



NH Department of Health & Human Services
Division for Children, Youth & Families

DCYF Standard Operating Procedure

1558.3 MISSING CHILD PROCEDURES - CPS ON-CALL

Policy Directive: **21-28**

Approved:

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This SOP defines how reports of a missing child involved with CPS through an Assessment or open case are managed outside traditional work hours.

Procedure

The following information is to support the implementation of the above referenced policy. This document shall not preclude staff from using their professional judgement based on individual circumstances, consistent with the requirements of the policy.

- I. When On-Call staff receive a report that a child is missing, they immediately determine if the child is involved with DCYF (Assessment or case).
- II. If DCYF is not involved, On-Call staff take minimal information, including if there are concerns that the child has been abducted, and directs the reporter to contact law enforcement. On-Call staff then:
 - A. Contact law enforcement as well and provide the information obtained; and
 - B. Consult with a Supervisor to determine if a report should be made through Central Intake.
- III. If DCYF is involved, On-Call staff engage the reporter to determine if the child has run away, been abducted, escaped/absconded from parole/administrative release (JJS case), or is otherwise missing and obtains the following information:
 - A. The reporter's name, contact information, and relationship to the child;
 - B. The child's demographic information;
 - C. A physical description of the child, including:
 1. What they were wearing when last seen; and
 2. Any birth marks, tattoos, or piercings the child has;
 - D. When, where, and with whom the child was last seen and who saw them;
 - E. The parents/guardians names and contact information (if different/unknown);
 - F. If the parents/guardians (as applicable) are aware of the situation;

- G. Why the child is believed to be missing, including:
 - 1. If the child has a history of running away or making threats to run away; and
 - 2. If anyone has made threats to take the child and if yes, their name and relationship to the child;
 - H. If there are concerns the child has been abducted; and
 - I. If law enforcement has been contacted and if they have, who did they speak with and was a missing person's report filed.
- IV. If there are concerns that the child was abducted, but law enforcement has not been contacted, On-Call staff direct the caller to contact law enforcement where the child is thought to have been abducted immediately.
- A. If there are concerns that a child has been abducted and it appears that the reporter may not contact law enforcement, On-Call staff contact 911 immediately to ensure a report is made.
- V. On-Call staff immediately notify the On-Call Supervisor of any situation in which a child involved with DCYF (regardless of legal status) is thought to be missing.
- A. The On-Call Supervisor immediately notifies the appropriate Field Administrator of any situation in which a child with whom DCYF has a legal relationship is believed to have been abducted.
- VI. If the child is currently involved with DCYF, On-Call staff will seek additional information to aid in locating the child once any concern of abduction (as applicable) has been addressed.
- VII. On-Call staff should seek information that can assist in understanding the child's current circumstances and locating the child. This may include:
- A. If the child has any medical, physical, or mental health issues;
 - B. If the child requires medication, and if yes:
 - 1. When did they last take their medication and is it accounted for;
 - C. Whether any of the child's clothing or other personal items are missing;
 - D. Any cell phone, email, and social media accounts the child may have;
 - E. Any websites the child is known to have visited;
 - F. Attempts already made to locate the child; and

- G. The name and contact information of family or friends of the child who may know more information or who the child may be with or go to (work, school, appointments, etc.).
- VIII. Once additional information has been gathered, On-Call staff request that the reporter contact law enforcement (if not already done) to open a missing child report.
- IX. On-Call staff then notify the assigned CPSW and Supervisor (as well as the JPPO and JJS Supervisor as appropriate) via email that the child’s whereabouts are unaccounted for and provide all available information.
- X. The On-Call Supervisor notifies the appropriate Field Administrator as necessary to ensure the missing child is reported to NCMEC within 24 hours of DCYF receiving the report.
 - A. When the Field Administrator makes a report to NCMEC, they email the Human Trafficking Specialist the date and time the report was made to NCMEC, along with the NCMEC report number within 24 hours.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Can DCYF make a report to law enforcement if the child remains in the custody of their parents/guardians?

- A DCYF has an obligation under [42 USC 671\(a\)\(9\)\(C\)](#) to make a report to law enforcement for any child involved with the Division who is thought to be missing.
- A On-Call staff should work with the parents/guardians to assist them in making the report, but also follow-up with law enforcement to ensure the report is made.

Q2. What do I do if law enforcement declines to take a missing child report or to enter the child in NCIC?

- A Under RSA 169-E law enforcement is obligated to take a missing child report from DCYF when DCYF has a relationship with the child.
- A If law enforcement declines to take the report or enter the child into NCIC, On-Call staff should engage them as to the reason, document the reason, and consult with a Supervisor.

Glossary and Document Specific Definitions

A - B C - D E - F G - I J - L M - N O - Q R - S T - V W - Z

Document Change Log

PD	Modification Made	Approved	Date