

Augusta University

Policy Library

Missing Resident Student Notification Process

Policy Manager: Dean of Students

POLICY STATEMENT

In compliance with Sec. 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, this policy establishes a framework for cooperation among members of the University community in locating and assisting residential students who are reported missing. Members of the University community are expected to follow the process outlined below. Although this policy and process does not apply to all students and to every instance where an Augusta University student may be missing, the institution may choose to utilize this process, as deemed necessary, to assist in locating a missing student who does not reside on campus.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:

- ☐ Alumni ☒ Faculty ☐ Graduate Students ☐ Health Professional Students
☒ Staff ☐ Undergraduate Students ☐ Vendors/Contractors ☐ Visitors
☐ Other:

DEFINITIONS

These definitions apply to these terms as they are used in this policy:

- A. *Student*: A student is any person currently enrolled in any course for academic credit at Augusta University. This does not apply to students enrolled in continuing education (not-for- credit).
- B. *Residential Student*: A student who resides in on-campus housing under a housing contract/lease and is currently enrolled at Augusta University.
- C. *Missing*: For purposes of this policy, a student may be considered missing if he or she is reported absent from the University for more than 24 hours without any known reason, the absence is contrary to his or her usual pattern of behavior, or there is a perception of unusual circumstances.
- D. *Emancipated Individual*: A student, who has not yet reached the age of 18 and otherwise considered a minor, but has been granted by a court of competent jurisdiction to terminate the legal rights of the parents, including but not limited to, custody, control, services, earnings of a minor, etc. For the State of Georgia, see Code §15-11-202 through §15-11-207.

PROCESS & PROCEDURES

All reports of missing students, whether they reside on campus or not, should be directed to the Augusta University Police Department (UPD). If a residential student is considered missing as defined within this policy, action will be taken to make contact and/or locate the student. In accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, as stated in Chapter 10 of “The

Office of Legal Affairs Use Only

Executive Sponsor: VP, Enrollment & Student Affairs

Next Review: 9/2029

Handbook for Campus Safety and Security Reporting.” law enforcement will be notified within 24 hours after the institution determines a student to be a missing student. If the missing student is under 18 years of aged, and not an emancipated individual at the time the student is determined to be missing, a University official will also notify the student’s custodial parent or guardian.

Emergency Contact Information

Each student living in University-operated residences must designate an individual to be contacted by the University in an emergency. Residential students must update their emergency contact information regularly. The contact information will be kept confidential and is only accessible to authorized campus officials or law enforcement if a student is deemed missing or another emergency situation. Students may contact the Office of Housing and Residence Life at (706) 729-2300 to list or update confidential contact information. Students also should review and regularly update their emergency contact information through the Office of the Registrar.

Process for Reports of Missing Students

Any student, faculty, or staff who receives information that a student may be missing should report immediately the known information to UPD. UPD, with the assistance of Housing and Residence Life and/or the Office of the Dean of Students will conduct a preliminary investigation to verify the situation and to determine the circumstances which exist relating to the reported missing student. For each incident when a student is deemed missing, as defined within this policy, a designated point person will be established to ensure continuity of operations and that all necessary University officials are informed as information is received.

The following process should be used to locate students who are deemed to be missing:

1. A staff member will attempt to contact the student via his/her mobile telephone (if listed).
2. A text message will be sent, if applicable, requesting the student respond letting University officials know the student is safe;
3. A staff member will check the student’s room and speak with his/her roommates or others in the residence hall that may have knowledge of the student’s whereabouts. This may require a staff member to enter the room to conduct a health and safety inspection. If applicable, a door audit also may be conducted to determine the last time the student entered using his/her student identification card;
4. A staff member should consult with the student’s faculty and any staff to determine the last time the student was in class or the last time the staff had contact with the student (e.g., student’s on-campus employer or any staff who may have had contact with the student).
5. A staff member should determine the last time the student’s ID was scanned at campus facilities, residence halls, dining halls, library, and/or other locations, and check security recordings if necessary;
6. Check social networking sites to determine if the student has been communicating about his/her whereabouts;
7. Attempt to locate the student’s vehicle on campus;

8. UPD should contact Wellstar MCG and other area hospitals to determine if the person is hospitalized.
9. UPD should check with area law enforcement agencies for possible information;
10. If the whereabouts of the student are still unknown, a representative from Housing and Residence Life, the Office of the Dean of Students or his/her designee will work with UPD to contact the person listed as an emergency contact.
11. If contact cannot be made with the person listed as an emergency contact, the University may contact the student's parent(s), guardian(s), and/or another emergency contact.
12. If the whereabouts of the student are still unknown, UPD will coordinate with local law enforcement and continue to investigate using established police procedures. Any new information will be provided to appropriate staff in the Division of Enrollment and Student Affairs, including Housing and Residence Life.
13. A University-wide e-mail alert including the missing student's photograph may be sent to all faculty, staff, and students, if it is deemed necessary by UPD and the Division of Enrollment and Student Affairs. Communications and Marketing may be consulted to determine the best communication strategy for the particular situation.

If any of these steps provide an opportunity to speak with the missing student, verification of the student's state of health and intention of returning to campus should be made. Once the information is determined, it should be reported back to the University officials working on the case. A referral may be made to the University's Department of Student Counseling and Psychological Services, Student Health Services, or other medical agency, as needed. Once the student is found, UPD will be contacted to notify them of the student's state of health and well-being. The status of the student, including the student's intention to continue attending classes, may be communicated to various University officials, including CARE Team to provide opportunities for the student to be successful at the University.

Residential students expecting to be away for an extended period of time (more than 24 hours) during non-break periods should always let at least one person (student or employee) in the residence hall know of his/her whereabouts.

Media Inquiries

All media inquiries will be referred to Communications and Marketing.

REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The Handbook for Campus Safety and Security Reporting
<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/handbook.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education, Campus Safety Webpage
<https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/campus.html>

RELATED POLICIES

[Jeanne Clery Act Compliance Policy](#)

APPROVED BY:

Interim Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, Augusta University

Date: 9/17/2024

President, Augusta University

Date: 9/23/2024