

# **CITY OF ANDERSON POLICE DEPARTMENT**

## **Anderson, South Carolina**

<b>DIRECTIVE TYPE</b> General Order	<b>EFFECTIVE DATE</b> August 4, 2010	<b>NUMBER</b> 2701.1
<b>SUBJECT</b> Missing Persons - Adults/Children	<b>REVISED</b> August 4, 2010	
<b>REFERENCE</b> SCLEA 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 18.4 & 18.5	<b>AMENDS/SUPERSEDES</b> 2701	
<b>DISTRIBUTION</b> All Personnel	<b>RE-EVALUATION DATE</b> Annual	<b>NO. PAGES</b> 12

### **I. Purpose:**

This policy outlines guidelines in responding to and investigating missing adults and children. Additionally, it includes procedures for the activation of the statewide AMBER Alert System, the "A CHILD IS MISSING" program and the B.E.A.S Project.

### **II. Policy:**

The most critical stage in the investigation of missing persons involves the initial reaction of law enforcement to the situation. Generally, when law enforcement receives the report of a missing person, it is usually unclear as to whether the person left willingly, wandered off, was delayed, or is the victim of foul play. Uncertainty in these situations may cause law enforcement to develop preconceived preliminary opinions as to the whereabouts and probable return of the missing person. Preconceived opinions may result in the loss of critical information such as a witness or physical evidence.

**In the interest of citizen well being, it is the policy of the City of Anderson Police Department to respond to every report of a missing person as if the person is in immediate danger until information is developed to indicate otherwise. Additionally, there is no waiting period for reporting a missing person.**

### III. Procedures:

#### Missing Person Incident Reports and Case Assignment:

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 subject’s behavior patterns, plans or routines. If the missing person is an adult and circumstances involved are not of a suspicious or unusual nature, a report is written. A BOLO is aired by Central Dispatch. If the missing person is a juvenile or there are suspicious or unusual circumstances, a patrol officer is immediately dispatched to take the incident report.

#### Examples of suspicious/unusual circumstances: (SCLEA 18.1f)

- The missing person is a child 17 years of age or younger.
- The missing person is mentally incapacitated.
- The missing person suffers a medical condition that is potentially life threatening if left untreated or unattended.
- The missing person has demonstrated a potential for suicide.
- Based on available information it is determined the missing person is in a life-threatening situation.
- Based on available information it is believed that the missing person is a child who is in the company of adults who could endanger his or her welfare.
- The absence of the missing person is inconsistent with his or her established patterns of behavior and the deviation cannot be readily explained.
- Other circumstances are involved in the disappearance that would cause a reasonable person to conclude the missing person should be considered “at risk.”

***Note – Supervisor notification is required for all missing person incidents involving young children, the elderly, mentally ill persons, and the seriously ill or handicapped.***

The **Criminal Investigations Division (CID)** – investigates all missing person’s cases.

The officer assigned to follow-up a missing person case is to: (SCLEA 18.1d & 18.1e)

1. Maintain contact with the complainant.
2. Report investigative progress to the missing person’s family on a regular basis.

#### **Definitions:**

**Family Abduction** - A non-custodial family member flees with a child, usually in direct violation of a court ordered custody arrangement.

**Non-Family Abduction** - A child who is taken by an unknown individual, through force or persuasion, usually in furtherance of additional victimization.

**Runaway** - Most often a teenager, who leaves home voluntarily for a variety of reasons.



**Thrown Away** - A child whose caretaker makes no effort to recover the child who has run away, or who has been abandoned or deserted.

**Lost or Otherwise Missing** - A child who becomes separated from parents or caretakers under circumstances not indicating the likelihood of an abduction or voluntary absence. An adult whose whereabouts cannot be readily determined.

**First Responder Responsibilities:** The following are first responder actions, considerations, and activities that will assist in performing competent, productive, and successful missing person investigations:

1. Interview complainant(s) who made the initial report.
2. Confirm that adult/child is in fact missing.
3. If the party missing is a child, verify the child's custody status.
4. Identify circumstances of the disappearance.
5. Determine when, where, and by whom the missing person was last seen.
6. Interview individuals who last had contact with the missing person.
7. If the missing party is a child, determine the child's zone of safety (that distance from the residence a child is routinely allowed to go with parental consent).
8. Based on available information, make an initial determination of the type of incident whether family abduction, non-family abduction, runaway, thrown away, lost or otherwise missing.
9. Obtain a **detailed** description of the missing person, abductor, and any vehicles used.
10. Secure photographs/video tapes of the missing person and the abductor, if available.
11. Evaluate whether circumstances of missing person's disappearance meets AMBER Alert Protocol, "A CHILD IS MISSING" Program and/or the B.E.A.S Project. Discuss plan activation with supervisor.
12. Relay detailed descriptive information to Central Dispatch for BOLO updates.
13. Determine need for additional personnel and discuss need with supervisor.
14. Obtain and note permission to search home or building where incident took place.
15. Conduct an immediate, thorough search of the missing child's home, even if the child was reported missing from a different location.
16. Ascertain if the missing person has a cellular telephone or other electronic communication device.
17. Treat areas of interest as potential crime scenes.
18. Determine if surveillance or security cameras in the vicinity may have captured information about the missing person's disappearance.
19. Interview other family members, friends/associates, and friends of the family to determine when they last saw the missing person and what they think happened to the missing person.

**Supervisory Responsibilities:** The following are supervisory personnel actions, considerations and activities that will assist in performing competent, productive, and successful missing person investigations:

1. Obtain written reports from the first responding officer and other personnel at the scene.
2. Decide if circumstances of missing person's disappearance meet the protocol in place for

activation of an AMBER Alert, “A CHILD IS MISSING” Program and/or the B.E.A.S Project.

3. Determine if additional personnel are needed to assist in the investigation.
4. Establish a command post, if applicable.
5. Determine if additional assistance is necessary from: CID, Victim Advocate, SLED, and FBI.
6. Ensure that all required resources, equipment, and assistance necessary to conduct an efficient investigation have been requested and expedite their availability.
7. Ensure coordination/cooperation among all law enforcement personnel involved in the investigation and search effort.
8. Ensure that all required notifications are made.
9. Ensure that all agency policies and procedures are in compliance.
10. Be available to make any decisions or determinations as they develop.
11. Inform the Public Information Officer if the need exists to use media services.
12. Inform the Public Information Officer if AMBER Alert, “A CHILD IS MISSING” and/or the B.E.A.S. Project are activated.

**Investigative Officer Responsibilities:** The following are investigative officer actions, considerations, and activities that will assist in performing competent, productive, and successful missing person investigations: (SCLEA 18.1d & 18.1e)

1. Verify the accuracy of all descriptive information and other details developed during the preliminary investigation.
2. Initiate a neighborhood canvass.
3. Obtain a brief, recent history of family dynamics.
4. Correct and investigate the reasons for conflicting information offered by witnesses and other individuals.
5. Review and evaluate all available information and evidence collected.
6. Develop and execute an investigative plan.
7. Determine what additional resources and specialized services are required.
8. Ensure that details of the case are reported to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, if applicable.
9. Secure the child’s latest medical and dental records, and if available fingerprints.
10. Establish a leads-management system to prioritize leads and help ensure that each one is reviewed and followed up on.

***Note – Medical, dental, and fingerprint records are critical when investigating unidentified children.***

**Missing Person NCIC Entry:** All adults or juveniles missing under special circumstances (i.e. elderly or mental, etc.) are immediately entered into NCIC by Central Dispatch. All other adults are entered at the request of a CID investigator. Removal of missing persons from NCIC is the responsibility of each investigating officer. (SCLEA 18.4, 18.5 & 18.1c)

**Missing Person Search:** Whenever deemed necessary by an on-duty supervisor, additional resources may be employed in a search for a missing person; i.e. canines and Air Support. All City of Anderson Police Department personnel and City of Anderson Fire Department Search and Rescue are



available for this purpose. Age, mental/physical condition of the missing person, time of day, weather conditions and area terrain are factors that can place a missing person at risk. **Searches are mandatory for at risk or critically missing persons;** see also the next section of this order describing the activation of AMBER Alert. (SCLEA 18.1b)

**Amber Alert System: Required Criteria for Activation of the South Carolina AMBER Alert:** (SCLEA 18.2)

1. It is believed a child was abducted (taken from his or her environment unlawfully, without authority of law, and without permission from parents or legal guardian).
2. The child is 17 years old or younger, and it is believed the child is in immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death; or an individual is 18 years old or older, and it is believed he or she is at a greater risk for immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death because the individual possesses a proven physical or mental disability.
3. All other possibilities for the victim's disappearance have been reasonably excluded.
4. There is sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the victim, suspect, or vehicle used in the abduction.

***NOTE - To qualify for activation of AMBER Alert, a missing person investigation must meet all of the four required criteria.***

**Procedure for Activating AMBER Alert:** (SCLEA 18.3)

1. The missing person is entered into NCIC and removed when located.
2. Only the Chief and Captains can activate AMBER Alert.
3. When the Chief or a Captain determines a case meets the criteria for AMBER Alert activation, the abduction is reported to the South Carolina Clearinghouse at (800)322-4453 or SLED Headquarters at (803)737-9000 by a Central Dispatch supervisor.
4. A completed South Carolina AMBER Alert Information Form (see attached) and a photograph of the victim are faxed to (803)896-7041 by a Central Dispatch supervisor.

**What Will Result Upon Activation:**

1. SLED will fax and e-mail the **South Carolina AMBER Alert Information Form** to radio and television stations designated by the South Carolina Broadcasters Association.
2. The Associated Press Control Bureau for South Carolina will provide this information for broadcast wires in North Carolina and Georgia.
3. SLED will notify all South Carolina law enforcement agencies, including DPS, DOT, FBI, and the South Carolina Truckers' Association.
4. The public will be notified by the news media every fifteen minutes for the next three hours.
5. After eight hours, any updates/cancellations should be made directly to the South Carolina Clearinghouse at 1-800-322-4453 using either the **South Carolina AMBER Alert Update Form** or the **South Carolina AMBER Alert Cancellation Form**.
6. In the event a citizen sees the child, abductor, and/or suspect vehicle, they should immediately call 911. The agency receiving this information will contact the Sheriff's Office with the citizen-supplied information.

**At the conclusion of an AMBER Alert, SLED will:**

1. Fax and e-mail a formal termination of alert to all radio/television stations and the Associated Press Control Bureau for South Carolina.
2. Notify all South Carolina law enforcement agencies, including DPS, DOT, FBI and the SC Truckers' Association.

**After Action Review** – Upon conclusion of a South Carolina AMBER Alert, the City of Anderson Police Department and the South Carolina AMBER Alert Review Committee will assess the operational efficiency of the Alert to determine if any systematic changes are needed.

**B.E.A.S Project** – The Billboard Emergency Alert System (BEAS) is made up of local businesses that donate their electronic signs, marquees and billboards in order to post public safety notices in the event of approaching tornados, hurricanes, ice storms, evacuation routes, shelter notifications and local flooding. The “B.E.A.S. project” is also used for local missing persons and Amber Alert notices. The Chief or his designee, may request BEAS be activated for critical situations. Request for activation is relayed through the 9-1-1 Communications Center to the BEAS Project Coordinator. Final approval of activation is determined by the Director of the Anderson County Emergency Services Division.

**“A CHILD IS MISSING” Program:** A CHILD IS MISSING (ACIM) is a not-for-profit program designed to provide timely information to the public about a missing person. ACIM generates telephone calls to local residents and businesses after initiation by the Police Department. This is a program that can be utilized when an incident does not meet the criteria for an AMBER Alert.

*It is this agency's policy to utilize ACIM only for missing children, elderly, and disabled persons.*

**ACIM Activation** - If the missing person is a child (2-17 years old), an elderly person (with Alzheimer's) or a disabled person (in danger) the investigating officer's supervisor may activate ACIM. ACIM is available for use twenty-four/seven.

**Factors for determining use of ACIM:**

**Children:**

1. A child should be 17 years old or younger.
2. The complainant is an adult family member, teacher, or another adult who is responsible for the child.
3. Runaways deemed at-risk.
4. Stranger abduction prior to activating the AMBER Alert.

**Disabled Person:**

There is no age stipulation for a disabled person. For purposes of this policy, a disabled person will fall into one of the following categories:

1. The person has a physical or mental impairment that severely limits self-care, is elderly, or suffers from Alzheimer's or senile dementia.
2. The person is disoriented or unable to respond to simple questions regarding personal information such as name and address.
3. The person is dependent upon life sustaining medication.



4. The approving supervisor may take into account other circumstances that may influence using ACIM even if the person is a habitual runaway or walk-away. Examples of these circumstances are: suspected foul play, imminent severe weather, etc.

**Activating ACIM: Procedure -**

1. The shift lieutenant or his/her designee is to contact a Central Dispatch supervisor.
2. ACIM activation is to be documented in the missing person incident report.
3. Central Communications personnel will man the ACIM phone.

**Leads and information** received from a citizen concerning the missing person are to be documented on A Child is Missing-Leads and Information Sheet and are to be forwarded to the supervisor in charge of the case. The supervisor in charge of the case depends on whether the incident was resolved during the initial reporting shift or the case was assigned to CID. After evaluation of the information, a supervisor is to take appropriate action.

**If a sighting of the missing person is confirmed**, the supervisor may want to consider re-activating ACIM. The second telephone alert should include the most recent known location. ACIM will relay this location in it's notification of residents. This is particularly important if the sighting location is in a different ZIP Code than the original report.

**If ACIM is activated more than once in the same case**, each activation is to be documented under the original case number on a supplemental incident report form. Documentation is to include activation by date and time, and the location the missing person was last seen.

**ACIM FOLLOW-UP:**

If the missing person is found, the supervisor on-scene is to notify Central Dispatch and complete the necessary supplemental paperwork.



Martin D. Brown.  
Chief of Police

8-4-2010  
Date

## **ACIM Information Checklist**

When reporting a missing person to A Child is Missing, the Central Dispatch supervisor is to provide the following information by Toll-free (888) 875-2246 or Emergency Back-Up Pager (954) 492-4778:

- ☐ Name of missing person
- ☐ DOB of missing person
- ☐ Gender
- ☐ Nationality
- ☐ Height
- ☐ Weight
- ☐ Eye color
- ☐ Hair color
- ☐ Any other characteristics such as glasses, tattoos, piercing, scars, etc.
- ☐ Clothing description
- ☐ Location last seen **with zip code**
- ☐ Provide accurate spelling of street names
- ☐ Provide nearest major intersection
- ☐ Residence if different than last seen location
- ☐ Date and time last seen
- ☐ Is the person a habitual runaway? First time missing?
- ☐ Were friends/family notified?
- ☐ Is there water or wooded areas near the last location last seen?
- ☐ Did the missing person leave in a vehicle, on a bicycle or skateboard?
- ☐ If in a vehicle, what is the vehicle description and license plate?
- ☐ Is there foul play suspected? Parental/stranger abduction?
- ☐ Was there a confrontation prior to the person's disappearance?
- ☐ Does the person have a substance abuse problem?
- ☐ Is the person taking medication?
- ☐ Case number assigned to the case
- ☐ Agency telephone number for the public to call if they have information
- ☐ Name of investigator in charge of the case
- ☐ Contact number for investigator in charge of the case – cell, beeper or land line.



**SOUTH CAROLINA AMBER ALERT INFORMATION FORM**  
**SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION**

Fax (803) 896-7041 (If problems, call (800) 322-4453 or (803) 737-9000)

**Reporting Agency Information**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Reporting Agency:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name /Title of Reporting Individual:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Number for Reporting Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fax Number for Reporting Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
NCIC Number

- ☐ Does the law enforcement agency believe that the child has been abducted (taken from their environment unlawfully, without authority of law, and without permission from the child's parent or legal guardian)?
- ☐ If the child is 17 years old or younger, does the law enforcement agency believe the child is in immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death, or if the individual is 18 years old or older, does the law enforcement agency believe the individual is at greater risk for immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death because the individual possesses a proven physical or mental disability?
- ☐ Have all other possibilities for the victim's disappearance been reasonably excluded?
- ☐ Is there sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the victim, suspect, or vehicle used in the abduction?

**\*IMPORTANT: Do NOT send an AMBER alert if the answer is NO to ANY of these questions.**

Date of Abduction: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Abduction: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Known Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Direction of Travel: \_\_\_\_\_

**VICTIM DATA: (Please FAX a photograph of the victim to (803) 896-7041, if available)**

Victim Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Eyes: \_\_\_\_\_ Eyewear: \_\_\_\_\_ Hair/Hairstyle: \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing: \_\_\_\_\_

Unique Physical Characteristics: \_\_\_\_\_

**SUSPECT DATA: (Please FAX a photograph of the suspect to (803) 896-7041, if available)**

Suspect Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_

Eyes: \_\_\_\_\_ Eyewear: \_\_\_\_\_ Hair/Hairstyle: \_\_\_\_\_

Clothing: \_\_\_\_\_

Unique Physical Characteristics: \_\_\_\_\_

**VEHICLE DATA:**

Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Color: \_\_\_\_\_

Tag: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Any Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Created by: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SOUTH CAROLINA AMBER**

### **ALERT UPDATE FORM**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

TO: SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

FAX (803) 896-7041 (If problem, call (800) 322-4453 or (803) 737-9000)

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON:

\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE #:

\_\_\_\_\_

FACSIMILE #:

\_\_\_\_\_

### **UPDATE INFORMATION**

NCIC#: \_\_\_\_\_

VICTIM'S NAME:

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH:

\_\_\_\_\_

UPDATED INFORMATION:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**SOUTH CAROLINA AMBER  
ALERT CANCELLATION FORM**

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM

TO: SOUTH CAROLINA LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION

FAX (803) 896-7041 (If problem, call (800) 322-4453 or (803) 737-9000)

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE #: \_\_\_\_\_

FACSIMILE #: \_\_\_\_\_

**CANCELLATION INFORMATION**

NCIC#: \_\_\_\_\_

VICTIM'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

REASON FOR CANCELLATION : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## A Child is Missing – Leads and Information Sheet

FORWARD COMPLETED FORM TO SUPERVISORS IN CHARGE OF MISSING PERSON CASE

MISSING PERSON CASE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPERVISOR IN CHARGE OF CASE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

CALLER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CALLER ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CALLER PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

CALLER'S LEAD/INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

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CALL TAKER NAME: \_\_\_\_\_