

WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

Thomas F. Oates, III
Chief of Police



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	320.10	5/23/2023	5/23/2023
SUBJECT		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
Amber Alert		11/13/2020	
ACCREDITATION		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA Standards: 41.2.6 RIPAC Standards: 7.7		12/15/2022, 5/17/2023	
INDEX		DISTRIBUTION	
Patrol Functions		Sworn Personnel Communications Personnel	

AMBER ALERT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to describe the Amber Alert Policy in the State of Rhode Island. Statistics show that the first few hours after child abduction are the most critical. The AMBER ALERT program provides Rhode Island law enforcement agencies with another valuable tool to recover abducted children

II. POLICY

The Woonsocket Police Department will participate in the Amber Alert Program for abduction cases, which fit the outlined criteria.

III. DEFINITIONS

Amber Alert: The Rhode Island AMBER Alert is a voluntary, cooperative program between law enforcement agencies and local broadcasters to send an emergency alert to the public when a child has been abducted and it is believed that the child's life is in danger. Area radio and television stations have agreed to interrupt regular programming to broadcast.

Search: Any systematic planned searching method or technique designed to conduct a thorough check of a building, residence, woods, fields, vehicles, bodies of water, or elsewhere for information about the missing child. The AMBER Alert provides law enforcement agencies with another tool to help recover abducted children and quickly apprehend the suspect.

Rescue: Use of personnel, equipment, and other available resources during emergencies that aid and assist in the preservation of life.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. INITIATING AN AMBER ALERT

1. The officer has reason to believe a child has been abducted.
 - a. A “child” is someone under seventeen (17) years of age. Other cases involving older children can be considered if specific factors warrant it.
2. The officer believes the circumstances surrounding the abduction indicate the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death. Circumstances may include:
 - a. The child is abducted and there are witnesses to the crime,
 - b. The child is missing but there is evidence of foul play, and police believe the child was abducted,
 - c. The vehicle was stolen or car-jacked and a child was inside the vehicle,
 - d. A child is missing and particular consideration is given to their behavior or mental capacity in some way contributing to their disappearance. The child is also considered endangered,
 - e. The Amber Alert is not normally used for runaway or parental abduction cases unless there is a specific reason to believe the life of the child is in severe danger.
3. There must be enough descriptive information about the child, abductor, and suspect’s vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast will help.
4. Contents of the Amber Alert worksheet should include:
 - a. Name, age, and physical description of the child.
 - b. Description of the child’s clothing.
 - c. Location and time the child was last seen.
 - d. Description of possible suspects.
 - e. Last known direction of travel and a possible destination.
 - f. Contact number for the public to call with information.
 - g. Name and number of the contact person for the media.
 - h. A recent photograph of the abducted child.

5. If all criteria are *not* met, the AMBER Alert Notification Plan should *not* be activated. The plan should not be used for runaways. Also, while each case must be judged individually, most “child custody” situations do not meet the criteria.

B. AMBER ALERT IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

1. The Woonsocket Police confirm that a child has been abducted.
 - a. The circumstances surrounding the abduction indicate the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.
 - b. The Woonsocket Police make a prompt entry into NCIC under the appropriate category (MKE/EME or MKE/EMI) and CA (child abduction) flag is entered/added to the MNP field.
2. Woonsocket Police concludes that an Amber Alert is warranted.
 - a. The Woonsocket Police contact the Alert Coordinator, Rhode Island State Police at (401) 444-1195 for review.
 - b. The Woonsocket Police provide the Alert Coordinator with a point of contact name and cell phone number.
3. If an Amber Alert request has met the criteria and is approved.
 - a. The Woonsocket Police will complete and forward the Amber Alert Information Worksheet with all the required information via fax or email. A photo of the missing child will be forwarded via email once obtained.
 - 1) Fax number (401) 444-1149
 - 2) Email: risp.rialerts@risp.gov.
 - b. The Woonsocket Police will call State Control, Rhode Island State Police at (401) 444-1195 to confirm receipt of the information and photo. The responsibility and decision to activate the Amber Alert program rest with the designated officer of the Rhode Island State Police.
4. Upon receipt of the worksheet, the Rhode Island State Police will:
 - a. Notify Rhode Island Emergency Management (RIEMA) to open the Emergency Operations Center (EOC),
 - b. Rhode Island State Police broadcast Amber Alert information over the inter-city police radio and/or RISPERN police radio systems,
 - c. Send an Administrative Message (AM) via RILETS/NLETS networks,
 - d. Notify E-911 of the Amber Alert Activation,
 - e. Notifies Rhode Island State Police personnel, identified law enforcement agencies in the Providence metropolitan area, and one (1) Woonsocket

- Police member to respond to the EOC at RIEMA Headquarters, 465 New London Avenue, Cranston,
- f. Enter/Activate the Amber Alert via the Alert Portal,
 - g. EAS (emergency alert system) and WEA (wireless emergency alert) are activated via IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert & Warning System),
 - h. State Control will have the Woonsocket Police modify the NCIC record MNP flag to AA (Amber Alert),
 - i. Notify the Rhode Island Department of Transportation Traffic Management Center (TMC) for the use of the highway variable message boards, and
 - j. Contact broadcast media by phone to ensure information is received and verified.
- 5. Broadcast media distribute information at least three times per hour for two hours. RIDOT activates message boards.
 - 6. Information from the public is received and forwarded as appropriate.
 - 7. The public will be told to call 46-AMBER (462-6237).
 - 8. Amber Alert will operate out of the EOC at RIEMA until the alert is terminated.

C. GUIDELINES

An AMBER Alert should only be issued for serious child abduction cases. It should not normally be used for runaway or parental-abduction cases, the two leading causes of missing children. The only cause for an alert under these circumstances would be if the OIC believes the life of the child is in danger (e.g. if a parent threatened to harm the child and this information can be verified). Each case will need to be judged on an individual basis.

- 1. Circumstances, where an AMBER Alert would be activated, include:
 - a. A child is abducted and there are witnesses to the crime,
 - b. A child is missing but there is evidence of foul play, and law enforcement believes the child was abducted,
 - c. Vehicle was stolen or "carjacked" and a child was left inside the vehicle; or
 - d. A child is missing, and consideration is given to their behavior or mental capacity in some way contributing to their disappearance. The child is also considered endangered.
- 2. Circumstances where an AMBER Alert **would not** be activated:
 - a. A child is missing, and law enforcement has no evidence of foul play,
 - b. A child runs away from home,
 - c. A child is missing because of a custody dispute and the child is not considered to be at risk of bodily harm or death; or
 - d. An adult is missing.

D. SUPERVISORY FUNCTIONS

1. Patrol Supervisors shall monitor all missing person incidents and respond directly to the scene of those involving children confirmed missing by the first responding officer(s).
2. Supervisors shall verify that the first responding officer has performed essential activities such as securing the scene, searching the home, gathering descriptive information and photographs, and entering all pertinent information into NCIC files.
3. Supervisors shall determine if additional patrol officers/detectives are needed to assist in the investigation and direct those units to saturate the area in a systematic pattern.
4. Once it has been determined that a child is missing under circumstances that will most likely require assistance from additional agencies and organizations, the supervisor shall determine what additional personnel, resources, equipment, and agencies are needed. Supervisors shall keep the OIC informed of any outside recourse needs to assist in these cases.
5. Where coordination or activities will be necessary, supervisors shall establish a command post from which investigative efforts can be directed.
6. Supervisors shall ensure coordination/cooperation among all personnel involved in the investigation and search effort.

E. RECOVERY OF MISSING CHILD AND CASE CLOSURE

1. In cases involving juveniles, officers will ensure that:
 - a. If necessary, the juvenile receives medical attention without delay;
 - b. Initial questioning of the youth identifies the circumstances surrounding the child's disappearance, any individual who may be criminally responsible, and/or whether an abusive or negligent home environment was a contributing factor; and
 - c. Parents, guardians, and/or the person reporting the missing juvenile are notified promptly.
 - d. Where indicated, follow-up action will include filing an abuse and neglect report with the Department of Children, Youths, and Families (DCYF).
 - e. The case report will include a complete report on the whereabouts, actions, and activities of children while missing.
 - f. Upon location of a missing person, all agencies and information systems previously contacted for assistance will be notified or updated (Cancel TTY and NCIC, if applicable), phone call or fax to "A Child is Missing" network to update on recovery.
 - g. Where indicated, criminal charges will be filed.

F. SEARCH AND RESCUE

1. Certain incidents or particular circumstances involving juveniles may demand a search be undertaken immediately.
2. The goal of the Woonsocket Police Department is to provide a timely, effective response to situations and incidents that preserve life and reduce the potential for loss of life, serious injury, or other harm.
3. The Uniform Division OIC will be in charge of all search and rescue efforts.
4. Any request for specialized assistance beyond locally available resources will be approved by the Chief of Police or designee.
5. Documentation of the search and rescue situation will be recorded in an official report.

V. ATTACHMENT

Amber Alert Information Worksheet

Per order,

Thomas F. Oates, III

Chief of Police

Written directives published within PowerDMS are in full force and effect on the referenced dates and have been approved by the Chief of Police

AMBER ALERT INFORMATION WORKSHEET



Complete as soon as possible and FAX completed forms to Rhode Island State Police Headquarters: 444-1149
Contact State Control, Rhode Island State Police at 444-1195 to confirm receipt of worksheet

Important Notes:

*** Indicates *mandatory* field for entry into portal.**

Do NOT use Abbreviations or Acronyms.

If no information is available for a box, in those fields that are not mandatory leave it BLANK

* Data Provided By:	Last Name		First Name	
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INCIDENT INFORMATION

* Date of Incident		* Time of Incident	
			: (HH:MM)
City		* County	
Case / Report #		* Zip code	
Location Name	(This is the only location field displayed to the public)		
Full Street Address/Hundred Block		Mile Marker	
Cross Roads		&	

* Incident Summary: (Maximum of 250 characters)

VICTIM INFORMATION

* Last Name	<input type="text"/>	* First name	<input type="text"/>
* Age	<input type="text"/> Old	Date Of Birth	<input type="text"/> (MM, DD, YYYY)
* Height	<input type="text"/> Feet <input type="text"/> Inches	* Weight	<input type="text"/> lbs.
* Hair Color	<input type="text"/>	Eye Color	<input type="text"/>
Complexion/ Skin Tone	<input type="text"/>		
* Race	<input type="text"/>	* Gender/Sex	<input type="text"/>

Additional Descriptors:(Maximum 250 characters) If no information is available for this area leave it BLANK
(Glasses, Hair style, Scars/Marks/Tattoos)

Clothing Description:(Maximum 250 characters) If no information is available for this area leave it BLANK
Complete the following sentence.
the Victim was believed wearing..

If available, obtain photograph of the child and e-mail to: risp.rialerts@risp.gov

Information for the Suspect

Last Name

First name

Age

Years old

Height

Feet

Inches

Weight

Lbs.

Hair Color

Eye Color

Complexion/
Skin Tone

Race

Gender/Sex

Additional Descriptors: If no information is available for this area leave it BLANK
(Glasses, Hair style, Scars/Marks/Tattoos)

Clothing Description: If no information is available for this area leave it BLANK
Complete the following sentence. Suspect was believed wearing...

Information for the Vehicle

Color

Year

Make

Model

Style

License Plate Number

License Plate State

Vehicle Additional Descriptors: If no information is available for this area leave it BLANK