

Health and Safety – Public Safety

Missing Student Notification

History: This publication is new. It is a compilation of existing university policies, procedures, and other guidance. It was adopted by the EWU Board of Trustees on January 29, 2010.

Summary: This policy prescribes notification and procedural standards for handling reports of missing students, who reside in university housing.

Applicability: This policy applies to all students of Eastern Washington University who reside in university housing.

Proponent: The proponent of this policy is University Police Department.

Authority: The authority for establishment and modification of this policy is the EWU Board of Trustees (BOT). Changes will be accomplished according to the provisions of EWU Policy 201-01.

Delegation: The Board of Trustees delegates authority for modifying appendices to this policy to the Chief of Police for the University Police Department.

Review: This policy will be reviewed every five years.

Supplementation: Supplementation of this policy is not authorized.

Suggested improvements: Users are invited to send comments and suggested improvements to:

Office of the President
ATTN: Policy Administrator
Eastern Washington University
214 Showalter Hall
Cheney, WA 99004

CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Introduction

- Purpose • Paragraph 1-1
- Missing Person • 1-2
- Student Disclosures • 1-3
- Confidential Contacts • 1-4

Chapter 2

Procedures

- Reporting • 2-1
- Investigation and Response • 2-2
- Notification • 2-3
- Campus Communications • 2-4

**CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION**

1-1. Purpose

This policy establishes university standards and procedures for notifying law enforcement, parents or guardians, and student identified contacts when a student, who resides in university housing, is reported as missing or has been determined to be missing. This policy applies to students who reside in campus housing, including off-campus apartment units leased by the university for student residents. The statutory authority for this policy is Section 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

1-2. Missing Person

For purposes of this policy, a student may be considered to be a “missing person” if the person’s absence is contrary to his/her usual pattern of behavior and unusual circumstances may have caused the absence. Such circumstances could include, but not be limited to, a report or suspicion that the missing person may be the victim of foul play, has expressed suicidal thoughts, is drug dependent, is in a life-threatening situation, or has been with persons who may endanger the student’s welfare.

1-3. Student Disclosures

Prior to occupying university housing, students will be informed of the following:

- (1) students may identify a person to be contacted if they are determined to be missing (section 1-4);
- (2) the university will notify the University Police Department if a student is reported missing (section 2-1b); and,
- (3) the university is required to notify a custodial parent or guardian if a student, who is under 18 years of age and not an emancipated individual, is determined to be missing (section 2-3).

1-4. Confidential Contacts

Students may register an individual to be contacted if the student is determined to be missing. Prior to occupying university housing, students will be given the opportunity to designate an individual or individuals to be contacted by the university in the event that the student is determined to be missing (per chapter 2). A designation will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student. The emergency contact information provided will be treated as confidential. Only authorized campus officials, and law enforcement officers in furtherance of a missing person investigation, may have access to the confidential contact information and it may not be disclosed to others.

CHAPTER 2 PROCEDURES

2-1. Reporting

- a. Any individual on campus who has information that a residential student may be a missing person should immediately notify a university official from the list below:
 - (1) University Police Officer / Department
 - (2) Dean of Students
 - (3) Professional Residential Life Staff Member
 - (4) Academic Department Chair
 - (5) College Dean
 - (6) Office of Student Affairs
 - (7) Office of Academic Affairs
 - (8) Human Resources Department
 - (9) University President's Office
 - (10) Director of Housing
- b. Any university official receiving such a report must immediately notify the University Police Department. The University Police Department must be notified regardless of whether the student has registered a contact person.

2-2. Investigation and Response

Upon receipt of a report that a student may be missing, the University Police Department will investigate. If University Police determine that the student has been missing for more than 24 hours and has not returned to campus, they will initiate the notification procedures described in section 2-3. University Police will also initiate the notification procedures when a student has been missing for less than 24 hours, if circumstances clearly indicate that the student is a missing person (e.g., witnessed abduction),

2-3. Notification

Within 24 hours after determining that a student is missing, the University Police Department will notify the registered contact(s) for the student. If the student is under 18 years old and not emancipated, the University Police Department will also notify the student's custodial parent or guardian within the same 24 hours.

2-4. Campus Communications

In cases involving missing persons, law enforcement personnel are best situated to provide information to the media that is designed to elicit public assistance in the search for a missing person. Therefore, all communications regarding missing students will be handled by the University Police Department, who may consult with the university's Marketing and Communications department. All inquiries to the university regarding missing students, or information provided to any individual at the university about a missing student, shall be referred to the University Police Department.

Prior to providing the community with any information about a missing student, the Marketing and Communications department shall consult with the University Police Department to ensure that communications do not hinder the investigation.