



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 610 – Missing Persons

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Forms Referenced in Procedure:	SAPD Form #2-1 SAPD Form #2-3	Related Procedures:	None

.01 INTRODUCTION

This procedure establishes guidelines for reporting missing persons, entering information into the computer system, and the canceling of missing person reports.

.02 POLICY

- A. The San Antonio Police Department investigates all reports of persons who are missing from or who were last seen in the City of San Antonio. The Department's responsibilities include investigations into possible violations of the Texas Penal Code and the Texas Family Code.
- B. The Department also assists citizens in attempting to locate persons who are not missing, but who may be temporarily lost (i.e., motorists from out of town who are following each other and who become lost due to heavy traffic conditions or overdue motorists).

.03 DEFINITIONS

- A. "Lost Persons" means those persons temporarily separated from their party or relatives.
- B. "Missing Person" means:
 - 1. A person seventeen (17) years old or younger who has disappeared;
 - 2. A person eighteen (18) years or older whose disappearance appears to be non-voluntary; or
 - 3. An elderly or confused person who has disappeared.
- C. "Mental Health Facility Missing Persons" means a person who is receiving inpatient intellectual developmental disorder services or court ordered inpatient mental health services in a mental health facility and that person leaves the facility without notifying the facility, or without the facility's consent.

.04 LOST PERSONS

- A. When attempting to locate lost persons, the officer(s) assigned to the call assists the reporting party in locating the person who is lost.
- B. Should it become apparent the person cannot be located without further assistance, the officer notifies a supervisory officer concerning the situation, as a more detailed search of the area may be necessary.
- C. A supervisory officer makes a decision regarding any further disposition of the case.

.05 REPORTING MISSING PERSONS

- A. All reports of missing persons are recorded on SAPD Forms No. 2-1, *Offense Report*, and No. 2-3, *Offense Continuation*.



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- B. Missing person reports are taken immediately with no time lapse or arbitrary waiting period required before reporting an individual missing.
- C. Missing person complaints involving a juvenile/child who is seventeen (17) years of age or younger or an elderly individual sixty-five (65) years of age and older or confused adult are taken by a Patrol Division officer in the field. The officer assigned to the call notifies a supervisory officer of the situation, as a search of the area may be necessary.
- D. All other reports of missing persons, except persons missing from the San Antonio State Hospital, are taken, in person, by any of the following:
 - 1. Any Patrol Division officer;
 - 2. The Missing Persons /Juvenile Processing Office.
- E. Reports of persons missing from the San Antonio State Hospital may be called in by telephone to the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office.
- F. A missing person's report is not taken if a person is not missing from or last seen in the City of San Antonio.

.06 STATE ALERT CRITERIA

Local and regional alerts will be initiated by the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing office and the response directed by the follow up unit with investigative responsibility. Request for any State Alerts must meet criteria defined by DPS (<https://www.dps.texas.gov/IntelligenceCounterterrorism/alerts/index.htm>.) The Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office is responsible for initiating the Amber State Alert request to DPS upon meeting the below criteria.

- A. **Amber Alerts** – Designed to inform the public of serious child abductions, in an effort to promote tips and leads to law enforcement. The below represents AMBER Alert criteria for the state's network:
 - 1. Is this child 17 years of age or younger, whose whereabouts are unknown, and whose disappearance law enforcement has determined to be unwilling which poses a credible threat to the child's safety and health; and if abducted by a parent or legal guardian, was the abduction in the course of an attempted murder or murder? **or**
 - 2. Is this child 13 years of age or younger, who was taken (willingly or unwillingly) without permission from the care and custody of a parent or legal guardian by:
 - a. Someone unrelated and more than three years older; **or**
 - b. Another parent or legal guardian who attempted or committed murder at the time of the abduction?
 - 3. Is this child in immediate danger of sexual assault, death or serious bodily injury?
 - 4. Has a preliminary investigation verified the abduction and eliminated alternative explanations for the child's disappearance?
 - 5. Is sufficient information available to disseminate to the public to help locate the child, a suspect, or the vehicle used in the abduction?
- B. **Silver Alert** - Designed to notify the public of missing older adults with a documented mental condition (to include Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia.) The below represents Silver Alert criteria for the state's network:
 - 1. Is the missing person 65 years of age or older or been diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease?
 - 2. Does the senior citizen have a diagnosed impaired mental condition, and does the senior citizen's disappearance pose a credible threat to the senior citizen's health and safety? (Law enforcement shall require the family or legal



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guardian of the missing senior citizen to provide documentation from a medical or mental health professional of the senior citizen's condition).

3. Is it confirmed that an investigation has taken place verifying that the senior citizen's disappearance is due to his/her impaired mental condition, and alternative reasons for the senior citizen's disappearance have been ruled out?
4. Is the Silver Alert request within 72 hours of the senior citizen's disappearance?
5. Is there sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the senior citizen? (Highway signs will be activated only if accurate vehicle information is available AND it is confirmed that the senior citizen was driving the vehicle at the time of the disappearance).

Note: A physician's letterhead, indicating the impaired mental condition, date of diagnosis, patient's name, with physician's signature is recommended to satisfy the documentation requirement.

C. **Blue Alerts** - Designed to speed in the apprehension of violent criminals who kill or seriously wound local, state, or federal law enforcement officers. During a Blue Alert, the public receives information regarding the suspected assailant, facilitating tips and leads to law enforcement. The below represents Blue Alert criteria for the state's network:

1. A law enforcement officer must have been killed or seriously injured by an offender.
2. The investigating law enforcement agency must determine that the offender poses a serious risk or threat to the public and other law enforcement personnel.
3. A detailed description of the offender's vehicle, vehicle tag, or partial tag must be available for broadcast to the public.
4. The investigating law enforcement agency of jurisdiction must recommend activation of the Blue Alert to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS).

D. **Endangered Missing Person Alert** - Texas AMBER Alert legislation was updated to include alerts for missing persons (of any age) with an intellectual disability (Autism, Developmental Disorders etc.) In order to avoid public confusion with AMBER Alerts for abducted children, the name "Endangered Missing Persons Alert" was selected. The below represents Endangered Missing Persons Alert criteria for the state's network:

1. Has the missing person been diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability and/or a Pervasive Developmental Disorder, including Asperger's Disorder, Autistic Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rett's Disorder or a Pervasive Developmental Disorder (Not Otherwise Specified)? If the missing person has been diagnosed with an Intellectual Disability, law enforcement shall require a written diagnosis from a physician or psychologist licensed to practice within Texas, or certified by the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services and/or Texas Department of State Health Services.
2. Is it confirmed that an investigation has taken place, verifying that a reasonable explanation for the missing person's disappearance has been ruled out and that the disappearance poses a credible threat to the health and safety of the missing person?
3. Is the Endangered Missing Persons Alert request being made within 72 hours of the missing person's disappearance?
4. Is there sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the missing person? (Highway signs will be activated only if accurate vehicle information is available AND it is confirmed that the missing person was in the vehicle at the time of the disappearance).



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- E. **Camo Alert** - Designed to notify the public of a missing current or former member of the United States armed forces, including the National Guard or a reserve or auxiliary unit of any branch of the armed forces. The below represents Camo alert criteria for the state's network:
1. Verification from the Texas Department of Public Safety that the missing military member is registered for the camo alert program.
 2. Confirmation the individual reported missing is a current or former member of the United States armed forces, including the National Guard or a reserve or auxiliary unit of any branch of the armed forces and that the individual's location is unknown.
 3. Confirmation the missing person suffers from a mental illness, including post-traumatic stress disorder or a traumatic brain injury.
 4. Confirmation the disappearance poses a credible threat to the military member's health and safety or the health and safety of another.
- Note:** A physician's or psychologist's letterhead, indicating the impaired mental condition, date of diagnosis, patient's name, with physician's signature is recommended to satisfy the documentation requirement.
- F. **CLEAR Alert** - Designed to close the gap between missing children and senior citizens. The CLEAR alert assists law enforcement in locating and rescuing missing, kidnapped or abducted adults or adults who are in immediate danger of injury or death, as well as aid in locating any potential suspects. The below represents CLEAR Alert criteria for the state's network:
1. Is the individual 18 to 64 years of age, whose whereabouts are unknown?
 2. Has a preliminary investigation verified the adult is in imminent danger of bodily injury or death or is the disappearance involuntary such as an abduction or kidnapping?
 3. Is the clear alert request within 72 hours of the individual's disappearance?
 4. Is sufficient information available to disseminate to the public to help locate the individual, a suspect, or the vehicle used in the incident?

.07 ENTERING MISSING PERSON INFORMATION INTO THE COMPUTER SYSTEM

All reports of missing persons seventeen (17) years of age or younger, elderly, confused, or whose disappearance is under suspicious circumstances are immediately called into the Missing Persons / Juvenile Processing Office for entry into the T.C.I.C. and N.C.I.C. computer system.

.08 SUSPECTED CRIMINAL OFFENSES

- A. When there is reasonable suspicion that the circumstances of the missing report involves a possible criminal offense, the Missing Persons / Juvenile Processing Office will immediately contact the respective follow up unit (or NCID after normal business hours) and provide the unit with the available information. If a criminal investigation is open or will be opened, the Missing Persons / Juvenile Processing Office personnel will take direction from the follow up unit.
1. To ensure that the integrity of a criminal investigation is not compromised, the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office will closely coordinate any investigation actions with the follow up unit.
 2. If it is determined by the follow up unit that a criminal offense has not been committed, the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office will continue its investigation pursuant to their SOP.
 3. If further information is obtained by the Missing Persons / Juvenile Processing Office that would tend to show that a criminal offense has occurred, the information will be forwarded to the follow up unit for subsequent review.



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.09 CANCELING MISSING PERSON REPORTS

- A. The cancellation of a missing person report is recorded on SAPD Form 2, *Incident Report*.
 - 1. A report of a missing adult is canceled when the reporting person requests the cancellation, the missing person is located by SAPD, or when the missing adult is located by another jurisdiction and notification of the location is forwarded to the San Antonio Police Department.
 - 2. A report of a missing juvenile is canceled only when the missing juvenile is in the custody of a law enforcement agency or the juvenile's parent/guardian.
- B. When a missing person returns or is located, the officer taking the subsequent report cancels the missing person search by notifying the Missing Persons / Juvenile Processing Office as soon as possible.
- C. When a missing person from a mental health facility is located, the officer will notify the appropriate mental health facility of the patient's location. If the patient is a danger to himself or others, or if the appropriate mental health facility requests the patient be returned, the patient is transported to the appropriate mental health facility. If the officer does not know which mental health facility the patient belongs to, the officer will call the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office for further assistance.
- D. When a missing juvenile seventeen (17) years of age or younger is located, the officer will notify the Parent/guardian, advising the juvenile was located. The juvenile will be taken into custody by the officer and transported to the parent/guardian.
 - 1. **If the officer is unable to locate the parent/guardian, the officer will transport the juvenile to Centro Seguro and contact the Missing Persons / Juvenile Processing Office to inform of placement.**
 - 2. The officer shall notify the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office so they can clear the missing from the system.
- E. When an out of county/state juvenile **under** seventeen (17) years of age is located, the officer will:
 - 1. Contact the TLETS channel in Communications and provide the necessary information for a message to be sent to the entering agency;
 - 2. Upon receipt of a positive confirmation the officer may follow GM Procedure 602.11.B.2 and transport the juvenile to Centro Seguro or contact the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office for assistance with finding placement.
- F. When an out of county/state juvenile seventeen (17) years of age is located the officer will:
 - 1. Contact the TLETS channel in Communications and provide the necessary information for a message to be sent to the entering agency;
 - 2. The officer may follow GM Procedure 602.11.B.2 and transport the juvenile to Centro Seguro or contact the Missing Persons/Juvenile Processing Office for assistance with finding placement.

.010 INFORMATION AND REQUESTS ABOUT MISSING PERSONS

All information received on reported missing persons and any requests for information on missing persons thought to be in the City of San Antonio are forwarded to the Missing Person / Juvenile Processing Office.