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MISSING PERSONS/RUNAWAY PROCEDURE (POL-P004)  
DCSS – Police Department

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**1.0 SCOPE:**

- 1.1 To provide guidance for Dougherty County School System Police Officers responding to missing persons and runaway calls.

**2.0 RESPONSIBILITY:**

- 2.1 Chief of Police
- 2.2 Police Officers

**3.0 APPROVAL AUTHORITY:**

- 3.1 Deputy Superintendent
- 3.2 Chief of Police

**4.0 DEFINITIONS:**

- 4.1 GCIC – Georgia Crime Information Center
- 4.2 NCIC – National Crime Information Center
- 4.3 OCGA – Official Code of Georgia Annotated

**5.0 PROCEDURE:**

5.1 Missing Persons (Adult)

- 5.1.1 The Dougherty County School Police shall act as the primary investigating agency in a missing person case only when it has been determined that the missing person was last seen on a Dougherty County School facility.

5.1.2 Initial Description and Information

- 5.1.2.1 Officers shall obtain a detailed description of the missing person(s) to include:

- 5.1.2.1.1 Physical attributes (e.g. race, gender, approximate height and weight, etc.)
- 5.1.2.1.2 Clothing description; and
- 5.1.2.1.3 Last known location.

5.1.3 Dissemination of Information

- 5.1.3.1 All information gathered concerning the missing person(s) shall be provided to the main office and Dougherty County 911 communications for broadcast to other officers and appropriate outside agencies via telephone, e-mail, or Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) terminal.

5.1.4 Entry into GCIC/NCIC Database of Missing Persons

- 5.1.4.1 At the discretion of the Team Leader a missing person may be entered into the GCIC/NCIC database. In accordance with the CJIS Network Policy Manual;

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Section 5.17, required documentation for such entries includes, but is not limited to:

- 5.1.4.1.1 Official police report of a missing person;
  - 5.1.4.1.2 written statements from a physician or other authoritative source verifying the missing person's physical or mental disability (if applicable);
  - 5.1.4.1.3 written statements from a parent, legal guardian, next of kin or other authoritative source advising that the person is missing under circumstances indicating that his/her physical safety may be in danger;
  - 5.1.4.1.4 and or written statements from a parent, legal guardian, next of kin or other authoritative source advising that the person's disappearance was not voluntary.
- 5.1.4.2 The Team Leader shall maintain close contact with complainants in missing person's cases to ensure they know everything the department knows and that all that can be done to find the person in question is being done. If and when the person is located, all personnel involved in the search effort, including those from outside the department, should be contacted.
- 5.1.4.3 Depending upon the nature of the case, indoor and outdoor common areas and parking lots may be thoroughly canvassed for the missing person. If the missing person is not located within a reasonable time, the Team Leader shall alert the Chief of Police and Assistant Chief of Police. Flyers and photographs of the individual may be circulated throughout the county in an effort to establish the missing person's whereabouts. The Team Leader will maintain close contact with the families of missing persons to ensure all available leads are fully exploited.

## 5.2 Missing Juveniles

During searches for missing juveniles, a county wide alert containing updated information shall be broadcast over the radio and via e-mail.

### 5.2.1 Abduction's

- 5.2.1.1 If abduction or a "family abduction" is a possibility, gather as much information on the potential suspects as possible and add this to the alert.
- 5.2.1.2 A Levi's Call: Georgia's Amber Alert Program can be issued when the Georgia Bureau of Investigation verifies that a child has been abducted and is in danger, an alert containing known details of the abduction is transmitted to the Georgia Emergency Management Agency, which is then transmitted by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency to broadcasters participating in the program then broadcast or otherwise disseminate the alert to listeners, viewers, or subscribers.

### 5.2.2 Runaway Juveniles (Less Than 17 Years Old and Non-Emancipated)

- 5.2.2.1 Enter records in the NCIC missing person files immediately.
- 5.2.2.2 Juvenile courts have jurisdiction over these persons.

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5.2.2.3 Georgia law enforcement agencies that locate these persons may detain them without court orders for involuntary return to parents, guardians or legal custodians within Georgia (OCGA 15-11-17).

5.2.2.4 Georgia law enforcement agencies that locate such persons, reported as runaways from other states, may detain them under the Interstate Compact on Juveniles (OCGA 39-3-2). Upon being detained, any such person shall be brought before the local Juvenile Court for processing (OCGA 15-11-17).

5.2.3 Runaway Juveniles (17 Years Old and Non-Emancipated)

5.2.3.1 Enter records in the NCIC missing person files within twelve (12) hours of being reported as runaways by their parents, guardians, or legal custodians (OCGA 35-1-8). Because Georgia Law does not provide for forcible detention and return of 17 year old Georgia runaways, the record entry must include a note in the miscellaneous field stating: "Locate Only- Do Not Detain- Contact Agency via Administrative Terminal Message."

5.2.3.2 Neither the Georgia Missing Children Information Center nor GCIC has been able to determine what court(s), if any, have jurisdiction over 17 year old Georgia runaways.

5.2.3.3 Georgia law enforcement agencies that locate such persons, reported as runaways from other states, may detain them under the Interstate Compact on Juveniles (OCGA 39-3-2). When confirming NCIC hits, determine if appropriate court documents have been obtained for the detention and return of the person. If so, these persons shall be brought before the local Juvenile Court (OCGA 39-3-2). Otherwise, they should not be detained.

**6.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS:**

6.1 Form Used To Record Evidence

**7.0 RECORD RETENTION TABLE:**

Identification	Storage	Retention	Protection	Disposition
Form used to record evidence	Hard copy maintain in Police Department	Minimum period of one year	Maintain in secure location	Shredded documents after time period ends

**8.0 REVISION HISTORY:**

Date:	Rev.	Description of Revision:
09-May-07	A	Initial Release

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