



IR47

**MISSING PERSONS**

IR47

Effective Date: 01 September 1994  
Last Reviewed/Revised Date: 06 April 2023\*

**Contents**

POLICY..... 1

REASON FOR POLICY ..... 1

RELATED POLICIES..... 1

PROCEDURES..... 2

    Jurisdiction ..... 2

    Receiving a Report..... 4

    Missing Person Risk Assessment ..... 4

    Investigation ..... 6

    High Risk Missing Persons..... 7

    Long Term Missing Person Files ..... 8

    Locating a Missing Person ..... 9

    Presumption of Death Investigations..... 9

    Missing Child..... 10

    Located Lost or Runaway Child..... 11

**POLICY**

1. The Delta Police Department (Department) will conduct a prompt, detailed and thorough investigation specific to persons reported missing.

**REASON FOR POLICY**

2. To ensure that all reports of missing persons are investigated in a thorough and consistent manner, and all necessary steps are taken to attempt to locate persons actually missing.

**RELATED POLICIES**

- CS32 – Protection of Children
- EA10 – Jurisdiction
- IR45 – Amber Alert



---

## DEFINITIONS

3. For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions will apply:

**Missing Person:** a person reported to the police or by police, whose whereabouts are unknown, and who are considered missing until located.

**'At-Risk' Missing Person:** a person whose age, lifestyle, behaviour, substance use, medical condition, or personal circumstances places them at a higher risk to become a victim of violent crime, including any vulnerable person who is not able to care for themselves.

**Missing Child:** any person under the age of 19, whose whereabouts are unknown, including if they are cared for by immediate or extended family or are in care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

## PROCEDURES

### Jurisdiction

4. The police agency of jurisdiction responsible for the primary investigation shall be:
- the agency of jurisdiction where the person was last confirmed sighted; and
  - if the location where the person was last seen is not known, the agency of jurisdiction where the person normally resides.
5. If jurisdiction is unclear and cannot be resolved between the Duty Officer and another jurisdiction, the Officer in Charge of the BC Police Missing Person Centre shall be contacted, as soon as practicable, who shall make the decision.
6. Risk assessment and investigation shall not be delayed pending determining jurisdiction.
7. If another police agency accepts a Missing Person report, and it is later determined that the agency of jurisdiction is Delta, a Duty NCO shall communicate with the other agency for access to all information created or collected, and the investigating members shall:
- conduct a new risk assessment;



- b) create a new PRIME file and cross-reference it to the relinquishing jurisdiction's file, if applicable;
  - c) advise the reportee of the transfer and the Delta Police file number; and
  - d) ensure that CPIC entry has been created.
8. If a Missing person report is accepted by the Department and investigative responsibility is determined to lie with another jurisdiction, members shall:
  - a) initiate, or continue, entry of the missing person on PRIME and CPIC, until it has been transferred to the agency of jurisdiction;

Note: transfer to another jurisdiction is not complete until the agency confirms its receipt of the report and has generated a file number.

  - b) forward all information to the agency of jurisdiction within 24 hours;
  - c) advise the reportee of the transfer and provide them with the file number of the agency of jurisdiction; and
  - d) document the receipt of the report, its transfer and any other actions taken.
9. In cases where the determination or transfer of jurisdiction is pending, members shall conduct an initial risk assessment.
10. The primary investigation shall include entering and amending CPIC records, and any other information regarding the following:
  - a) dental and medical records, if needed;
  - b) search of the residence for any evidence that may lead to the possible location of the missing person; and
  - c) interviewing of family, friends and neighbours.
11. The Department shall assist other agencies with missing person investigations, when requested and practicable.



### **Receiving a Report**

12. No waiting period is required before a person may report a missing person, and the Missing Person report shall be taken immediately and treated as a priority call.
13. Any employee of the Department, police or police staff, shall accept any reports of a missing or lost person who normally resides within the jurisdiction of Delta.
14. The Department E-Comm Liaison shall seek to ensure that E-Comm SOPs for Delta calls reflect that, when a missing person report is made to the 911 or police report centre, the call taker shall immediately assess whether the missing person falls into one of the following categories:
  - a) abduction;
  - b) overdue wilderness adventurer;
  - c) wanderer / lost, e.g. elderly or child;
  - d) suicidal or distraught person;
  - e) any other missing report; or
  - f) presumption of death (e.g., bridge jumper or plane crash).
15. In the event that the missing person is missing from or was last seen in another jurisdiction, the report taker shall assist the reportee to report the incident to the appropriate police agency of jurisdiction, and a Department file, missing report or assist file is to be initiated in all cases.

### **Missing Person Risk Assessment**

16. Upon being assigned to a Missing Person report, the member shall complete the Missing Person Risk Assessment Template, and if the response to all questions on the Template is:
  - a) 'no' – the member must consult with a supervisor to confirm the screening result; and
  - b) 'yes' – the member must immediately report it to their supervisor, and consider the following of the missing person:



- i) any reasonable grounds to suspect abduction,
- ii) any suspicious, dangerous or unknown circumstances surrounding their disappearance or suggest they may be the victim of a crime,
- iii) mental or emotional state (e.g., emotionally distraught, suicidal or likely to cause harm to self or others),
- iv) whether they are part of an identifiable group that is statistically at an increased risk of harm,
- v) characteristics that may make them vulnerable (e.g., age, substance use, infirmity, inability to communicate, mental health, disability),
- vi) weather and physical conditions (e.g., terrain, location, clothing),
- vii) previous incidents of going missing (e.g., suffered harm while missing, previous designation of high-risk Missing Person),
- viii) whether they have been involved in a violent or threatening incident prior to going missing (e.g., bullying, intimate partner violence, abuse),
- ix) whether the behaviour is out of character,
- x) whether they were scheduled to testify in court as a witness or victim,
- xi) whether they were involved in activities that may put them at increased risk (e.g., sex work, hitchhiking, gambling, gang, organized crime),
- xii) the length of time they have been missing, and
- xiii) any other circumstance or factor that may be determined to increase the risk of harm.

17. The Missing Person Risk Assessment Template and the decision regarding risk shall be approved by a supervisor and documented in the PRIME file, at the earliest opportunity and prior to their shift's end.



## **Investigation**

18. Members shall follow the appropriate 'Missing Persons Checklist' if assigned to a Missing Person report, including completing the Provincial Missing Intake Form.
19. Supervisors shall complete Missing Person Supervisor Template on PRIME, including all items on the Checklist, where practicable.
20. Supervisors are also responsible for:
  - a) notifying the Duty Officer;
  - b) reviewing the information regarding the circumstances of the case and determine the extent of the action to be taken in the investigation;
  - c) considering all cases 'at risk' until significant information to the contrary is confirmed;
  - d) arranging a general broadcast to all units, and where applicable, to neighbouring jurisdictions and the Real Time Intelligence Centre (RTIC), giving a complete description of the missing person and where they were last seen and locations they may likely frequent;
  - e) assigning investigators to attend and search for evidence at the location where the person was last seen, and to search their residence;
  - f) requesting assistance from other resources (e.g., Search and Rescue, Public Safety Operations, Canadian Coast Guard);
  - g) considering request of a media bulletin;
  - h) where the assessment identifies suspicious circumstances, implement an immediate criminal investigation;
  - i) identifying circumstances which warrant urgent investigation and immediate search (e.g., wandered child and/or medical concerns);
  - j) coordinating resources, including outside help, search teams and media assistance, if required;



- k) assigning a family liaison to communicate with the family or relevant persons during the investigation; and
  - l) ensuring a supervisor review is documented in the file.
21. While the file remains in Patrol, an investigator shall be assigned at all times, and a task list/summary shall be completed prior to passing on to the next investigator at shift change.
22. Members shall consult with the Indigenous Liaison Officer if the Missing Person is Indigenous.

█ [REDACTED]

**High Risk Missing Persons**

24. If, after the initial or ongoing risk assessment, the supervisor determines an investigation as a High Risk Missing Person, they shall:
- a) notify the Duty Officer and the Missing Persons Coordinator (via a PRIME 'notify');
  - b) score the PRIME file as a High Risk Missing Person investigation;
  - c) immediately assign appropriate resources; and
  - d) notify the family/reportee of the action to be taken, unless doing so would jeopardize the missing person or the investigation.
25. Where an immediate full-scale search is determined necessary, the Duty Officer may request assistance from other police agencies and agencies with search capabilities.

█ [REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]

█ [REDACTED]



- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]

**Long Term Missing Person Files**

28. Beyond one month, the Major Crime investigator shall:
- a) attempt to obtain dental and medical records and ensure that these records are added to CPIC;
  - b) ensure that the missing person’s fingerprints and familial DNA have been obtained and are on file;
  - c) revisit banking, welfare and other governmental agencies monthly to see if any activity has occurred since the missing person disappeared;
  - d) review the file to determine if there are any circumstances that would place the missing person in the ‘At Risk’ category, and if so, contact the B.C. Police Missing Persons Centre;



- e) liaise with RCMP Missing Persons Centre and B.C. Coroner's Service (BCCS) to process DNA exhibits for submission to the B.C. unidentified remains DNA databank; and

█ [REDACTED]

- 29. After the first year, the Major Crime investigator shall conduct semi-annual reviews of the file.

**Locating a Missing Person**

- 30. When a missing person has been located, whether alive or deceased, the missing person file shall be deemed concluded, and members shall:

- a) update all CPIC and PRIME entries to reflect that the person has been found;
- b) notify the B.C. Police Missing Persons Centre of all 'At Risk' missing persons who are found and the circumstances surrounding their location.
- c) advise any other agencies, where broadcasts have been previously made or where the investigation originated, that the missing person has been located; and
- d) if the person was missing from another jurisdiction, contact that jurisdiction.

- 31. In cases where a witness, or the reportee, has contacted police to report that they have located the missing person, the report shall not be concluded until:

- a) a member has had personal contact with the missing person, confirmed their identity, and assessed their well-being; or
- b) the witness is a caregiver employed or contracted by the Province of B.C. for the purposes of being a guardian for minors in care of the Ministry of Child and Family Development (MCFD).

**Presumption of Death Investigations**

- 32. Persons reported as presumed to be deceased are to be investigated in the same manner and follow the same guidelines as a missing person





- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

**Located Lost or Runaway Child**

- 40. Members coming into contact with a runaway or lost child shall attempt to return the child to its parent(s) or guardian.
- 41. The investigating member shall take all reasonable steps to determine why the child ran away and obtain as much information as possible, which is to be included in a report.
- 42. In accordance with the *Child, Family and Community Services Act*:
  - a) members shall contact MCFD After Hours Emergency Services at [REDACTED], and attempt to remain with and supervise the child until a social worker attends:
    - i) if a runaway child does not cooperate with being returned to a parent or guardian, or if the guardian is MCFD;
    - ii) if a member has reason to believe a runaway child’s health or safety is in immediate danger; and
    - iii) if a member believes that a lost or runaway child is “in need of protection”, even if not in immediate danger.
- 43. Before taking charge of a child, members shall reasonably believe that the health or safety of the child is in immediate danger, and consider that:



- a) older children, 16 to 18 years of age, may be less at risk; and
  - b) the attitude or mental capability of a runaway may indicate the level of protection the child might need.
44. MCFD, and not the member, shall notify the parents of a runaway child that the child has been taken charge of.

\*Revised Dates:  
15 October 2012  
12 December 2016  
09 March 2017  
15 May 2018