

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

ROCK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

TITLE: Missing, Runaway and Found Juveniles
NUMBER: 5.260
SCOPE: All Sworn Employees
REFERENCE: Statement of Confirmation Form

EFFECTIVE DATE: 01/01/05
CANCELS: Policy 14.02
APPROVED BY: Sheriff

PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to provide guidelines for the handling of missing, runaway and found juveniles.

POLICY

The problem of handling runaways and missing juveniles is one of the most difficult and time-consuming problems facing law enforcement agencies. While the primary focus of these types of investigations may be to locate these juveniles (or their parents), it is important to also attempt to determine the reason for the juvenile's disappearance and then work to correct the underlying problem as well. The responsibility for handling reports of missing, runaway, and found juveniles rests with this Department's sworn personnel.

I. Initial Investigation

- A. Upon receipt of a complaint involving a missing or runaway juvenile, a deputy shall be dispatched to conduct a thorough investigation and to complete a report on the matter.
 - 1. The juvenile's parent or guardian should be interviewed to determine what information exists to indicate that the juvenile is actually missing or has run away.
 - 2. The deputy should obtain a complete description of the missing/runaway child.
 - 3. A list of the missing/runaway juvenile's friends and acquaintances should be obtained to assist in locating the juvenile.
 - 4. The investigating deputy will have the parent or guardian of the missing/runaway juvenile complete a "Statement of Confirmation" form at the time of initial investigation unless it appears that the

missing/runaway juvenile can be apprehended immediately without extraordinary efforts.

B. Missing Juvenile - Additional Steps.

1. The investigating deputy will ensure that the patrol supervisor is advised of the situation and circumstances of the disappearance.
2. Contact should be made with friends and acquaintances of the missing subject in an attempt to locate or determine the last known location of the subject.
3. A search should be conducted of the missing juvenile's residence, the area where the juvenile disappeared, and any nearby attractive nuisances or congregating spots in an attempt to locate the subject.
4. The 911 Center and adjoining agencies shall be notified of the missing juvenile and any other information deemed pertinent.
5. The missing juvenile shall be entered in NCIC/CIB and on the department's Hot Sheet.

C. Runaway Juvenile - Additional Steps.

1. The investigating deputy shall contact Civil Process or the 911 Center to have the runaway entered in the NCIC/CIB system.
2. Attempts should be made to locate the runaway by checking the area and/or contacting friends and acquaintances of the juvenile.
3. The runaway shall be entered on the Department's Hot Sheet, and adjoining agencies notified.

II. Follow-up Investigation

- A. If a runaway or missing juvenile is not immediately located, the case management review officer shall assign the report for follow-up investigation.
1. If the case involves a runaway or a missing juvenile where foul play is not suspected, the report will be assigned to the initial deputy for further follow-up in an attempt to locate the missing subject.

2. In cases where foul play is suspected, the report will be assigned to the Detective Bureau for further investigation.
 3. In the event that the assigned deputy is unavailable to complete the follow-up, the shift supervisor will reassign the follow-up to another deputy.
- B. The deputy/detective assigned to conduct follow-up on a missing/runaway juvenile case shall be required to complete at least a weekly supplement report which indicates what attempts were made to locate the juvenile.

III. Recovered Runaway or Missing Juveniles

- A. Upon notification that a runaway or missing juvenile has been located, a deputy shall be dispatched to meet with the recovered juvenile and complete the pending investigation.
1. In all cases where the juvenile's parent or guardian has not been notified, the deputy will contact the parent or guardian and notify them of the juvenile's recovery.
 2. If the juvenile was a missing juvenile, the deputy will attempt to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the juvenile's disappearance to decide if further/criminal investigation is warranted.
 3. If the recovered juvenile is a runaway, the deputy shall:
 - a. Contact Juvenile Probation, advise the intake worker of the circumstances and determine where the juvenile is to be placed.
 - b. Complete an arrest report and juvenile court referral for the recovered juvenile, listing the charge as runaway. Also complete a juvenile detention form if the juvenile will be held in custody.
 4. In all cases, the deputy will ensure that all CIB/NCIC entries and any Hot Sheet entries on the missing/runaway juvenile are canceled.
 5. Upon completion of the necessary investigation and reports, the juvenile will be returned to his/her parents or transported to the location indicated by the intake worker (i.e., Detention Center).

- B. When a member of this Department observes a lost child or a deputy is dispatched to handle a complaint of a found child, the deputy shall:
1. Make contact with the found child and the person(s) who found the child to determine if the child can be identified.
 2. Attempt to have the found child look for his/her home while riding around with the deputy.
 3. Stop citizens, including children, to determine if they recognize the child.
 4. Transport the child to the Department and contact Human Services to provide appropriate care if the parents are not located in a reasonable time.
 5. Interview the parents of the lost child to determine the circumstances around his/her disappearance and to decide if further investigation is necessary.
 6. File a complete report on the matter.
- C. When a runaway or missing juvenile from another jurisdiction is located, further investigation will be assigned to the deputy who locates the juvenile.
1. Contact should be made with the agency from where the juvenile is reported as a runaway or missing.
 - a. This contact should confirm that the juvenile is reported as a runaway or missing.
 - b. The deputy should also make arrangements with or through the originating agency for pickup/transport of the recovered juvenile.
 2. In cases where the recovered juvenile cannot be transported to, or picked up by, the originating agency or parent in a reasonable amount of time, the deputy will contact the juvenile intake worker to obtain placement of the juvenile in secure or non-secure custody, as deemed appropriate.

3. The recovering deputy shall prepare a detailed report concerning the assistance provided to another agency and any other arrest reports or juvenile forms required.