

Child and Family Services Policy Manual: Missing or Runaway Foster Youth Protocol

- Purpose** The following protocol is to be used whenever a Montana foster youth is missing or has runaway. For purposes of this policy “Foster Youth” is defined as:
- Youth in foster care (including paid or unpaid kinship), a congregate care facility or a residential treatment facility.
 - Youth on a Trial Home Visit (THV).
 - youth in placement per a protection plan under the 30 day voluntary placement statute.
 - Youth for whom CFSD has court order care and control but the youth continues to reside in their birth parent’s home.
- Protocol**
1. CFSD staff, congregate care or residential treatment facility staff or foster parents will call the Centralized Intake Hotline (1-866-820-5437) to report missing or runaway foster youth.
 2. CI will collect information from the reporter that is listed on the on “[Missing or Runaway Foster Youth Referral Form](#)” to collect the information.
 3. Once the information on the referral form is collected CI will immediately:
 - a. Notify, via phone, local law enforcement (LE) and also fax LE a copy of the completed referral form.
 - b. Notify, via phone, the following Department of Criminal Investigation at the MT-Dept. of Justice (DCI) staff:
 - i. Primary: Anne Dormady
 1. Office: 406-444-1317
 2. Cell: 406-202-0349 (to be used after 5:00pm, on weekends and Holidays).
 - ii. Secondary Bryan Costigan (in the event Anne cannot be contacted):

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1. Office: 406-444-1314
2. Cell: 406-438-1611 (to be used after 5:00pm, on weekends and Holidays).
- c. Send, via email, a copy of the completed referral form to the following:
 - i. dojintel@mt.gov
 - ii. Anne Dormady (adormady@mt.gov)
 - iii. Bryan Costigan (bcostigan@mt.gov)
- d. Document in CAPS an ACTD entry under the child's CAPS number with the following information:
 - i. Child was reported missing/runaway on _____ (date reported); by _____ (who reported). Law enforcement notification to _____ (LWE agency contacted) was made on _____ (date contacted).
4. Within one working day, the Child Protection Specialist (CPS) assigned to the foster youth's case will contact DCI staff (i.e. Anne Dormady or Bryan Costigan - see contact information above) to follow-up and provide any additional information from the referral form that was not available at the time the report was issued from CI.
5. CI will notify National Center for Missing Exploited Children (NCMEC) by entering information on the NCMEC website cmfc.missingkids.org, by clicking on the "Report a Missing Child Here" tab.
6. DCI will:
 - a. Follow-up w/ local LE to determine what resources they can leverage to assist in locating the foster youth.
 - b. Send a referral to Internet Crimes Against

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Children staff (ICAC) to begin looking on social networking websites and other websites known to facilitate sex trafficking in an attempt to locate the foster youth or gather additional information on the foster youth's whereabouts.

- c. Follow follow-up with the following Court Administrator's Office staff to determine if there is any relevant juvenile justice history on the foster youth.
 - i. Bob Peake: 406-841-2961 or
 - ii. Kelly Elder: 406-841-2921
 1. Note: Route all requests to the Court Administration staff listed above prior to making contact with local juvenile probation offices to ensure that any privileged information is shared with DCI.
- d. Determine if there will be a public alert issued. If so, determine what type of alert is to be issued and coordinate with local law enforcement in issuing the alert.
 - i. An Amber Alert can be issued based on the criteria listed on <https://dojmt.gov/missing-persons/>).
 - ii. Missing or Endangered Person's Alert.
 1. Similar to an Amber Alert. This alert has broader criteria for its use and can include adults. This alert is not as widely publicized as an Amber Alert (e.g. National Weather Service isn't noticed but the alert will still go out on social media and lottery machines.

7. Tribal IVE Social Services agencies will also issue reports of missing or runaway foster youth to CI as this is

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a requirement under the Title IVE contracts.

- a. CI and DCI will follow the same procedures listed above when referral of missing or runaway foster youth are received from communities located on any of Montana's Indian Reservations.
 - b. Within one working day, the Tribal Social Services staff assigned to the missing or runaway foster youth's case will be expected to follow-up with the DCI staff listed above and provide additional information not available when the CI referral was issued.
8. Once the foster youth is located CFSD and Tribal IVE Social Services agencies will be responsible for the following:
- a. Determine the factors that led to the foster youth being absent from foster care and to the extent possible address those factors in subsequent placements.
 - b. Determine the foster youth's experiences while absent from care, including whether the child is a sex trafficking victim.
 - c. Report related information as required by the federal Department of Health and Human Services.
 - d. Immediately report to local law enforcement any time it has been determined a youth has been sex trafficked.

References

Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act

New 09/15