



## Newport News Police Department - Operational Manual

### OPS-441 - MISSING PERSONS (AGE 21 & OLDER)

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#### I. PROCEDURE

##### A. Reporting Procedures

1. All reports of missing persons (age 21 and older) will be taken by a sworn police officer. The Department holds that every person reported as missing will be considered at risk until significant information to the contrary is confirmed.
  - a. If the missing person reporting call received is from an out-of-state/jurisdiction complainant:
    - 1) The call-taker obtains the complainant's name, call-back number, and last known location of the missing individual (if available).
    - 2) The call-taker immediately notifies an on-duty supervisor from the corresponding precinct.
    - 3) If information on the missing individual's whereabouts is not known, then the call-taker may use discretion as to which supervisor is notified.
    - 4) The supervisor contacts the complainant as soon as possible to determine the nature of the incident and formulate the correct plan of action.
2. A police officer shall respond to the scene to determine if the person is missing from the City of Newport News and which of the following criteria the person meets. [41.2.5(f)]
  - a. *Disability*: Person missing is under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting himself or others to personal or immediate danger.
  - b. *Endangered*: Person missing under circumstances indicating his physical safety is in danger.
  - c. *Involuntary*: Person missing under circumstances indicating the disappearance was not voluntary, and which may establish them as a critically missing adult (VA Code §52-34.10).

NOTE: If the missing person falls under one of the categories, the reporting sergeant shall notify the on-call Special Victims Unit supervisor/detective. In addition, if the missing person falls under the category of *Involuntary*, the reporting sergeant shall ensure the incident area or place where the person was last seen as a potential crime scene is secured and safeguarded.

- d. *Other*: A person 21 years of age or older who does not meet the criteria for entry in any other category, who is missing and for whom there is a reasonable concern for his or her safety.

3. Should the person fall in any of the above categories, the responding police officer shall:
  - a. Complete a Virginia Missing Person Information Clearinghouse Report (VA State Form SP 67) in its entirety, to include Parts III and IV, which must be signed by the reporting person. [41.2.5(a)]

NOTE: In the event the complainant is unable to sign the report (e.g., the complainant resides in another city and is making the report by telephone), the responding officer may sign the report in lieu of the complainant.

- b. Obtain an IBR number and record it on the Virginia Missing Person Information Clearinghouse Report.

NOTE: There must be a separate clearinghouse report and incident report number for each person reported missing. Since Communications can only generate one incident report number per call, multiple incident report numbers must be computer generated.

- c. Enter the basic information contained in the Virginia Missing Person Clearinghouse Report into the IBR. [41.2.5(c)]
    - d. Request a recent photograph of the missing person and attach it to the Virginia Missing Person Information Clearinghouse Report. The reporting officer will annotate the pictured subject's name, race, gender, date of birth and IBR report number on the back of the photograph. If multiple subjects are in the photograph, the reporting officer will circle the missing subject.

NOTE: Advise the person providing the photograph that it will not be returned.

- e. Notify the on-duty supervisor who will respond to the scene, and will determine if additional personnel and resources are needed to assist with the search/investigation. [41.2.5(f)]
      - f. Broadcast a BOL for the missing person over the radio and MDC. [41.2.5(b)]
      - g. Attempt to determine if the missing person requires any specific medication or if any other special considerations exist.
      - h. Scan relevant photos and documents (i.e. photograph(s) of missing person, completed SP-67) as attachments to the IBR.

#### B. NCIC/VCIN Entries

1. The missing person is entered into NCIC/VCIN, the Missing Persons Entry Form and the teletype reply indicating the NIC and VIC entry numbers will be forwarded to the Records Unit each working day. [41.2.5(c)]
2. Critically missing adult reports must be entered into NCIC/VCIN within two hours of receipt (§15.2-1718.2 Code of Virginia).

#### C. Search and Rescue [41.2.5(d,e); 46.2.5]

1. When a missing person cannot be located, or there is reason to believe an abduction has occurred, a search of the area shall be conducted upon consent of the person with

standing. The search will include all areas of the victim's residence and/or all areas of the location the responding officer was dispatched to, as well as any vehicle(s) parked at the scene. The responding officer will: [41.2.5(f)]

- a. Conduct the search regardless of any search that may have been conducted previously by a relative or others.
- b. Conduct a thorough home search even if the person's disappearance occurred elsewhere.
- c. Before conducting a search of all applicable areas, request that the owner or person in control of the property, sign a Consent to Search Form (NNPD Form #183) whenever practical.

NOTE: If the person in control of the property refuses to allow a search of the premises/property, contact the on-duty supervisor for guidance and assistance. [41.2.5(f)]

- d. When dealing with a person with disabilities, identify the distance a person could travel from the location where last seen before he would most likely be at risk of injury or exploitation based on the person's age, development stage, and related matters in the event that an extended search is necessary. [41.2.5(f)]
2. When a search party is organized for missing persons, K-9 personnel shall be notified (see OPS-605, "Utilization of Police Canines") . sUAS (drone) personnel may also be notified as a resource (see OPS-615, "Unmanned Aircraft Systems"). The on-call Special Victim's Unit supervisor will respond to the scene and assume command of the search after receiving notification from the on-scene supervisor. [41.1. 4(a); 41.2.5(f)]
  3. Additional assistance from search and rescue organizations can be requested by calling the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VADEM). This official state agency coordinates emergency services within the Commonwealth of Virginia, and has resources available to assist local agencies. The Newport News Department of Emergency Management should also be notified.
  4. The Virginia "Critically Missing Adult Alert" (Virginia Code §§52-34.10, 52-34.11) program provides a quick public notification method in cases where a missing person is deemed to be a "critically missing adult". [41.2.5(d)]
    - a. The on-call Special Victim's Unit supervisor will be contacted in cases where the missing person meets the definition of "critically missing adult" as set out in §52-34.10.
    - b. If it is determined that the missing person meets the definition, the Special Victim's Unit will contact the Virginia State Police for assistance in the activation of the Critically Missing Adult Alert.

#### D. Locating Missing Persons

1. Upon notification that a missing person has been located within the City, an officer will be dispatched to the scene to verify the missing person has in fact returned to the proper location and the reporting person or relative has been notified. It will be the responsibility

of the officer locating the missing person to immediately contact the Records Unit (0800 - 1700 hours Monday through Friday) or the Communications Division (all other times) to remove the missing person from NCIC/VCIN. [41.2.5(c,d)]

2. The officer locating the missing person shall ensure that the Virginia Missing Person Clearinghouse Report is immediately updated as well as the arrest information and the narrative section pages of the IBR, to reflect the date, time and location where the missing person was located, along with the date, time and name of the person who removed the missing person from NCIC/VCIN.

NOTE: In the event the information from the Missing Person Information Clearinghouse Report has not yet been entered into the IBR, the information will be recorded on a Supplemental Report and forwarded to the Records Unit for entry.

3. The Records Unit will forward a copy of the recovery information to the Special Victims Unit for the investigation. [41.2.5(b,e)]
4. If information is received that the missing person has been located in another jurisdiction, all attempts will be made to have an officer in that jurisdiction make physical contact with the missing person. The officer's name, agency time and date of contact will be noted in the Virginia Missing Person Information Clearinghouse Report. The missing person (if entered) will then be cleared from NCIC/VCIN.

E. Maintaining Communications with the Complainant/Reporting Person

The complainant/reporting person shall be kept up-to-date with any investigative progress or updates that may be of concern or interest regarding the missing person. This responsibility will rest with the investigating officer/detective. Information which could hamper the investigation will not be released. Determination of the need to release such information is the responsibility of the lead officer/detective or his supervisor. [41.2.5(b,d,e)]

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