

Missing Person Policy

Policy Statement

Every student who resides in on-campus housing shall have the option to identify a confidential individual to be contacted within 24 hours of the determination that the student is missing in accordance with the procedures outlined below. Only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers in furtherance of a missing person investigation may have access to this information.

Reason for Policy

In accordance with Section 485 of the Higher Education Act (HEA), every institution of higher education that provides on-campus housing must provide a missing student notification policy for those students residing in on-campus housing.

Organizations or Persons to Whom a Report should be made

The organization or persons to which individuals should report a student as missing includes: Housing and Residence Life Staff, The Office of Student Affairs, or designated campus personnel.

Procedure for Informing Students

During the first floor meeting of the fall semester, RAs will cover confidential contact information with students. During the first week of the spring semester, the RA will meet with all new students to provide missing person policy information. Written information describing the process of submitting the confidential contact will be included in the on-campus housing contract. The information will be kept with the student profile in the OU Housing Portal. Students can change the information at any time by updating their profile in the OU Housing Portal.

Procedure for Determining if a Student is Missing

If a student is reported missing to a staff member, the staff member should be sure to obtain the reporting person's name, relationship to the student, and contact information where the reporting person can be reliably reached. The staff member should obtain local directory information about the missing student and immediately notify the Office of Student Affairs and OUPD.

The Student Affairs staff should refer to the Reported Missing Student Checklist and contact the reporting person to obtain the additional information needed.

If the staff member determines at any point that there is a credible threat to the well-being of the student reported as missing, local law enforcement should be called for assistance. In addition, an incident report should be filed.

The Student Affairs staff member should then proceed to contact known student friends/relationships, beginning with roommates/suitemates, and the missing student's resident assistant. The staff member should also use direct and indirect methods of leaving messages for the student to make contact immediately. The purpose at this point is to determine if the student

is truly missing or has simply failed to make the desired contact with the reporting person. If the student is located or is determined not to be missing, the student should be advised to contact the reporting person. The staff member may also contact the reporting person and relay that the student is not missing and has been asked to contact the reporting person.

If pursuing known contacts has not yielded confirmation that the student is not missing, the Student Affairs staff member (if not the Dean of Students) should contact the Dean of Students, reporting all obtained information, and follow verbal notification with an Incident Report (IR). The staff member or Dean of Students may then authorize one or more of the following measures to determine recent activity by the student reported as missing:

- Meal plan utilization
- Card Access
- Mailbox activity
- Class attendance
- Social Media presence
- In-plain-sight examination of room to see signs of recent use or planned departure

If the results of these activity measures suggest that the student is indeed missing and unaccounted for, the Dean of Students or designee will immediately request law enforcement investigation. All information obtained about the missing student should be shared with law enforcement representatives. The Dean of Students or designee is responsible for notification of the missing student's identified contact if the student has been missing for 24 hours. If the student is under 18 years of age and not an emancipated individual (by court order, no longer under the control or responsibility of parents), the Dean of Students or designee shall immediately contact the custodial parent or guardian.

Procedure for Notification of Missing Student

If Dean of Students or designee determines that a student for whom a missing person report has been filed has been missing for 24 hours, then within the next 24 hours, they must:

- Notify the individual identified by the student to be contacted in this circumstance,
- If the student is under 18 years old, notify a custodial parent/guardian and any other designated contact person, and
- Notify law enforcement.

The above procedures do not preclude University officials from making a determination that a student is missing before the student has been missing for a full 24 hours or initiating notification procedures as soon as it determines that the student is missing.