

# Missing On-Campus Resident Student Policy & Procedures

## Housing & Residence Life Provisional Policy

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for Humboldt State University's response to reports of missing students residing on campus, as required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008.

For purposes of this policy, a student residing on campus may be considered to be a "*missing person*" if the person's absence is contrary to his/her usual pattern of behavior and/or unusual circumstances may have caused the absence.

### Policy

Individuals having reason to believe that a resident is a missing person must immediately notify the Humboldt State University Police Department (UPD) on campus at 1 Harpst Street, Arcata or by calling (707) 826-5555. A sworn police officer should initiate an investigation in accordance with the UPD's missing person policy, procedures, and regulations.

Missing resident reports should be made immediately and directly to UPD, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Housing & Residence Life employees are required to make prompt reports to their supervisor and UPD.

However, anyone may make these reports to the Housing & Residence Life Office located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Jolly Giant Commons or by calling (707) 826-3451. Reports may also be made to Dean of Students Office in Siemens Hall 211 or by calling (707) 826-3504. Both of these departments will then cross-report the missing person notification to UPD immediately.

### Procedure

#### 1. "Emergency Contact Information" Procedures

- a) Housing & Residence Life may collect Emergency Contact Information on a form or electronically. Emergency Contact information will be maintained by Housing & Residence Life, who controls the release of their contents when needed. The "Emergency Contact" information is typically used to make emergency notifications to pre-designated parents, guardians, family members, or friends when a resident student becomes sick or injured.

- b) Non-emancipated residents under 18 years of age shall be advised by Housing & Residence Life that, if they are reported to be missing, their parent or guardian will be notified.
- c) Housing & Residence Life may provide information to UPD from a missing resident student's (any age) Emergency Contact Information to further the missing person investigation. This policy acknowledges that a common investigative step in missing person investigations is police contact with family members who are designated on these types of documents.

## **2. "Confidential Contact" Procedures for Missing Person Notification**

- a) Housing will provide each student living in an on-campus housing facility with the option to register a "Confidential Contact" person to be notified in the case that the student is determined to be missing. This person may or may not be the same person listed as the resident student's "Emergency Contact." The sole purpose of collection and retention of the "Confidential Contact" information is for campus officials to make notification in the event that a resident is determined to be missing.
- b) Housing may collect this information on a form or electronically; "Confidential Contact" information is intended to be kept confidential and only accessed in a reported missing person situation.
- c) Housing shall be the custodian of "Confidential Contact" information. This information may only be released upon authorization by the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Dean of Students, the Director of Housing & Residence Life, the Associate Director of Residence Life, or the acting Director of Housing & Residence Life in the absence of the above-named persons.
- d) Only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers in furtherance of a missing person investigation may have access to "Confidential Contact" information.
- e) All resident students shall be advised by Housing at check-in that in the event they are reported missing, UPD shall be notified, regardless of whether or not they have registered a "Confidential Contact" person.

## **3. Specific Procedures When a Student is Determined to Have Been Missing for 24 hours:**

- a) Any HSU employee who has or receives information that a resident student may be a missing person must notify their supervisor and UPD immediately.
- b) UPD will promptly initiate an investigation consistent with UPD policies, procedures, and applicable regulations.

- c) Upon request by UPD, Housing & Residence Life will assist in gathering essential information about the situation and the missing resident (e.g., description, clothes last worn, where student might be, who student might be with, vehicle description, information about the physical and mental well-being of the student, information from the Housing Department's Emergency Contact Information Form, an up-to-date photograph, class schedule, check meal plan activity and read resident's key lock information, etc). It is especially important to report to UPD any indications if the missing resident student appears to be at-risk, including but not limited to:
- 1) The missing student is the victim of a crime or foul play
  - 2) The missing student is in need of medical attention
  - 3) The missing student has no pattern of running away or disappearing
  - 4) The missing student may be the victim of a parental abduction
  - 5) The missing student is mentally impaired
- d) Housing & Residence Life shall determine if the missing student has registered a "Confidential Contact" person with the Housing Department.
- e) If the missing resident student has registered a "Confidential Contact" person, then that contact person shall be contacted by an authorized official of the university (refer #3g & #3h below.)
- f) If the missing resident student is under 18 years of age and not emancipated, their parent or guardian will be notified that they are missing by an authorized official of the university as described below.
- g) The following campus officials are authorized to notify a "Confidential Contact" or to parent/guardians of non-emancipated resident students under 18 years of age:
- a. A sworn officer of the University Police Department
  - b. Vice President for Student Affairs
  - c. Dean of Students
  - d. Director of Housing & Residence Life
  - e. Associate Director of Residence Life
  - f. Associate Director of Business Operations
  - g. Acting Director of Housing & Residence Life
- h) When reasonably possible, the investigating UPD officer or UPD supervisor should be consulted in advance regarding which authorized official should call and what information should be shared.
- i) An investigating officer from UPD or another law enforcement agency may contact the missing adult resident student's friends, parents, other family members, or persons listed on the Emergency Contact Information Form in an effort to further the investigation (not simply to make a notification).

- j) If not already aware of the situation, the Vice President for Student Affairs, the Dean of Students, the Director of Housing & Residence Life, the Associate Director of Residence Life, acting Director of Housing & Residence Life, and Marketing and Communications Department should be notified of the missing student's name and circumstances.
- k) UPD should notify the HSU Vice President for Administrative Affairs, the HSU Risk Manager, the CSU Risk Manager, and the CSU Chief Law Enforcement Officer.
- l) The Dean of Students or designee may contact the student's professors and advisor.

#### **4. Summary of Investigative Procedures for Missing Resident Students**

- a) UPD should accept any report, including any telephone report, of a missing resident student. Initially, UPD should assume primary investigative responsibility for the case and strive to carry out its responsibilities consistent with UPD policies, procedures, and applicable regulations.
- b) UPD should conduct interviews, gather information, and evaluate possible evidence. Sworn personnel should make an assessment of the situation, any known at-risk factors, and request assistance as needed. UPD may make appropriate notifications to other law enforcement agencies.
- c) In some circumstances, the primary responsibility for investigation of a missing student case may shift from UPD to another agency; e.g., when information is developed indicating that the student's disappearance was actually from their home town or from another jurisdiction.
- d) UPD may immediately release a photo of the missing residential student as a tool to assist in locating the individual and may seek information and/or assistance from a variety of campus and/or community resources during the course of the investigation.

#### **5. Campus Communications Regarding Missing Resident Students**

- a) UPD may immediately initiate communication to the campus about the situation if deemed appropriate (e.g., flyers passed out and/or posted prominently).
- b) In continuing situations, UPD may initiate more formal communication in the form of news releases, press briefings, and other means. Such formal communications should be coordinated through and with the assistance of the HSU Marketing and Communication Department.

- c) Whenever possible, Housing and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs should be consulted and informed regarding formal communication content and strategies.
  
- d) All inquiries to the university and its employees regarding missing students, or information provided to any individual at the University about a missing residential student, shall be handled in a coordinated effort by UPD and Marketing and Communications.