be entered into the system for those missing longer than 30 days from the original report.
- e. Missing Person's records must indicate whether or not DNA data was obtained within 90 days of the original report.

**8. Investigative Follow-up:** The Investigations Bureau is responsible for following up on reports of missing persons. The assigned investigator shall:[CALEA 41.2.6.f]

- i. Periodically contact the complainant to update the case [CALEA 41.2.5.e];
- ii. Comply with statutory requirements and bureau procedures;
- iii. Ensure that additional information is entered into F/NCIC/NamUs to update the record as the information is discovered.
  - a. The National Child Search Assistance Act of 1990 requires a maximum window of 60 days from the original report to update F/NCIC regarding missing children;
  - b. State law requires that no later than 30 days from the date of the original report, the investigator shall ensure that

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information on whether dental records exist, or the dental records themselves, are entered into F/ NCIC/NamUs. [CALEA 41.2.5.c]

- c. When medical records exist that could aid in the identification, and can be entered into F/NCIC/NamUs, these records shall also be entered.

- iv. Document follow-up contacts and additional information / investigative efforts in supplemental investigative reports;

- v. Contact returned persons to determine the circumstances of their disappearance (see Section IV, 9 for details).

When investigating chronic or habitual runaways, members should determine the home / family situations of the juveniles to determine what circumstances may be contributing to their flight, and, when appropriate, make referrals to the proper support agencies. [CALEA 41.2.6 a]

- vi. Ensure that found persons' information is removed from whichever systems into which it was entered, such as FCIC/NCIC/NamUs and MEPIC immediately.

- vii. NamUs also requires a mandatory monthly review of each case to determine if the case should be maintained in the database. [FSS-937.021 1(c)]

- 9. **Locating Missing Persons:** When a missing person is located, the Department member who locates, or is notified that the person has been located, shall:

- i. Identify the Circumstances of the Recovery:

- a. Depending on where a missing person is found, determine whether a rescue mission should be initiated.

When a person is found in a situation (such as in a lime rock pit, in a body of water, stuck in a hole, or other unusual circumstance), wherein specialized rescue is required, immediately initiate the call-out of related teams. Units' on-scene shall:

- 1). Ensure that a supervisor is aware of the situation;
      - 2). Cordon off the area to minimize further harm;
      - 3). Call for additional units and support teams, as needed.

- b. Preserve potential or actual evidence.

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- c. Investigate the circumstances of the person's location / return and proceed accordingly (for example, refer the case to CIB or conduct a criminal investigation and/or arrest);

ii. Verification of Return of Missing Persons: Broadly, on-view verification of the return of missing persons is generally required, with the exception of repeat runaways with no foul play suspected. [CALEA 41.2.6.f]

- a. ON-VIEW Verification: Of a person's return and well-being is required in all cases reported to GPD when the missing person is:

- 1). Under 13 years of age,
- 2). 13-17 years of age and is a first-time runaway; [41.2.6.a]
- 3). A vulnerable adult (elderly with Alzheimer's, is disabled, etc.),
- 4). Of any age, and was missing involuntarily and/or under circumstances of suspected or known foul play.
- 5). Exhibiting a combination of potential indicators of Human Trafficking, preceded by who facilitated the return and the manner in which the juvenile returned (bus, taxi, Uber, etc.):
  - i). Reported to be out of town at an unknown location(s) and/or with unknown persons.
  - ii). Has returned with new valuable items like cash, clothing or cell phone.
  - iii). Has returned with cosmetic enhancements (hair/nails/makeup, tattoos).
  - iv). Shows signs of physical or emotional trauma.
  - v). Has shown or more of these indicators in a past missing or runaway report.
- b. A Phone Report is Allowed: When the criteria [above] are not met, i.e., a returned' missing juvenile has a history of running

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away, had voluntarily left a facility (such as Interface), or was sighted or located in another jurisdiction.

1). The reporting member may make a determination regarding whether an on-site verification is needed.

i). In most cases, a phone report of the person's return will suffice.

ii). The reporting officer/ member should, when possible, speak with the person to check his/her well-being.

2). When missing juveniles reported to GPD are located in another jurisdiction, their return may be handled over the phone when reported or verified by:

i). Another law enforcement or social service agency;

ii). A relative, whose name and location are verified by the initial reporting complainant, parent or guardian.

3). Information or tips on sightings, possible locations, or other follow-up information shall be included in a supplement to the original case report by the member receiving the information.

The member shall notify the jurisdictional law enforcement agency if the information is timely or sufficient enough to prompt either a law enforcement field response or an investigative follow-up by that agency.

The member should contact the assigned GPD detective when additional information is received on a missing persons case.

iii. Conduct Follow-up and Provide Documentation:

a. Complete and forward an FCIC/NCIC Exit Form to the Records Unit to remove the person's information from FCIC/NCIC; (if the person was entered) [CALEA 41.2.6.c][CALEA 41.2.5.c]

b. The Records Supervisor or Designee will be responsible for the removal of persons from NamUs and to check the NamUs database monthly as to the validity of the missing persons still listed.

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- b. Facilitate the removal of a child's information from the MEPIC computer system (if the child's information was entered) by either reminding the parent to call, or placing a call to MEPIC (1-888-356-4774). [CALEA 41.2.6.f]
  - c. Complete a Supplemental Report detailing the circumstances of the location of the person and all investigative efforts taken by the reporting member. If the missing person is located before the Investigative Report is submitted to Records, then it can be used to record supplemental information and a Supplemental Report is not necessary;
  - d. Ensure that the complainant is notified; [CALEA 41.2.5.e]
  - e. Forward the report(s) and the 180 Exit to the Records Section via a supervisor;
  - f. Cancel the BOLO, ensuring that the Combined Communications Center is notified;
  - g. Assist the missing person in receiving necessary and appropriate services;
  - h. Make follow-up notifications to the support agencies contacted during the investigation;
  - i. For juveniles and adults under managed care, note to whom, by whom, and where the person was released.
10. **Public Information Officer:** Members should contact the PIO / designee for assistance with any missing person case when dissemination of information to the public is needed to assist in locating the person.[CALEA 41.2.6.d]
- i. The Public Information Officer may be requested to respond if the news media arrives at the scene.
  - ii. The PIO / designee, when available, shall issue any news releases and/or case information to the news media.
11. **Other Division/ Unit Responsibilities:**
- i. Records Unit personnel shall: [CALEA 41.2.6.f]

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- a. Send requested teletypes, follow-up BOLOS, etc., over FCIC, NCIC, NamUs, NLETS.
  - b. Forward copies of all missing persons reports and related documentation to the Investigations Bureau (1.B.);
  - c. Enter qualifying persons (and photos; dental records, etc.) into the FCIC/NCIC/NamUs system as soon as possible after the forms are received;
  - d. Exit found persons from the F/NCIC/NamUs system upon receipt of the appropriate paperwork.
- ii. Crime Analysis Unit: Distribute BOLO documents for notification throughout the Department.

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**By Order of**

*Signed Original on File in the  
Administrative Support Division*

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**Lonnie Scott.**  
**Chief of Police**

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### **MISSING PERSON CHECKLIST**

#### **A: Complainants:**

1. Missing Juveniles - Parent, Guardian, or person in authority at facility.
2. Missing Adult - Family Member, Friend, Caretaker, Neighbor, Roommate, Co-worker or any other responsible adult with reliable information.

#### **B. Immediate Action and Investigation:**

1. Criminal Act,
2. Elderly with reduced mental capacity,
3. Disabled,
4. Juveniles under 13 years old

#### **C. Investigation Activity:**

1. Verify jurisdiction based on where person was last seen;
2. Secure any potential or verified crime scene;
3. Organize and conduct a search of the immediate area (residence, yard, vehicles, refrigerators, hiding places, etc.), with assistance of the Aviation Unit, Mounted Unit, and/or Department K9 (or UCI Bloodhound) to search nearby property, woods, etc. If the use of K9 is appropriate, based on timeframe and lack of scene contamination, verify and preserve the last seen point for the K9 team.
4. Evaluate content and appearance of the person's room, with the complainant. Is anything missing? Is there anything of investigative or evidentiary value?
5. Preserve bedding, clothes worn, and/or shoes for use as scent material in the event a bloodhound is requested.
6. Interview subjects in the immediate area;
7. Interview sexual predators or offenders residing in the area. Ask to conduct a consent search of the residence. (See Sexual Predators Program below.);
8. Conduct a door-to-door neighborhood/business check;
9. Determine if anyone in the area was photographing or video-taping in the area;
10. Interview the person who last saw the missing person. (May not be the complainant.);
11. Contact and involve the child's school;

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12. Instruct the complainant or anyone else involved to contact the Department if the person is located or new information developed; and

13. If the suspect is known, attempt to locate/contact the suspect.

### **D. Collect the Following Information:**

1. Circumstances (Signs of struggle, vehicle abandoned, depression, non self-sufficient adult, unsupervised child, etc.);

2. Date & Time last seen;

3. Last known location (zip code for reverse 9-1-1);

4. Last person to see the victim;

5. Who the person was with;

6. Possible destinations;

7. Any known mental, medical, physical or other pertinent conditions;

8. Whether the person has been missing before (previously located);

9. Background which may contribute to disappearance (substance abuse, mental condition)

10. Physical description of victim (race, gender, nationality, DOB, age, height, weight, hair color, hair length, hair style, eye color, glasses, facial hair, scars, marks, piercings, tattoos, and other physical identifiers);

11. Collect (via text or email) and attach to the report a recent digital photograph, or a printed photo as a last resort;

12. Vehicle description (year, make, model, color, tag, etc.);

13. Bicycle, scooter, skateboard, etc. description; and

14. Names, addresses, telephone numbers of associates, friends, relatives, school, etc.

15. Obtain any URL's and/or usernames for their active social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.).

16. Obtain the name, and verify the location, of both their dentist and primary care doctor.

17. In the case of a missing or runaway juvenile where their guardian is the reporting party, print and have them sign Page 1 of the Dental History Information packet, which authorizes law enforcement to obtain their dental records. Attach this page to the original report.



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### **E. Notifications When Foul Play or Imminent Peril Exists:**

1. Notify a Supervisor;
  2. Notify CIB;
  3. Request Victim Advocate for family support and Liaison;
  4. Notify PIO for media support;
  5. Issue a BOLO and FCIC/NCIC entry with photograph;
  6. Telephone the NE Florida Intelligence Support Center (NeFISC) at 904-256-5901 or email [nefiso-intell@flcjin.net](mailto:nefiso-intell@flcjin.net) (LEA email notifications);
  7. Telephone a Child is Missing, Inc. at 1-888-875-2246 for both juveniles and adults (similar to reverse 9-1-1);
  8. Email completed form to Missing Children Information Clearinghouse (MGIC) with the child's photograph (to activate, if criteria met, the AMBER Plan - television, radio, and DOT sign system);
- \*for direction telephone 1-888-356-4 774
9. If case indicates that a child may be headed to Georgia, activate the Levi's Call (Georgia's AMBER Plan) via Florida's MGIC (see above);
  10. Telephone Child Watch at 1-800-928-4-2445 (constructs and distributes posters with photographs);
  11. Telephone National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at 1-800-843-5678 {Also constructs and distributes posters with photographs};
  12. Telephone Sexual Predators Program at 1-888-357-7332 to obtain the names and addresses of all sexual predators and sexual offenders known to be in the area;
  13. Utilize ASO-Combined Communications Center's Dialogic system;
  14. Have ASO-Combined Communications Center notify Traffic Engineering in order to activate the city's Variable Message Trailers (similar to DOT electronic signs). Specify which major intersections would be best to place the signs. There are only 3 signs available; and
  15. Tracking bloodhounds available through Union Correctional Institute at 386-431-2104 (Control Room) or 386-431-2007 (Shift Sergeant). Preserve clothing, shoes, bedding, etc. for scent material and evidence.

### **F. Additional Notification if Verified Criminal Abduction:**

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**a)** Notify the FBI immediately (local 372-9600 / after hours 904-721-1211) under the following circumstances:

1. Child under 12 years of age and non-custodial abduction;
2. Custodial abduction if the abducting parent is suspected of intending to harm or kill the child;
3. If a ransom note's content indicates that investigative assistance or investigative lead may be needed;
4. If the missing person is believed to have been taken to another state; or
5. If some other federal law has been violated.

### **G. Reports:**

1. Investigative Report
2. Supplemental Reports
3. Crime Scene Reports
4. Photograph
5. BOLO form
6. FCIC/NCIC entry
7. MEPIC form signed by the parent (if qualified event)