


# MONROE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

## General Order

<b>CHAPTER:</b> 047-1		<b>TITLE:</b> Missing Adult
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> December 15, 2008	<b>NO. PAGES:</b> 5	<b>REVIEWED/REVISED:</b> November 29, 2022
 <b>Sheriff of Monroe County</b>		<b>RESCINDS:</b>

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this General Order is to establish policy and procedures that govern the response to, and investigation of, missing adults.
- II. **POLICY:** It is the Sheriff's policy that reports of missing adults are immediately and properly responded to and thoroughly investigated according to professional standards
- III. **DEFINITIONS:**
- A. Missing Adult: a person
    - 1. 18 years of age or older
    - 2. Whose temporary or permanent residence is in, or is believe to be, in Florida
    - 3. Whose location has not been determined
    - 4. Who has been reported as missing to a law enforcement agency
  - B. Disabled: A person of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting himself/herself or others to personal and immediate danger.
  - C. Endangered: A person of any age who is missing and in the company of another person under circumstances indicating that his/her physical safety is in danger.
  - D. Missing Endangered Person:
    - 1. A missing child
    - 2. A missing adult younger than 26 years of age
    - 3. A missing adult 26 years of age or older who, by law enforcement agency is believed of being endangered or the victim of criminal activity.
  - E. Involuntary: a person of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance was not voluntary, i.e. abduction or kidnapping.
  - F. Catastrophe Victim: a person of any age who is missing after a catastrophe.
  - G. Missing Endangered Person Report: A report prepared on a form prescribed by FDLE for use by the public and law enforcement agencies in reporting information to the Missing Endangered Personal Information Clearinghouse about a missing endangered person. There is two different report forms: one for missing endangered adults and one for a missing child.
- IV. **PROCEDURE:** There is no waiting period for reporting a missing person. All reports of missing persons shall be accepted and documented.

**A. Communications Responsibilities:** Communications personnel receiving the report of a missing adult shall:

1. Immediately dispatch a deputy to the scene of the report
2. Obtain sufficient information from the reporting party to broadcast a BOLO to other officers and appropriate agencies. The BOLO should contain the following information if available:
  - a. Missing person description
    - 1) Height
    - 2) Weight
    - 3) Eye and hair color
    - 4) Clothing last seen wearing
    - 5) Location last seen
    - 6) Person last seen with (if other than suspect)
    - 7) Any medical and/or disabilities
  - b. Suspect description
    - 1) Emphasis on vehicle used and direction of travel
    - 2) Time delay
3. A supervisor should be notified of every reported incident in which "unusual circumstances" are determined to exist.
4. Immediately inform all on-duty law enforcement officers of the existence of the missing adult report, communicate the report to every other law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the county and within two hours after receipt of the report enter the report for inclusion within the FCIC and NCIC databases.
5. Upon locating the missing adult, immediately purge information about the case from the FCIC and NCIC databases and notify the Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse.

**B. Patrol Responsibilities**

1. When a patrol deputy is dispatched to a Missing Adult call, the deputy will:
  - a. Make personal contact with the complainant. If the complainant is out of county, phone contact shall be made as soon as possible
  - b. Conduct a preliminary investigation
  - c. Initiate a search as dictated by the case circumstance
  - d. Provide updated information to communications for an updated BOLO
  - e. Confer with a supervisor regarding notifying a Major Crimes Team detective
  - f. Write the initial report including, but not limited to:
    - 1) Full description
    - 2) Associates, places frequented, threats of violence, etc.
    - 3) Full details of the circumstances surrounding the event
    - 4) If a BOLO was issued
    - 5) Investigator notification
    - 6) A signed statement by the reporting party will accompany the report as required by NCIC

2. An NCIC entry is made if the missing person falls into one or more of the following categories:
    - a. Disabled
    - b. Endangered
    - c. Involuntary
    - d. Catastrophe.
  3. If the missing person does not fit into any of the entry categories, no NCIC entry will be made. A statement in the report will indicate that no entry was made. For example "The subject does not meet the entry criteria for NCIC, therefore, no computer entry was made."
  4. If the case information indicates that the victim was abducted, a supervisor will be immediately contacted and will coordinate inter- and intra-agency response.
  5. If the case information indicates that the victim is a "Missing Endangered Person" as defined above, a Missing Endangered Person Report shall be completed by the officer and signed by the complainant.
  6. If any of the requested information is unknown or unavailable, document that on the form. Do not leave any blank spaces. Submit this form with the offense report.
- C. Records Responsibilities:** The Missing Endangered Person/Child form will be forwarded to the Records Section who will mail a copy to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (address on back of form).
- D. Supervisor Responsibilities:** Supervisor will be contacted in all cases and will review the circumstances of each missing person report and direct further action as deemed appropriate for the individual case.
- E. Detective Responsibilities:**
1. If requested, will respond to the scene to begin an immediate investigation as the circumstances dictate.
  2. Normal investigation protocols will be followed in all other cases not requiring an immediate response.
  3. If NCIC entry criteria can be met by the detective subsequent to the investigation an entry shall be made.
  4. Detectives are responsible for all case follow-ups.
- F. NCIC/FCIC Databases:** At a minimum, the detective must make a monthly review of each case with a determination of whether the case should be maintained in the databases.
1. An entry concerning a missing child or a missing adult MAY NOT be removed from the FCIC or NCIC database based solely on the age of the missing child or missing adult
  2. The lead investigator shall ensure that dental and DNA information is updated and current within the F/NCIC.
- G. Dental Records/DNA**
1. The Major Crimes Team Investigator shall obtain or attempt to obtain dental records for the missing child or missing adult within 30 days of the initial report and that information will be entered into F/NCIC.

2. If a missing child or adult is not located within 90 days after the missing child or missing adult report is filed, the Major Crimes Team shall attempt to obtain a biological specimen for DNA analysis or from appropriate family members in addition to obtaining necessary documentation.
3. This section does not preclude the detective from attempting to obtain information or approved biological specimens for DNA analysis before the expiration of the 90-day period. This information will be entered into F/NCIC.

**H. Case Closure/Cancellation:** The deputy closing the case will:

1. Verify the return and identity of the missing person. (If the missing person is found in another jurisdiction, the deputy can have the law enforcement agency in that jurisdiction make the verification.)
2. Write a supplement report including, but not limited to, the following:
  - a. Location where the subject was found
  - b. Subject's physical and mental condition
  - c. How identity was verified
  - d. Account of subject whereabouts during time unaccounted for
  - e. Synopsis of any criminal charges contemplated
3. Cancel any teletypes, BOLO or NCIC/FCIC entries and attach proof with supplement.
4. Notify assigned detective.
5. Advise original complainant of the relevant details of the case and the subject's location. Deputies are cautioned in this regard that every case presents different problems and that discretion will be exercised where appropriate in furnishing information.
6. If it develops that the missing person has been the subject of foul play or has been located either deceased or in severely deteriorated physical or mental condition, personal contact will be made with the complainant.
7. In all other cases phone contact will suffice.
8. Return any photographs in Sheriff's Office custody to the owner.

**I. Silver Alert**

1. The Silver Alert System has been developed to broadcast vehicle information of a missing elderly person who suffers from irreversible deterioration of intellectual faculties (dementia) in a timely manner, to the general public via F.D.O.T.'s highway dynamic message signs and other highway advisory methods.
2. The Silver Alert System may be activated if all of the following criteria are met:
  - a. The investigating deputy has initiated a regional media alert.
  - b. The missing person is 60 years of age or older.
  - c. There must be a clear indication that the individual has a diagnosed cognitive impairment, such as Dementia or;
  - d. Under extraordinary circumstances when a person aged 18 to 59 has irreversible deterioration of intellectual faculties and the Major Crimes Team Supervisor has determined the missing person lacks the capacity to consent, and that the use of dynamic message signs may be the only possible way to rescue the missing person.
  - e. The missing person is believed to be in danger and driving a vehicle.

3. Silver Alert activation must be authorized by a supervisor
  4. Activation Procedures: The Silver Alert System should be activated as soon as possible after it is determined that all of the above criteria have been met.
    - a. Contact the FDLE Missing Endangered Persons Information Clearinghouse (MEPCI) toll-free at 1-888-356-4774
    - b. Advise the person answering that activation of the Silver Alert System is requested and provide the following information:
      - 1) Vehicle description to include verified vehicle description and tag number
      - 2) Information that a statewide BOLO to other law enforcement/911 centers has been initiated
      - 3) Information that a regional media alert has been initiated
    - c. Notify the Major Crimes Team Supervisor
- J. Additional Resources:** The following additional resources are available to aid in the recovery of cognitively impaired missing persons:
1. Florida Department of Elderly Affairs (850) 414-2000: can provide an email alert notification to the senior network. Local law enforcement can provide the Department of Elderly Affairs with the missing persons' flyer via [SilverAlert@elderaffairs.org](mailto:SilverAlert@elderaffairs.org)
  2. Project Lifesaver (<http://www.projectlifesaver.org>): A program aiding the victims and families suffering Alzheimer's disease and related disorders such as Down's Syndrome and Autism. Project Lifesaver uses state-of-the-art technology employing wristband transmitters to locate wandering and lost adults and children.