



2.18: MISSING PERSON

CRITICAL POLICY A lost person is always missing, but a missing person is not always lost. Every missing person shall be considered as lost until proven otherwise.

2.18.1: INTRODUCTION

It is paramount that a uniform member understands that the first consideration in a lost/missing person investigation is the well being of the subject. Early intervention in all lost/missing person cases will assist the investigator and conversely any delay will only complicate the location effort.

2.18.2: PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- establish consistent guidelines for receiving reports of a lost/missing person and conducting the investigation involving their disappearance;
- differentiate between a ground search for a lost person and a criminal investigation for a missing person;
- allow a uniform member to actively respond to these types of occurrences and deal with them as expeditiously as possible;
- ensure the Missing Persons & Unidentified Bodies (MPUB) Unit, Behavioural Sciences & Analysis Services (BSAS) is involved for all cases of an unsolved lost/missing person; and
- ensure that all missing person investigations are conducted in accordance with Police Orders, Chapter 2, Criminal Investigation Management Procedures, and the Missing Person Manual.

2.18.3: MANUAL

**Commander,
Investigation &
Support Bureau**

The Commander, Investigation & Support Bureau shall be responsible for maintaining the Missing Person Manual, and for auditing the content for relevancy on an annual basis.

Uniform Member

A uniform member shall be conversant with the Missing Person Manual.

2.18.4: AWARENESS ISSUES

It is important for a uniform member to:

- differentiate between a ground search for a lost person and a criminal investigation of a missing person;
- remain aware of the emergent nature of these types of occurrences;
- remain aware of the trauma and crisis experienced by the family/friends/associates of the lost/missing person;
- recognize/respect the ethnic background of the persons effected; and
- provide comprehensive immediate action as this is crucial in the delivery of an appropriate and effective police response.

2.18.5: BENCHMARK CRIME

A missing person case, where foul play cannot be ruled out, is a benchmark crime, and the matter shall be dealt with in accordance with:

- Police Orders, Chapter 2, Criminal Investigation Management/Procedures; and
- Ontario Major Case Management Manual.



2.18.6: JURISDICTION

Where the OPP does not have jurisdiction in a lost/missing person occurrence, the reported information shall be forwarded to the appropriate police agency. Where there is doubt as to jurisdiction, or the respective police agency refuses to take action, the OPP shall undertake the investigation.

A uniform member shall accept all reports of a lost/missing person, regardless of jurisdiction.

2.18.7: ASSISTANCE

MPUB Unit

Any unsolved OPP lost/missing person cases (along with ER035—Lost/Missing Person Questionnaire and photo) shall be referred to the MPUB Unit, Behavioural Sciences & Analysis Services (BSAS), Investigation & Support Bureau (ISB) after a 30-day review period has elapsed, unless circumstances deem it to be urgent and in accordance with Police Orders, Chapter 2, Criminal Investigation Management/Procedures.

Ground Search

A request for assistance from a police agency for a ground search for a lost person shall be directed to the applicable regional commander.

Regional Commander

The regional commander, in consultation with the Emergency Response Team (ERT) regional co-ordinator, may assign a search co-ordinator to discuss OPP response to the incident with the requesting police agency.

Federal Resources

A request for federal resources to support a ground search for a lost person shall be directed to the Manager, Emergency Response Team.

External Search Requests

All lost person searches in an OPP jurisdiction, including those that are being conducted at the request of an external policing or regulatory agency, shall be conducted under the authority and control of the detachment commander responsible for the search area.

2.18.8: INITIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Employee

An employee accepting a report of a lost/missing person shall notify the Provincial Communications Centre (PCC) immediately with pertinent details.

Provincial Communication Centre (PCC)

The PCC receiving a report of a lost/missing person shall:

- generate an occurrence;
- request the following information about the missing person from the uniform member or caller:
 - length of time the individual has been missing;
 - clothing;
 - habits;
 - if the missing person has a cellular phone; and
 - if the call shall be dispatched as a priority call;
- if required, determine jurisdiction responsibility;
- make a broadcast on all applicable talk groups/channels regarding the lost/missing person; and
- dispatch a uniform member to attend/personally interview the complainant.

First Uniform Member at the Scene

The first uniform member at the scene of a lost/missing person occurrence shall:

- immediately attend the complainant's location and establish preliminary perimeter control in accordance with Police Orders, Chapter 5, Preliminary Perimeter Control;



- immediately report the incident to the immediate supervisor/detachment commander;
- conduct a preliminary interview of the complainant in person;
- determine/verify whether the person is actually lost/missing;
- complete as much of the following form as possible using Niche RMS:
 - ER035—Lost/Missing Person Questionnaire; and
- where there is a potential for a ground search for a lost person, additionally complete:
 - ER036—Evaluating Search Urgency; and
 - provide a copy of each to the respective investigating officer/ERT search co-ordinator; and
- update Niche RMS prior to the conclusion of their tour of duty.

See the Missing Person Checklist in the OPP Field Guide for additional information.

Potential of Death

If any single factor has potential to cause the death of the lost/missing person, the investigation shall be given priority ranking.

Detachment Commander

Lost Person

A detachment commander, receiving a report of a lost person shall:

- immediately request activation of an ERT regional co-ordinator to assess the incident and for the ERT regional co-ordinator to activate an ERT search co-ordinator;
- assign:
 - an investigating officer to support the ground search function; and
 - logistics member to support ERT activities; and
- ensure all forms are added to the Niche RMS report prior to the completion of the investigating officer's tour of duty.

Note: The ERT regional co-ordinator is an ERT member who is appointed to be the manager of the regional ERT program and activities.

Missing Person

A detachment commander, receiving a report of a missing person shall obtain as much information as possible to assist in determining whether foul play exists.

2.18.9: MISSING PERSON INVESTIGATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

Investigator

A uniform member investigating a missing person shall:

- verify that the person is missing by immediately attending the scene;
- conduct a missing person investigation in accordance with the Missing Person Manual;
- search the residence/outbuildings/vehicles/containers, including the missing person's room/sleeping area, with the assistance of the complainant/family member for clues, e.g. missing clothing, letters, notes, diaries, drugs, and document times/locations searched.

Missing persons, particularly children, have often been found hiding/sleeping.

- where foul play cannot be ruled out, at any time during the investigation:
 - notify the area crime supervisor; and
 - secure the scene pursuant to Ontario Major Case Management Manual;



- evaluate circumstances surrounding the disappearance;
 - ensure local community family support resources are made available to the family, and all required forms are completed ASAP;
 - ensure that face-to-face personal interviews are completed with the following individuals:
 - complainant reporter;
 - the last person(s) to see the missing person; and
 - any associate(s) of the missing person ASAP.; in order to:
 - assess the validity of the report;
 - assess the person reporting to determine if foul play is involved;
 - determine the point last seen; and
 - assure the complainant that the OPP will respond diligently to the occurrence;
 - establish the lost/missing person's:
 - identity;
 - physical description;
 - medical condition, including mental illness;
 - developmental state; and
 - emotional state;
 - collect the following information to assist in the identification of a missing person, and enter on CPIC/NCIC/Interpol:
 - photograph;
 - dental records;
 - fingerprints; and
 - DNA sample sources;
 - update ER035—Lost/Missing Person Questionnaire with any additional information;
- ER035 is available in hard copy on the MPUB Unit website, and for electronic completion through Niche RMS.*
- assemble information required for entry on Niche RMS including proper violation code and sub-codes; and
 - submit a Lost/Missing Person Report using Niche RMS.

Supervisor The immediate supervisor of the investigator of a missing person shall:

- ensure a victim liaison officer is assigned;
- consult with the assigned investigator;
- consult with the area crime sergeant to discuss the circumstances of the investigation and determine the appropriate action to be taken;
- ensure the investigator has the necessary resources to complete the investigation;
- confirm that the investigating uniform member has completed their investigative responsibilities;
- maintain ongoing communication with the detachment commander;
- initiate, if a ground search is required, the SAR call-out procedure in accordance with Police Orders, Chapter 5, Emergency Response Team;



- request someone familiar with the missing person patrol the neighbourhood with a uniform member; and
- notify a First Nations liaison officer when an investigation involves an Aboriginal person.

**Detachment
Commander**

The detachment commander shall ensure the complete investigative file is retained including:

- initial/subsequent reports;
- all required forms;
- original statements;
- any generated ground search forms;
- any electronic messages related to the occurrence;
- all photographs;
- all press clippings or summaries of media reports;
- personal identifiers, e.g. blood group, fingerprints, dental charts, handwriting;
- DNA source samples and location, e.g. specimen hair sample;
- Dental Characteristic Form (RCMP 1667); and
- copy of all CPIC/NCIC/Interpol messages.

2.18.10: SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES

**Victim Liaison
Officer**

The victim liaison officer (VLO) shall:

- provide timely information regarding the status of the lost/missing person to the complainant/family/friends;
- complete any responsibilities assigned, as specified in the Missing Person Manual;
This VLO may also be the investigator.
- provide updates and timely information regarding the status of the lost/missing person to the complainant/family/friends, throughout the investigation;
- complete any assigned/required investigative responsibilities, in accordance with the Ontario Major Case Management Manual;
- consider obtaining the victim services assistance in accordance with Police Orders Chapter 3, Victim Services; and
- assure the complainant that the OPP will respond diligently to the occurrence.

2.18.11: GROUND SEARCH

A decision to conduct a ground search for a lost/missing person shall be based on priority ranking using ER036—Evaluating Search Urgency.

All ground searches for a lost person shall be:

- supervised by a trained ERT search co-ordinator; and
- conducted in accordance with Police Orders, Chapter 5, Emergency Response Team.

A detachment commander shall ensure liaison is maintained with volunteer/community agencies specializing in locating lost children/teenagers/adults.

**Volunteer/
Community
Agencies**

Local Protocols

Local protocols shall be established in accordance with the Emergency



Response Team SOP Manual provisions concerning volunteer assistance to ensure that a co-ordinated search plan is in place if agency volunteers assist in a ground search.

2.18.12: ABDUCTION

Non-parental

All occurrences of non-parental abductions shall be reported pursuant to the provisions of Police Orders, Chapter 2, Behavioural Sciences, Violent Crime Linkage Analysis System Centre, Missing Persons/Unidentified Bodies/Remains Unit, Ontario & National Sex Offender Registries, and Chapter 3, Victim Services.

AMBER Alert

Ontario AMBER Alert is a voluntary, co-operative partnership between law enforcement agencies and the media used to alert the public in child abduction cases, where police believe that the child is in danger.

In all cases of suspected child abduction, the investigating uniform member shall refer to Police Orders, Chapter 2, Parental/Non-Parental Abductions & Attempts.

2.18.13: EVIDENCE

All evidence collected shall be handled pursuant to the provisions of Police Orders, Chapter 2, Forensic Identification.

2.18.14: FOREIGN INQUIRY

A uniform member who receives an inquiry/request regarding an alleged missing person from a resident of another country shall notify:

- if in the field—Manager, Crime Prevention and Investigations; or
- if at GHQ—Commander, Investigation & Support Bureau.

Direct

Correspondence

A uniform member shall not enter into correspondence with the person initiating such an inquiry unless directed by their detachment commander.

RCMP Notification

The Commander, Investigation & Support Bureau upon receiving an inquiry/request through normal channels, shall:

- notify the RCMP; and
- make any other inquiries necessary to determine an appropriate OPP response.

Exhibit: National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls		
Location/Phase: <u>Part 2 Regina</u>		
Witness: <u>Mark Britchard</u>		
Submitted by: <u>Julian Roy</u>		
Add'l info: <u>P02P02P0401</u>		
Date: <u>JUN 28 2018</u>		
Initials	I/D	Entered
<u>67</u>		<u>127</u>