



TIVERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDERS

Subject: Missing Persons - Adult	General Order Number: 300.50
Section: 300 – Law Enforcement Operations	Subsection: 00 - General
Amends/Supersedes: 9-11, 300.50 (01/05/2015)	
Effective Date: 01/05/2015	Revised Date: 01/09/2020
Review Date: As Needed	
Per Order Of: Patrick W. Jones, Chief of Police	
RIPAC: 7.6	
Distribution: Sworn Department Members, Communications Center Operators, Records Clerks	

NOTE: This written directive is for the internal governance of the Tiverton Police Department, and is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Tiverton Police Department to establish guidelines for investigating missing persons. Officers and dispatchers should give all missing person complaints consideration and attention, and complaints should be carefully recorded and investigated. Specific attention should be directed to cases involving missing juveniles, persons who may be mentally or physically impaired or persons who are insufficiently prepared to care for themselves, and in cases involving suspicious circumstances.

II. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the investigation of missing persons reported to the Tiverton Police Department.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Adult: A person eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- B. Child or Juvenile: A person under eighteen (18) years of age.

IV. MISSING PERSON REPORTS

- A. There is no waiting period required to report a missing person.
- B. A *Rhode Island State Police Missing Person Report (Attachment A)* is to be completed for all missing persons.
 - 1. The report must be signed by either the reporting party or the investigating officer;
 - 2. A picture of the missing person, if available, shall be attached to the report;

3. Missing person reports are to be filed in Dispatch until the person has been located. When and if the person is located, the report is to be forwarded to the Records Division.
- C. Officers or dispatchers may take missing person reports in-person or by telephone.
- D. A person may be declared missing when his/her whereabouts is unknown and unexplainable for a period of time that is regarded by knowledgeable parties as highly unusual or suspicious in consideration of the person's behavior patterns, plans or routines.
- E. Other criteria include when a missing person:
 1. May be the subject of foul play;
 2. May be unable to properly safeguard or care for oneself because of age (young or old);
 3. May suffer from diminished mental capacity or medical conditions that are potentially life threatening if left untreated or unattended;
 4. May be a patient of a mental institution and is considered potentially dangerous to himself/herself or others;
 5. May have demonstrated the potential for suicide;
 6. May have been involved in a boating, swimming, or other sporting accident or natural disaster.
- F. An Offense Report (OF) will be assigned for all missing person cases.

V. INITIAL REPORT TAKING

- A. An officer who takes the initial report must gather as much information as possible to initiate a proper response. This includes the following information:
 1. Name, age, and physical description of the missing person and relationship of the reporting party to that person;
 2. A description of the clothing that the person was last seen wearing.
 3. Time and place of last known location and the identity of anyone accompanying the person;
 4. The extent of any search for the person;
 5. Whether the person has been missing on prior occasions and the degree to which the absence departs from established behavior patterns, habits or plans;
 6. Whether the person has been involved recently in a domestic incident, suffers emotional trauma or life crises, has demonstrated unusual, uncharacteristic or bizarre behavior, is dependent on drugs/alcohol, or has a history of mental illness;
 7. The current physical condition of the person and whether the person is currently on prescription medication or any other considerations applicable to critically missing or at-risk persons.
- B. Appropriate information obtained from the initial report shall be disseminated to dispatch and other Tiverton officers. Appropriate agencies shall be provided information to assist in locating the missing person.

VI. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF MISSING PERSONS

- A. The officer assigned to the case shall interview the complainant, whenever possible. This will allow the officer to verify information already obtained and to provide the reporting person the opportunity to relate any further facts that may help in determining the whereabouts of the missing person. This process includes gathering the following types of information and materials:
1. A complete description and recent photograph of the person.
 2. Details of any physical or emotional problems, if known.
 3. Identity of the last person(s) to have seen the missing person, as well as friends, relatives, co-workers or associates who were or may have been in contact with the missing person prior to disappearance.
 4. Plans, habits, routines and personal interests of the person including places frequented or locations of particular personal significance.
 5. Indications of missing personal belongings, particularly money and other valuables;
 6. Any suggestions of foul play.
 7. In the case of missing children, officers shall be particularly cognizant of information that may suggest the potential for parental abduction, as well as:
 - a. The presence of behavioral problems;
 - b. Past instances of running away;
 - c. Signs of an abusive home environment or dysfunctional family situation;
 - d. Whether the child is believed to be with adults who may pose a danger;
 - e. The name and location of the school attended by the child and any persons who may be responsible for private transportation to and from the location.

VII. NCIC ENTRY CATEGORIES

- A. Missing persons may be entered into NCIC if they fall into one of the following categories:
1. Disability: A person of any age who is missing and has a proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting oneself or others to personal and immediate danger.
 2. Endangered: A person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that his or her physical safety may be in danger.
 3. Involuntary: A person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance may not have been voluntary, such as an abduction or kidnapping.
 4. Catastrophe Victim: A person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe or natural disaster.

5. Child or Juvenile: A person who is missing and declared un-emancipated as defined by Rhode Island General Law and does not meet any of the entry criteria set forth in the above four categories.
- B. NCIC missing person entries must be done within twenty four (24) hours of the initial report.

VIII. ONGOING INVESTIGATIONS

- A. During ongoing investigations of missing persons, officers shall:
1. Request the release of dental records and any fingerprints available.
 2. Contact hospitals and the Rhode Island State Medical Examiner's Office, as appropriate, for injured or deceased persons fitting the description of the missing person.
 3. Thoroughly check the location at which the missing person was last seen and conduct interviews, as appropriate, with persons who were with the person or who may work or frequent the area.
 4. Conduct interviews with any additional family, friends, work associates, schoolmates, and teachers as well as school counselors and social case workers, as appropriate, to explore the potential for foul play, voluntary flight or in the case of juveniles, parental kidnapping or running away.
 5. Provide identification and related information to neighboring police agencies, and, if parental or stranger-to-stranger abduction is suspected the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 6. Obtain the approval of the Police Chief and the missing person's family prior to using local media to help locate missing persons.
 7. Consider it the primary investigator's responsibility to maintain routine, on-going contact with the reporting persons and/or missing person's closest relative concerning progress of the investigation. These and other relevant individuals shall be informed, as they must notify the primary investigator as soon as any contact is made with the missing person.
- B. For persons missing for longer than sixty (60) days, with no additional information during that time period, the case will be forwarded to the Detective Division Commander for review/follow up investigation. The Detective Division Commander, or designee, will attempt to obtain DNA and/or dental records of the missing person.
1. If DNA is obtained, the sample will be sent to the Rhode Island Department of Health for analysis and entry into the CODIS Data Base.
 2. Dental records will be maintained in the case file.

IX. USE OF FINGERPRINT IDENTIFICATION

- A. Based upon the availability of fingerprint impressions, the Detective Commander (Detective Lieutenant), or designee, may submit the inked impressions, along with a cover letter which sets forth a summary of the incident and a current description of the missing person to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

1. The FBI will accept fingerprint cards relating to missing persons provided that they have been properly entered into NCIC.
2. The Detective Commander, or designee, shall ensure that the appropriate entry has been made into the NCIC Missing Persons File prior to the submission of the fingerprint card to the Identification Division of the FBI.

X. MISSING PERSON FLYERS

- A. Whenever an officer investigates a missing person case, he/she may request that the Detective Commander (Detective Lieutenant) initiate a Missing Person Flyer.
- B. Each flyer shall include, at a minimum, the following missing person information:
 1. Name;
 2. Date of birth;
 3. Sex;
 4. Eye and hair color;
 5. Height and weight;
 6. Race and nationality;
 7. Complexion;
 8. Build;
 9. Place of birth;
 10. Photograph.

XI. RECOVERY OF MISSING PERSONS/CASE CLOSURE

- A. Competent adults, having left home for personal reasons, cannot be forced to return home. Officers locating such individuals shall:
 1. Advise them that they are the subject of a missing person investigation;
 2. Ask if they desire the reporting party or next-of-kin to be notified of their whereabouts;
 3. Make arrangements to transmit this information to the reporting party or next-of-kin if permitted by the missing person.
- B. In all cases, reporting parties shall be informed of the well-being of located missing persons. Desires of missing persons not to reveal their whereabouts shall be honored, unless criminal matters necessitate other action.
- C. Missing persons shall be questioned to establish the circumstances surrounding their disappearance and whether criminal activity was involved.
- D. Upon locating a missing person, all agencies and information systems previously contacted will be notified and updated. The Officer in Charge of the shift working when the child is located shall ensure that the original NCIC message has been cancelled.
 1. A second NCIC inquiry shall be made to ensure that the original entry has been deleted from NCIC.
 2. A copy of the NCIC verification number (NIC) shall be attached to every complaint involving an NCIC entry.
- E. The investigating officer's incident report shall include a complete accounting of the whereabouts, actions, and activities of children while missing.

- F. Where indicated, follow-up action shall include the filing of an abuse and neglect report with the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families.
- G. Where indicated, follow-up action shall include the filing of criminal charges with the Rhode Island Department of the Attorney General or the FBI, depending on the jurisdiction of the offense.

XII. USE OF ALERT OR NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

A. Rhode Island Criteria for Silver Alert

- 1. The following criteria must be met before a Missing Senior Citizen Alert, commonly known as a Silver Alert, can be activated. A Missing Senior Citizen:
 - a. Whose whereabouts are unknown;
 - b. Whose age at the time he or she is reported missing is sixty (60) years of age or older, or is a person with a diagnosis of dementia;
 - c. Who has an impaired mental condition;
 - d. Whose disappearance poses a credible threat to the safety and health of the missing person, as determined by the Rhode Island State Police;
 - e. The impaired condition(s) shall be demonstrated by the appropriate documentation presented by the missing senior citizen's family, legal guardian, long-term ombudsman, or long-term care facility where person resides.

B. Code Red

- A. When an individual presents a threat to themselves or others, the Code Red system may be used to advise residents of the individual's status. When instances arise where an individual is believed to be within a certain geographical area, residents may be contacted via Code Red within that geographical location to provide them with information that could potentially assist with the investigation.

XII. ATTACHMENTS

- A. *Rhode Island State Police Missing Person Report Form.*

Attachment A

MISSING PERSON REPORT Rhode Island State Police

CASE # _____ Date of Report _____

Message Key (See definitions on page 1) (MKE) Name (NAM) Race (RAC)
☐ Disability (EMD) ☐ Juvenile (EMJ) ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander (A) ☐ Unknown (U)
☐ Endangered (EME) ☐ Victim (EMV) ☐ Black (B) ☐ White (W)
☐ Involuntary (EMI) ☐ Caution ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native (I)

Place of Birth (POB) Sex (SEX) Date of Birth (DOB) Date of Emancipation (DOE) Height (HGT) Weight (WGT) Eye Color (EYES)
☐ Male (M) ☐ Female (F) ☐ Black (BLK) ☐ Hazel (HAZ)
☐ Blue (BLU) ☐ Maroon (MAR)
☐ Brown (BRN) ☐ Multicolored (MUL)
☐ Gray (GRY) ☐ Pink (PNK)
☐ Green (GRN) ☐ Unknown (XXX)

Hair Color (HAIR) Hair Description (HAIR) ☐ Wavy ☐ Curly ☐ Straight ☐ Treated (HAIR)
☐ Black (BLK) ☐ Brown (BRN) ☐ Red/Auburn (RED) ☐ White (WHI) ☐ Unknown (XXX)
☐ Blonde/Strawberry (BLN) ☐ Gray/Partially Gray (GRY) ☐ Sandy (SDY)

Hair Length (HLN) Hair Style (HLS) Skin Tone (SKN) ☐ Fair (FAIR) ☐ Light (LGT) ☐ Olive (OLV) ☐ Ruddy (RUD)
☐ Black (BLK) ☐ Lt Brown (LBR) ☐ Medium (MED) ☐ Sallow (SAL)
☐ Dark (DRK) ☐ Med Brown (MBR) ☐ Yellow (YEL)
☐ Dk Brown (DBR)

Has the missing person ever been fingerprinted? ☐ No ☐ Yes - If so by whom? Fingerprint Classification (FPC) Other Identifying Numbers (OIN)

Social Security Number (SOC) Operator's License Number (OLN) Operator's License State (OLS) Operator's License (OLY) Year of Expiration Date of Last Contact

Originating Agency Case Number (OCA) Blood Type (BLT) ☐ A Positive (APOS) ☐ B Positive (BPOS) ☐ AB Positive (ABPOS) ☐ O Positive (OPOS) ☐ A Negative (ANEG) ☐ B Negative (BNEG) ☐ AB Negative (ABNEG) ☐ O Negative (ONEG) ☐ A Unknown (AUNK) ☐ B Unknown (BUNK) ☐ AB Unknown (ABUNK) ☐ O Unknown (OUNK) Has missing person ever donated blood? ☐ No ☐ Yes Where?

Has the missing person been circumcised? ☐ Yes circumcised (C) ☐ Was not circumcised (N) ☐ Unknown (U) Are footprints available? ☐ Yes (Y) ☐ No (N)

Are body x-rays available? (BXN) ☐ Full (F) ☐ Partial (P) ☐ None (N) Does the missing person have corrected vision? ☐ Yes ☐ No (SMT) Corrective vision prescription (VRS)

Type of Contact Lenses and Color (MIS) ☐ Hard ☐ Longwear ☐ Blue ☐ Gray ☐ Clear ☐ Soft ☐ Semi ☐ Green ☐ Brown ☐ Clear Jewelry Type (See check list) (JWJ) Jewelry Description (JWL)

Handedness ☐ Left ☐ Right (MIS) Build ☐ Very thin ☐ Medium ☐ Heavy/Stocky ☐ Thin ☐ Muscular ☐ Obese (MIS)

Any other miscellaneous information (MIS)

Below is a list of clothing and personal effects. Please indicate those items the missing person was last seen wearing. Include style, type, size, color, condition, labels, or laundry markings. (MIS)

Item	Style/Type	Size	Color	Markings	Item	Style/Type	Size	Color	Markings
Head Gear					Shoes/Boots/Sneakers				
Scarf/Tie/Gloves					Underwear				
Coat/Jacket/Vest					Bra/Girdle/Slip				
Sweater					Stockings/Panty/hose				
Shirt/Blouse					Wallet/Purse				
Pants/Short					Money				
Belts/Suspenders					Glasses				
Socks									

LICENSE PLATE AND VEHICLE INFORMATION

License Plate Number (LIC) State (LIS) Year Expires (LY) License Plate Type (LIT)

Vehicle Identification # (VIN) Year (VYR) Make (VMA) Model (VMO) Style (VST) Color (VCO)

Aliases Reporting Agency Reporting Officer

Complainant's Name Complainant's Address Complainant's Telephone Number

Relationship of Complainant to Missing Person Missing Person's Address Missing Person's Occupation

NCIC # (NIC) Places missing person frequented (MIS)

Close friends/relatives Possible destination

Complainant's Signature Date

- Attach current photo, if available.
- If additional space is needed, attach additional sheets.
- All dental information should be recorded on the dental report and entered in NCIC as a supplemental record.

ORIGINAL — STATE POLICE
YELLOW — LOCAL POLICE