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20 June 2011

SUBJECT: Procedures for Receiving and Investigating Reports of Missing Persons

ISSUED BY: Fernando Solorzano

**I. PURPOSE:**

To establish procedures for the handling of reported missing person's cases.

**II. POLICY:**

Missing person's reports are often high profile events. At the very least, it is a traumatic time for the reporting party. Officers and dispatchers should remember that while most persons are found safely and quickly, every report has the potential of not being resolved quickly and easily. The State of California has enacted many laws and guidelines for police agencies to follow in this area. This policy is intended to cover these guidelines and laws and provide time frames and requirements for officers to follow. It should be noted that this policy will not cover every circumstance, nor is it intended to. Officers should use sound judgment whenever they encounter situations not covered by the policy.

**III. PROCEDURE:**

(a) State Mandates

- (1) The following are the State of California mandates and guidelines for the initial response and follow-up to a missing persons report, as defined in 14205-14210(c) of the Penal Code.
  - a. Accept any report of a missing person without delay, regardless of jurisdiction.
  - b. Accept any report of a runaway juvenile without delay.
  - c. Accept reports of missing persons by telephone.
  - d. Assign priority to missing persons reports over non-emergency property crimes.
  - e. Make an immediate assessment of reasonable steps to be taken to locate, based on the type of missing person, as defined in 14213(a) PC, and determine if that person might be at risk.

- f. Broadcast a BOL, without delay, when a child is under the age of 12 or the person missing is considered at risk.
  - g. Within seven (7) days, the agency that assumes primary jurisdiction should provide the reporting party with DOJ form SS 8567 that authorizes the release of dental records and/or x-rays, skeletal x-rays, and/or photographs.
- (b) Jurisdiction – California law requires all police departments (with the exception of CHP), to take without delay, any missing persons report which is reported to them, whether it is their jurisdiction or not. As such, the University Police Department will take any missing persons report without delay, regardless of jurisdiction. A missing person call will be given priority over non-emergency property crime calls in determining order of dispatch.
- (1) All missing persons reports belonging to another jurisdiction, taken by this Department will be forwarded to that jurisdiction in a timely manner. The primary jurisdiction will be determined by the missing person’s address and last known location.
  - (2) The dispatcher will enter the missing person into MUPS for the agency having jurisdiction, according to the guidelines in this policy. This entry will remain in effect until the primary agency is notified of the missing persons report.
  - (3) Advise the agency having primary jurisdiction for the report of all actions taken and entries made. Once the agency having primary jurisdiction makes an entry into MUPS, the University Police should cancel the original entry.
  - (4) If the case involves a child under 12 years, this cross reporting must be done within 24 hours after the initial receipt of the report.
- (c) Definitions
- (1) **MUPS** – California Department of Justice Missing Persons System. This system will allow the entry of missing persons and body parts into the CLETS system. Entry will automatically be made into the NCIC system.
  - (2) **At Risk** – Includes, but is not limited to, circumstances where evidence or indications exist that the missing person (juvenile or adult, regardless of age) is a victim of a crime or foul play, is in need of medical attention, has no pattern of running away or disappearing, is the victim of parental abduction/kidnapping, or is mentally impaired.
  - (3) **BOL Teletype** – A message sent via computer to other agencies through the CLETS system. May include local and national locations.
  - (4) **Coroner Check** – A check with the coroner in the localities where the missing person was most likely last located.
  - (5) **Medical Records** – X-rays of dental and body and full medical records. This also includes fingerprints, if available.

(6) **Photo** – Most recent photo of missing person.

(d) Computer Entry

- (1) All missing person's reports must be entered into California Missing Persons System (MUPS) as soon as possible, but no longer than twenty-four (24) hours after the initial report. If the missing person is reported as an at-risk individual, or, where other conditions warrant, this shall be completed in four (4) hours. (This entry will automatically be forwarded to NCIC.)
- (2) The officer taking the report will record the FCN on the missing person form.

(e) Investigation (Juvenile)

- (1) When the missing person is a child under 18 years of age, the investigating officer must have the reporting party complete the DOJ form SS 8567, "Authorization to Release Dental/Skeletal X-Rays, Photograph and Description Information."
- (2) If the missing person has no next of kin, then the investigating officer may file a written declaration authorizing the release of the records.
- (3) The following guidelines will be followed:
  - a. If the child is under 12 years of age and still missing after 143 days, the release form (SS 8567) must immediately be executed to obtain dental/skeletal x-rays and a photograph. The investigating officer must check with the coroner. The report, photograph, and the dental/skeletal x-rays must be submitted to DOJ within 14 hours.
  - b. If it is determined the missing child is at risk, the dental/skeletal x-rays and a recent photograph should be immediately obtained. The investigating officer must immediately check with the coroner. The report, photograph and the dental/skeletal x-rays must be submitted to DOJ within 24 hours.
  - c. If the child is 12 years or older and is still missing after 30 days, the reporting party is required to obtain the dental records and give them to the investigating officer within 10 days.
  - d. If the child, 12 years or older, is still missing after 45 days, the investigating officer is to confer with the coroner and immediately send the report, dental/skeletal x-rays, photograph and DOJ release form to DOJ.
  - e. If the missing person is found, the investigating officer must see that DOJ is notified within 24 hours and that the MUPS entry is canceled.

(f) Investigation (Adult)

- (1) When the missing person is an adult, the investigating officer must have the reporting party complete the DOJ for SS 8567, "Authorization to Release Dental/Skeletal X-Rays, Photograph and Description Information."
- (2) If the missing person has no next of kin, then the investigating officer may file a written declaration authorizing the release of the records.
- (3) The following guidelines will be followed:
  - a. If the person is still missing after 30 days, the reporting party is required to obtain the dental records and give them to the investigating officer within 10 days.
  - b. If the person is still missing after 45 days, the investigating officer is to confer with the coroner and immediately send the report, dental/skeletal x-rays, photograph and DOJ release form to DOJ.
  - c. If the missing person is found, the investigating officer must see that DOJ is notified within 24 hours and that the MUPS entry is canceled.

(g) Distribution

- (1) The address that the required reports must be sent to is:

Department of Justice  
Missing/Unidentified Persons Program  
Post Office Box 903417  
Sacramento, CA 94203-4170

APPROVED