



<b>CHAPTER # 34 MISSING PERSON ALERTS</b>	<b>POLICY # 34.1 AMBER ALERTS</b>
<p><i>This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee's civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis of a complaint by this department for non-judicial administrative action in accordance with the laws governing employee discipline.</i></p>	
Date Implemented: 11/01/2019	Review Date:

**POLICY**

This Department will promptly request AMBER Alert activation when it confirms the abduction of a child under the age of eighteen has occurred and the child is believed to be in danger of serious bodily harm or death.

**DEFINITIONS**

AMBER Alert – a partnership between local law enforcement, Kentucky State Police, Division of Emergency Management, Transportation Cabinet, the Kentucky Broadcasters Association, and the Kentucky Press Association. This partnership operates a system to notify the public when a child has been abducted and the Kentucky State Police determines that public notification might aid in the recovery of the child.

**PROCEDURES**

The Department will comply with the provisions of:

- KRS 16.175 – Abduction of children – Kentucky AMBER Alert System – Department to cooperate with other agencies
- KRS 39F.180 – Reports of search and rescue missions – immediate search for lost, missing, or overdue persons
- US Department of Justice Recommended AMBER Alert Criteria
  - Law enforcement officials have a reasonable belief that an abduction has occurred
  - Law enforcement official believe that the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily harm or death
  - The victim of the abduction is a child age 17 years or younger
  - There is enough descriptive information of the child, captor or captors' vehicle to issue an alert
- When a child has been reported abducted, the Department shall respond and provide immediate assistance

All pertinent information shall be gathered concerning the possible location of the child and circumstances surrounding his/her disappearance. Preliminary investigation should include but is not limited to:

- Whether there is a witness to or physical evidence of an abduction
- The age of the child
- Whether the child has been missing before; prior runaway episodes and locations, frequency; whether the circumstances are different this time

- The length of the time the child has been missing; his/her actions before disappearance; whether the reporting party underestimates the time
- Whether the child is despondent; whether the child is experiencing academic, personal, or family problems; whether the child is physically or mentally disabled or has a known drug/alcohol problem.
- Whether there is evidence of online enticement; whether blog, instant messaging, text messaging, and/or cell phone activity has continued or stopped
- Interview the person making the report, parent, other caregivers, witnesses, friends, and school staff
- Conduct an initial search (area of disappearance and the child's home)
- Secure any potential crime scene/evidence
- Whether the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily harm or death

Based on the initial investigation, officers will determine if there is reasonable belief that an abduction has occurred and the criteria for an AMBER Alert activation has been met. The decision to request an AMBER Alert activation will be a collaboration with on-scene investigators, the Chief of Police, and Emergency Management. Officers shall:

- Complete a Kentucky Missing Persons Report. Obtain recent photo and any other pertinent information for entry into NCIC
- Complete a NIBRS report
- Complete KSP AMBER Alert activation request
- Enter the missing person child into NCIC. Entry into NCIC should be made without delay including any available information about the perpetrator, vehicles, or any other information that may help law enforcement apprehend the perpetrator and safely recover the child
- The Louisville Metro Emergency Management Director should be notified of the abduction during the initial investigation stage but must be notified within two hours of the initial response, pursuant to KRS 39F.180

Kentucky State Police will be contacted and the request for AMBER Alert activation will be forwarded for review. Prior to AMBER Alert activation, KSP will determine

- That the minor has been abducted or that all available evidence strongly indicates that the minor has been abducted
- That public notification is the most appropriate method of recovering the child in a safe and efficient manner; and
- The geographic area in which the notification shall be made
- Kentucky State Police is the only agency authorized to activate the AMBER Alert system (KRS 16.175(6))
- AMBER Alert is activated per Kentucky State Police protocol

In addition to the AMBER Alert system, the Department will utilize every resource available to investigate and facilitate the safe return of all abducted children.

Additional information that should be compiled for an AMBER Alert

- Full name, nicknames, age, sex, race, height, weight, hair color, eye color, clothing child was last observed wearing
- Location, date and time the child was last seen
- Recent photographs, preferably a close-up of the child's face
- Medical issues the child has, i.e. needed prescription drugs, allergies, or other pressing medical conditions
- Belongings in the child's possession when he/she was last seen (book bags, backpacks, game cases, notebooks, jewelry, body piercing, or noticeable scars)
- Abductor information – name (if known), age, sex, race, height, weight, hair/eye color, clothing, dress, jewelry, body piercing, facial hair, glasses, or other identifying information
- Abductor's vehicle description, including year, make, model, color, license plate, distinctive insignia, personalization, or damage which sets it apart from others
- Direction of travel and last known location of vehicle or conveyance