

AMBER Alert Procedures



New York State Association
of Chiefs of Police

AMBER ALERT PROCEDURES

Std. 00.0

Distribution:

A. PURPOSE: To provide members with guidelines for activation of an AMBER Alert.

B.

C. POLICY: The Department will promptly request an 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.

D. DEFINITIONS:

1. **Department:** The _____ Police Department.
2. **Confirms:** means having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abducted. Confirmation can be established through eyewitness accounts or by eliminating other possibilities.

E. AMBER ALERT PROCEDURES:

1. Respond to the scene and conduct a preliminary investigation. Some considerations will include:
 - a. whether there a witness to or physical evidence of an abduction
 - b. the age of the child
 - c. whether the child has been missing before; prior runaway episodes and locations, frequency; whether the circumstances different this time
 - d. the length of time the child been missing; his/her actions before disappearance; whether the reporting party underestimate the time
 - e. whether the child 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
 - f. whether there is evidence of online enticement; whether blog, instant messaging, text messaging and/or cell phone activity has continued or stopped
2. Interview the person making the report, parents, other care givers, witnesses, friends, school staff.
3. Conduct an initial search (area of disappearance and the child's home)
4. Gather and document detailed information (circumstances, child, suspect, vehicle) and assess:
5. Verify that the child is missing
6. If abduction has occurred and the case may qualify for an AMBER Alert, immediately contact New York State Police Communications Section (COMSEC) at 518-457-6811 to request activation.
7. If a familial abduction, ascertain if the family member has harmed the child in the past or is currently threatening to do so. Familial abductions qualify for AMBER Alert if a child is endangered by the actions of the abducting family member. Threats or use of violence while taking a child and history of abuse against a child, spouse or partner should be considered.

8. Obtain photographs or images of the child and the abductor. Inquire whether the child is registered in Operation SAFE CHILD. If so, DCJS can provide a digital image of the child. If not, scan photographs and submit via e-mail.
9. Preserve evidence (including computers, cell phones, other devices).
10. Provide additional information to communications/patrols.
11. Ensure that DCJS/NCIC missing persons file entries (File 6 MENT with Involuntary, Endangered or Disability status) and File 11A abduction message), as required by state and federal statute, are made via NYSPIN or eJusticeNY.

AMBER ALERT ACTIVATION

FOR AMBER ACTIVATION OR CONSULTATION:

NEW YORK STATE POLICE COMMUNICATION SECTION

DIRECT: **518-457-6811**

FAX LINE: 518-457-3207

TO E-MAIL PHOTOS OR IMAGES:

missingchildren@dcjs.state.ny.us

commop@troopers.state.ny.us

NOT SURE ABOUT AN ACTIVATION? CALL COMSEC!

F. NON-AMBER ALERT PROCEDURES:

1. When a missing child or college student is endangered, but the case does not meet AMBER Alert activation criteria, the case may be eligible for a DCJS Missing Child/College Student Alert.

DCJS MISSING CHILD/ COLLEGE STUDENT ALERT

FOR MISSING CHILD/COLLEGE STUDENT ALERT OR CONSULTATION:

DCJS MISSING & EXPLOITED CHILDREN CLEARINGHOUSE

DIRECT: **800-FIND-KID (800-346-3543)**

FAX LINE: 518-457-6965

TO E-MAIL PHOTOS OR IMAGES:

missingchildren@dcjs.state.ny.us

By order of: _____ Dated: _____

Appendix A: AMBER Alert submission form

Appendix B: AMBER Alert and DCJS Missing Child Alert Quick reference card

Appendix C: New York State AMBER Alert Program Brief and Law Enforcement Guide (also available through eJusticeNY – click on ‘Law Enforcement Services’, then ‘Missing Children’)