

**POLICY
335**

**Effective
Date
11-21-17**

**Eugene
Police Department**



A Child is Missing Alert Program

335.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The safety of Eugene's vulnerable populations is a priority and the department should use every resource available to protect them. The first few hours after a child, elderly person (often with Alzheimer's or Dementia), college student on campus, or person with a disability is reported missing are critical to the safe recovery of that person, and it is essential to utilize maximum public participation in the efforts of law enforcement to locate the individual.

The A Child is Missing Alert (ACIMA) program, is a valuable tool for law enforcement if used properly. A Child is Missing Alert will generate telephone calls to local residents within fifteen (15) minutes after initiation by law enforcement.

ACIMA will only be used for missing children, elderly, college students on campus and persons with disabilities whenever the criteria of the program, as outlined in this policy, are met.

ACIMA is an additional tool to assist in locating the missing person, but it does not replace or preclude a thorough investigation and/or search by members of this department in the field.

This policy relates to and works in conjunction with *Policy 332 – Missing Persons Reporting* and *Policy 334 – AMBER Alerts*.

335.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Missing Person: Any person whose whereabouts are unknown to the reporting party, including, but not limited to, a child taken, detained, concealed, enticed away, or retained by a parent in violation of *ORS 163.245* or *ORS 163.257*.

Missing person also includes any child who is missing voluntarily, involuntarily, or under circumstances not conforming to his or her ordinary habits or behavior and who may be in need of assistance.

At Risk: Includes, but is not limited to, evidence or indications of any of the following:

- (a) The person is missing under suspicious circumstances and may be victim of a crime or foul play.

- (b) The person missing is in need of medical attention or medication without which s/he may experience serious medical problems.
- (c) The person missing may be the victim of a parental abduction or is otherwise believed to be in the company of a person considered to be dangerous to the missing person.
- (d) The person missing is mentally or cognitively impaired or considered to be a danger to self or others.
- (e) The person is likely to have been the victim of a boating, swimming, or other similar accident, or may be a victim of a natural disaster.
- (f) The person is suffering from Alzheimer's, Dementia, or other condition that severely limits their ability to care for themselves.

Elderly: For purposes of this program the person must be 55 years of age, or older

Child: While Oregon considers a child to be a person under eighteen years of age, for purposes of this policy federal law considers any person under the age of twenty-one years to be a child.

335.2 A CHILD IS MISSING ALERT ACTIVATION CRITERIA

- (a) The ACIMA system should only be activated in the following circumstances when dealing with missing reports, or people who are found and where they belong needs to be located:
 - A child has been reported missing by an adult family member, teacher, or another adult (guardian) who is responsible for the child
 - A runaway child. Habitual runaways may be included if circumstances indicate they may be in imminent danger
 - Stranger abduction, prior to calling Amber Alert
 - College students living on campus, under suspicious circumstances
 - An elderly person, and being missing is out-of-character
 - An elderly person who has walked away from a nursing facility, even if they frequently do so
 - A known Alzheimer's or Dementia patient
 - A person who has physical, mental or intellectual disability that severely limits their ability to care for themselves
 - A person who is disoriented or unconscious

- A person who is dependent on life-sustaining medications
- Other conditions that place a missing person in danger, such as imminent severe weather or other conditions not listed above.

335.3 ALERT RESPONSIBILITY

The employee receiving the abduction report will notify the Watch Commander or appropriate Investigations supervisor as soon as practical. The Watch Commander or Investigations supervisor will then determine whether or not the situation is appropriate for the use of the ACIMA system.

335.4 INITIAL ACTIVATION PROCEDURE

- (a) When the decision is made to use the ACIMA system, the investigating officer or Watch Commander or supervisor will call A Child is Missing immediately.
 - (1) Since the system communicates directly with citizen's phones, the most effective times to call are between 0700 hours and 2230 hours. However, circumstances may exist that dictates use of the system at other times.
 - (2) The involved supervisor or Watch Commander will determine the phone number that will be supplied to ACIMA for the public to contact the department with information about the missing person. This will most often be 9-1-1 or the non-emergency phone number, but may be another number if active tip monitoring is warranted.
 - (3) Notify the Communications Supervisor that ACIMA system is being used.
 - (4) Contact ACIMA at 1-888-875-2246 or page the operator at 1-954-492-4778. They will want to have as much of the following information as we can provide:
 - Agency Name and Zip Code
 - A phone number for the general public to call
 - A fax number that ACI can use for case follow ups
 - Name, DOB and physical description of the missing person,
 - Any identifying features such as glasses, tattoos, scars, piercings, etc.
 - Detailed clothing description
 - Circumstances involved that qualify them for the program
 - Location last seen with a zip code

- Provide accurate spellings 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?
 - Is there water or wooded areas near the location last seen?
 - Did the missing person leave in a vehicle, on a bicycle or skateboard, or other mode of transportation
 - If in a vehicle, provide a detailed vehicle description and plate number, if known
 - Is foul play suspected?
 - Is parental or stranger abduction a possibility?
 - Was there a confrontation prior to the person's disappearance?
 - Does the person have a substance abuse problem?
 - Is the person taking medication?
- (b) If the situation warrants the press to be involved, the Public Information Officer (PIO), Watch Commander, or involved supervisor will prepare an initial news release that includes all available information that can be released that might aid in locating the missing person, such as:
- (c) Information ACIMA received from the public will be relayed to the Communications Center or the Supervisor involved in the investigation.
- If a sighting of the missing person is confirmed, the supervisor may want to consider using A Child Is Missing Alert again using the most recent known location in the notification of residents. This is particularly important if the sighting location is in a different Zip Code than the original report.
 - If an ACIMA is issued more than once in the same case, the dates and times of the alert as well as any additional geographic details will be documented in the police report

335.5 FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION

- (a) When the missing person is located, the supervisor will notify A Child is Missing to report the recovery.
- (b) A Child is Missing will fax a “Case Follow-Up Report” to be completed by the officer or supervisor and faxed back to them for their record keeping.
- (c) If the missing person is not located before the end of shift, ensure that proper notifications have been made, pursuant to *Policy 332 – Missing Persons Reporting* and to ensure that oncoming shifts are aware of the situation and are aware that an ACIMA has been issued.

PETE KERNS
Chief of Police

OAA 2.2.4