
	<b>GAITHERSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT</b>		
	<b>Missing Persons</b>		
	<b>GENERAL ORDER</b>	<b>608.1</b>	
<b>Effective Date</b>	<b>10/06/2025</b>		
<b>Authorized by:</b>	<b>Mark P. Sroka</b> CHIEF OF POLICE	SIGNATURE	DATE <b>10/06/2025</b>

## 1. POLICY

- 1.1. Patrol officers are responsible for conducting preliminary investigations for persons reported as missing.
- 1.2. Officers should note that individuals reporting someone as missing are not required to wait a certain period of time before filing a report.

## 2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. **Active Search:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Active Search” refers to the act of actively looking for a missing person in a coordinated manner utilizing resources to effectively and efficiently locate the person.
- 2.2. **Catastrophic Event:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Catastrophic Event” refers to a sudden, large-scale incident, either natural (tornado, earthquakes, hurricanes, or floods) or man-made (industrial accidents, terrorist attacks, or manmade disasters) that causes widespread damage, loss of life, severe disruption to communities.
- 2.3. **Cognitive Disorder:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Cognitive Disorder” refers to a category of mental health disorders that generally include damage to the memory portions of the brain and primarily affect learning, memory, perception, and problem-solving. Examples include amnesia, delirium, and dementia/Alzheimer’s.
- 2.4. **Deafblind:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Deafblind” refers to a condition in which a person has both significant hearing and vision impairments. The combination of these two sensory losses creates unique and complex communication, mobility, and access challenges, even if the person isn’t totally deaf or totally blind.
- 2.5. **Intellectual Developmental Disability:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Intellectual Developmental Disability” refers to a disability that originates during the developmental period (birth to age 18) and is characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem-solving) and in adaptive behavior, which covers a range of everyday social and practical skills. Examples include autism, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, developmental delay, down syndrome, and fetal alcohol syndrome.
- 2.6. **Late-Deafened:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Late-Deafened” refers to a person who loses their hearing after having acquired spoken language, typically after childhood or adolescence, often in adulthood. This means they had normal or near-

normal hearing for a significant period and became deaf later in life due to illness, injury, aging, or other causes.

- 2.7. **Missing Adult:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Missing Adult” refers to an individual, 18 years of age and over, who is the subject of a missing person’s report filed with a law enforcement agency and whose whereabouts are unknown.
- 2.8. **Missing At-Risk Adult:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Missing At-Risk Adult” refers to a missing individual, 18 years of age and over, who meets one or more of the following criteria:
  - 2.8.1. Is 75 years old or older;
  - 2.8.2. Has a cognitive disorder or intellectual developmental disability;
  - 2.8.3. Has a known or suspected serious injury, illness, or physical handicap, thereby subjecting the individual or others to immediate danger;
  - 2.8.4. Is currently suicidal;
  - 2.8.5. Is missing following a catastrophic event; or
  - 2.8.6. Foul play is suspected.
- 2.9. **Missing Child:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Missing Child” refers to an individual under the age of 18 years who is the subject of a missing person’s report filed with a law enforcement agency and whose whereabouts are unknown.
- 2.10. **Missing At-Risk Child:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Missing At-Risk Child” refers to any child reported under the age of 13 or a missing individual under the age of 18 years who meets one of the following criteria:
  - 2.10.1. Has not been the subject of a prior missing person (including runaway) report;
  - 2.10.2. Suffers from a mental or physical handicap or illness;
  - 2.10.3. Has a cognitive disorder or intellectual developmental disability;
  - 2.10.4. Has ever previously been the subject of a child abuse report filed with the state or local law enforcement agency;
  - 2.10.5. Is missing following a catastrophic event;
  - 2.10.6. The disappearance is of a suspicious or dangerous nature; or
  - 2.10.7. The person filing the report of a missing child has reason to believe the missing child may have been abducted.

- 2.11. **Unemancipated Juvenile:** Within the context of this directive, the term “Unemancipated Juvenile” refers to a minor (under 18), who is still legally under the care, custody, and control of their parents or guardians.

### 3. MISSING ADULTS – INITIAL INVESTIGATION

- 3.1. **Patrol Procedures and Responsibilities:** When a patrol officer is dispatched to a missing adult call, the officer will make contact with the complainant and:
- 3.1.1. Conduct a preliminary investigation and complete a MCP Form 617, Search Urgency Evaluation Form. The complainant’s information will be recorded on the Search Urgency Form. If the complainant is not the parent or guardian and the missing person is not under their own care (for example, adult day care, private caregiver), the officer will contact the parent or guardian once known.
  - 3.1.2. When a Missing At-Risk adult is involved, the officer may consider the following actions:
    - 3.1.2.1. Conduct an initial search which may include, but is not limited to:
      - 3.1.2.1.1. A thorough check of the home and vehicles;
      - 3.1.2.1.2. Search of the immediate area; or
      - 3.1.2.1.3. Search of place last seen.
    - 3.1.2.2. Place a radio lookout with the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC). When it is reasonably believed a missing-at-risk person may have traveled outside of either the City of Gaithersburg or Montgomery County, the officer should request PSCC to contact other jurisdictions as appropriate (for example, a missing-at-risk person seen entering the metro station, an autistic, non-verbal adult seen entering a metro bus). When PSCC fulfills the notification request via phone, radio, or other electronic means, PSCC will add the contacting agency, name of person/ID number information was provided to, and time of the notification.
    - 3.1.2.3. Notify a supervisor who may respond to the scene based upon a consideration of the totality of the circumstances, to include but not limited to at-risk factors. If necessary, supervisors may notify the on-call commander.
    - 3.1.2.4. Notify the on-duty/on-call MCP Search Coordinator when:
      - 3.1.2.4.1. There is a score of 1 in any category on the MCP Form 617; or
      - 3.1.2.4.2. The cumulative score is 15 or less on the MCP Form 617.

3.1.2.4.3. There are circumstances where the officer feels further consultation with the Search Coordinator is necessary or practical.

3.1.4.1. Place the subject into NCIC via the Message Routing Center (MRC).

3.1.4.2. Notify the district investigative section if the on-scene supervisor believes their involvement would be beneficial, or if there are urgent factors where immediate investigations may be necessary.

3.1.4.3. Coordinate appropriate search procedures, as determined by the supervisor and/or Search Manager.

### 3.1.3. NCIC Entry:

3.1.3.1. For an NCIC entry to be made, the complainant must sign a GPD Form 592 – NCIC/Social Media Missing Person Attestment Statement, at the time of the report. NCIC regulations mandate that a signed statement be provided to the police department taking the report to aid in the protection of the adult missing person's right to privacy. The GPD Form 592 should be submitted with and attached to the missing person report.

3.1.3.1.1. The reporting officer should email a copy of the Form 592 to the GPD PIO.

3.1.3.2. NCIC entry must be made for any missing adult who is at least 18 and under 21 years old.

3.1.3.3. For missing adults over the age of 21 years old, the complainant should sign Part I – NCIC Entry Attestment and Part II – Social Media Attestment. If the complainant refuses to sign one or both sections, officers will not follow through with those components that were refused without prior authorization from the on-call commander.

3.1.4. Write the initial report which may include the following information:

3.1.4.1. Full description - upload a photograph to Evidence.com when available.

3.1.4.2. Acquaintances, places frequented, threats of violence, etc.

3.1.4.3. Prescribed medications, mental or physical ailments, doctors, if known, and place of employment and/or school.

3.1.4.4. Whether a radio lookout was made and if other jurisdictions were contacted by officers/Police Services Assistants (PSAs)/PSCC. Include in the narrative what agency was contacted, name and ID number of person contacted, and time of notification.

3.1.4.5. Investigator notified, if applicable.

- 3.1.4.6. A statement regarding whether or not an NCIC entry was made, the ID number of the MRC operator who made the entry, and the time MRC was contacted.
- 3.1.4.7. Attach a copy of the MCP Form 617 – Search Urgency Evaluation Form to the report.
- 3.1.5. Prior to the end of the officer’s tour of duty, supervisors will route the report electronically via the report writing system to the Gaithersburg Police Department Investigative Section, which is responsible for the follow-up investigation of missing adults.

#### **4. MISSING ADULTS – FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION**

- 4.1. The supervisor of the Investigative Section with follow-up responsibility, or designee, will review the report and assign the case for follow-up investigation in compliance with the Section’s standard operating procedures.
  - 4.1.1. The detective responsible for follow-up investigation will ensure a complete Criminal History Check (III) is completed within 90 days of the individual being reported missing. If the missing person returns within the first 90 days, then a Criminal History Check is not required.
  - 4.1.2. The supervisor of the Investigative Section will consult with the GPD PIO regarding the issuance of press releases and/or social media posts.
- 4.2. The Montgomery County Police Major Crimes Division will assume follow-up investigation responsibility when foul play is suspected, or a person reported as missing is discovered to be deceased.

#### **5. MISSING CHILDREN – INITIAL INVESTIGATION**

- 5.1. **Patrol Procedures and Responsibility:** On receipt of a report regarding a Missing Child, the officer shall make contact with the complainant and:
  - 5.1.1. Conduct a preliminary investigation and complete a MCP Form 617 – Search Urgency Evaluation Form. The complainant’s information will be recorded on the search urgency form. If the complainant is not the parent or guardian (for example, school, daycare, private caregiver, etc.), the officer will contact the parent or guardian once known.
  - 5.1.2. When a Missing At-Risk Child is involved, the officer may consider the following actions:
    - 5.1.2.1. Conduct an initial search which may include, but is not limited to:
      - 5.1.2.1.1. A thorough check of the home and vehicles;
      - 5.1.2.1.2. Search of the immediate area; or

- 5.1.2.1.3. Search of place last seen.
- 5.1.2.2. Place a radio lookout with the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC). When it is reasonably believed a missing-at-risk person may have traveled outside of the City of Gaithersburg or Montgomery County, the officer should request PSCC to contact other jurisdictions as appropriate (for example, a missing-at-risk person seen entering the metro station, an autistic, non-verbal adult seen entering a metro bus). When PSCC fulfills the notification request via phone, radio, or other electronic means, PSCC will add the contacting agency, name of person/ID number information was provided to, and time of the notification.
- 5.1.2.3. Notify a supervisor who will respond to the scene based upon a consideration of the totality of the circumstances, to include but not limited to at-risk factors. If necessary, supervisors may notify the on-call commander.
- 5.1.2.4. Search Urgency Form Scores: Notify the on-duty/on-call MCP Search Coordinator when:
- 5.1.2.4.1. There is a score of 1 in any category on the MCP Form 617 – Search Urgency Form;
- 5.1.2.4.2. The cumulative score is 15 or less on the MCP Form 617 – Search Urgency Form;
- 5.1.2.4.3. The subject is a first-time runaway; or
- 5.1.2.4.4. There are circumstances where the officer feels further consultation with the Search Coordinator is necessary or practical.
- 5.1.2.5. Place the subject into NCIC immediately via the Message Routing Center (MRC).
- 5.1.2.6. Notify the Special Victims Investigations Division (SVID) – Missing Children Section at [REDACTED] or the on-call investigator through the PSCC.
- 5.1.2.7. Coordinate appropriate search procedures, as determined by the supervisor and/or Search Manager.
- 5.1.2.8. Attempt to obtain a photograph of the missing child, preferably a portrait-type photo. If a photograph is available for bulletins or various forms of media, complete a GPD Form 592 – NCIC / Social Media Missing Person Attestment Statement. For missing children, the complainant should sign Part II – Social Media Attestment only (Part I does not pertain to juveniles). If the parent, guardian, or caretaker refuses to sign Part II, the officer will not follow through with social

media post procedures without prior approval from the on-call commander.

5.1.2.9. Before the officer's tour of duty is completed:

5.1.2.9.1. Complete all reports and initiate appropriate teletype for missing children believed to be in a specific location outside Montgomery County.

5.1.2.9.2. Supervisors will route the report electronically via the report writing system to the SVID Missing Children Section.

5.1.2.9.3. Forward the photo of the missing child to SVID. SVID will ensure the MCP Public Information Office (MCP PIO) receives a copy of the missing child's photo.

5.1.3. If it is not a missing at-risk child, the officer should:

5.1.3.1. Seek to determine the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the missing child.

5.1.3.2. Follow procedures set out in Section 5.1.2.

5.1.4. In cases involving repeat runaways, if the missing at-risk child criteria is not met, notification to either the on-call MCP Missing Children Section detective or a MCP Search Manager is not necessary. Instead, notification will be achieved via the appropriate reporting writing system routing group.

## 6. MISSING CHILDREN/RUNAWAY – FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION

6.1. SVID will conduct follow-up investigations in missing children/runaway cases.

6.2. When the child turns 18, the investigation will be transferred to the District Investigative Section where the child was originally missing unless it has been 72 hours since the person was reported missing; in this case, the investigation will be transferred to the MCP Major Crimes, Cold Case Section.

6.3. The MCP Major Crimes Division will assume follow-up investigation responsibility when foul play is suspected.

## 7. NCIC ENTRY CRITERIA

7.1. An NCIC entry can only be made if the missing person falls into one or more of the following categories:

7.1.1. **Disability:** An individual of any age who is missing and under proven physical/mental disability or is senile, thereby subjecting the individual or others to personal and immediate danger;

7.1.2. **Endangered:** An individual of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the individual's physical safety may be in danger;

- 7.1.3. **Involuntary:** An individual of any age who is missing under circumstances indicating that the disappearance may not have been voluntary (i.e., abduction or kidnapping);
  - 7.1.4. **Juvenile:** An individual who is missing and declared unemancipated as defined by the laws of the individual's state of residence and does not meet any of the entry criteria outlined in the above categories;
  - 7.1.5. **Catastrophe Victim:** An individual of any age who is missing after a catastrophe;  
or
  - 7.1.6. **Other:** A person who is missing and for whom there is a reasonable concern for their safety or a missing person who is at least 18 and under 21 years old (Suzanne's Law). Consult with a supervisor when encountering situations that may fall under this section.
- 7.2. If the missing person does not fit into any entry categories, an NCIC entry cannot and will not be made. A statement in the report should indicate that no entry was made (ex: "The subject does not meet the entry criteria for NCIC. Therefore, no computer entry was made.").

## **8. MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE MANAGED SEARCH OPERATIONS TEAM (MSOT) PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 8.1. Conduct a consult with the officer on the scene of missing at-risk persons and assess the extent of active search operations needed and the level of response from the MCP's MSOT. Levels of searches are:

### **8.1.1. Level 1:**

8.1.1.1. Utilizes only the assets of the District of occurrence.

8.1.1.2. Requires no response by MSOT personnel.

8.1.1.3. Command is retained at the District Level.

### **8.1.2. Level 2:**

8.1.2.1. Coordinated by MCP MSOT personnel.

8.1.2.2. Utilizes resources other than that of the District of occurrence.

8.1.2.3. Command is retained at the District Level with the coordination of a MCP MSOT Coordinator.

### **8.1.3. Level 3:**

8.1.3.1. Coordinated by MCP MSOT personnel.

- 8.1.3.2. Utilizes multiple resource types or resources from outside of the department.
- 8.1.3.3. Use of any volunteer resources.
- 8.1.3.4. The MCP Special Operations Division assumes command.
- 8.2. When an MCP MSOT response is initiated to an active search, the MCP Search Coordinator will ensure the search is coordinated efficiently and effectively utilizing scientific, statistical, historical, and intuitive data per MSOT guidelines.
- 8.3. MCP MSOT will coordinate efforts with the appropriate investigative unit(s).
- 8.4. The use of volunteer resources will only be conducted under the coordination of a MCP Search Coordinator.
- 8.5. MCP Search Coordinators may, when necessary, issue an “A Child is Missing” call to the community in the search area to notify them of a missing at-risk child or adult. “A Child is Missing” is a federally funded notification system similar to a reverse 911. Only MCP Search Coordinators can authorize a “A Child is Missing” Call.
- 8.6. MCP Search Coordinators may consider notification of the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) to initiate an Alert Montgomery message to those in Montgomery County who have selected to receive Police Alerts. An alert may be considered for missing-at-risk individuals with Autism, Alzheimer's/ Dementia, or developmental disabilities when there is an active search, and the MCP MSOT has requested a county-wide lookout every 30 minutes. Such a request will come only after coordination with MCP MSOT.
- 8.7. **Notifications During Active Searches:** The appropriate Bureau Commander and GPD PIO should be notified immediately whenever an active search for a missing person is taking place in the City and one or more of the following conditions is/are met:
  - 8.7.1. The missing person is not missing of his/her own free will or is missing under suspicious circumstances;
  - 8.7.2. The missing person is a juvenile, is elderly, or is suffering from Alzheimer’s or another debilitating disease or condition;
  - 8.7.3. Special resources, such as a canine team, helicopter, or drone are deployed; or
  - 8.7.4. An Amber Alert, Silver Alert, or Purple Alert is anticipated.

## 9. CLOSURE/CANCELLATION

- 9.1. Only a patrol unit or investigative unit can close missing person reports.
- 9.2. The officer closing the case will:

- 9.2.1. Verify the return and the identity of the missing person. If the missing person is found in another jurisdiction, the officer can have the police department in that jurisdiction make the verification.
- 9.2.2. Cancel any teletypes, lookouts, or NCIC entries by contacting MRC.
- 9.2.3. Write a supplemental to the original Ejustice Report or Police Information Report (if originally reported from another jurisdiction) which may include the following:
  - 9.2.3.1. Location where the subject was found;
  - 9.2.3.2. Subject's physical and mental condition;
  - 9.2.3.3. How identity was verified; and
  - 9.2.3.4. Synopsis of any criminal charges contemplated, if applicable.
- 9.2.4. Notify the PIO as soon as practical if a press release or social media post was previously issued.
- 9.2.5. Notify the appropriate investigative section. Supervisors will route the supplement report electronically via the report writing system to the appropriate investigative section.
- 9.2.6. Advise the original complainant of the relevant case details and the subject's location. Officers are cautioned that every case presents different problems, and that discretion will be exercised where appropriate in furnishing information.
  - 9.2.6.1. If it develops that the missing person has been the subject of foul play or has been located either deceased or in severely deteriorated physical or mental condition, personal contact will be made with the complainant by the lead investigative unit.
  - 9.2.6.2. In cases involving missing juveniles outside Montgomery County, NCIC entries can only be canceled upon returning to this jurisdiction. To accomplish this, officers will inform the guardian to immediately contact SVID when the juvenile returns so the NCIC entry can be canceled. Exceptions may be made when the juvenile's location and condition are verified by another police agency and the legal guardian grants permission for the child to remain at that location.
  - 9.2.6.3. In all other cases, telephone contact will suffice.
- 9.2.7. If requested, return any photographs in police possession.

## **10. CITY RESIDENT MISSING OUTSIDE THE CITY**

- 10.1. When a call is received concerning a city resident who is believed to be missing in another jurisdiction outside of Montgomery County with circumstances that would warrant an investigation if the individual were missing in Gaithersburg, the following procedures will be followed:

- 10.1.1. Report: A Police Information (2938) Report will be written, and a copy will be forwarded to the appropriate Investigative Section.
- 10.1.2. Notifications:
- 10.1.2.1. If a Missing At-Risk Adult is involved, the officer should notify GPDIS as soon as possible.
  - 10.1.2.2. If a Missing At-Risk Child is involved, the officer should notify SVID as soon as possible.
  - 10.1.2.3. In a non-critical case, the officer should immediately contact the jurisdiction where the individual is believed to be missing. This should be noted in the report, along with a point of contact for the other jurisdiction.
- 10.1.3. Liaison: Once an investigator is assigned to the case, the investigator will act as a liaison between the complainant and the jurisdiction where the individual is believed to be missing. The investigator will email a copy of the report to the other jurisdiction as soon as practical but no later than the end of the shift.
- 10.1.4. NCIC Entry: The jurisdiction where the individual is believed to be, or last known to be, is responsible for making the NCIC entry.

## 11. MARYLAND AMBER PLAN, SILVER ALERT AND PURPLE ALERT PROGRAMS

11.1. **Amber Plan**: The Maryland Amber Plan is a collaborative approach between broadcasters, Maryland State Police (MSP), and area law enforcement agencies in response to the abduction of children. “Amber” is an acronym for America’s Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response and is a protocol for alerting the public of a child abduction to solicit information useful in the investigation and recovery of abducted children.

11.1.1. Once the patrol officer verifies a kidnapping/abduction and all the criteria have been met, the officer should immediately contact SVID Missing Children Section and place a lookout stating, “Amber Alert pending.” A Sergeant or detective from the SVID Missing Children Section will confirm that all criteria have been met and contact the MSP Duty Commander in Pikesville at [REDACTED] to request an Amber Plan be placed.

11.1.2. Amber Alert Criteria:

- 11.1.2.1. The child is under 18 years of age and there is evidence that the child was abducted;
- 11.1.2.2. The circumstances surrounding the abduction indicate that the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death;

11.1.2.3. The abductor and/or child are likely to still be in the Washington metropolitan broadcast area;

11.1.2.4. There is a likelihood someone provided with a description of the abductor, the child, or the vehicle involved may observe and report the whereabouts to police; and

11.1.2.5. The child's name and other elements have been entered into NCIC by police.

11.1.3. Supervisors should ensure that the appropriate PIO, on-call Bureau Commander, and investigative units are notified prior to the Amber Alert being placed.

11.2. **Silver Alerts:** Silver Alerts are a collaborative approach between broadcasters, MSP, and area law enforcement agencies for response to missing persons with a cognitive disorder. Once an investigator or MCP Search Coordinator verifies the missing person meets the criteria set forth by MSP below, they may contact the MSP Duty Commander in Pikesville to request a Silver Alert be issued.

11.2.1. Silver Alert: Vehicle-Related:

11.2.1.1. The missing person is traveling in a vehicle, and there is enough descriptive information about the missing person and the vehicle for law enforcement to issue an alert; and

11.2.1.2. The missing person suffers a cognitive impairment, including a diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia; and

11.2.1.3. The missing person's disappearance poses a credible threat to the health and safety of the individual; and

11.2.1.4. The investigating agency has already activated a local or regional alert by contacting media outlets in their jurisdiction; and

11.2.1.5. The missing person has been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

11.2.2. Silver Alert: Non-Vehicle:

11.2.2.1. The missing person is not likely traveling in a vehicle, but there is enough descriptive information about the missing person for law enforcement to issue an alert; and

11.2.2.2. The missing person suffers a cognitive impairment, including a diagnosis of Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia; and

11.2.2.3. The missing person's disappearance poses an immediate and credible threat to the health and safety of the individual; and

11.2.2.4. The investigating agency has already activated a local or regional alert by contacting allied agencies and media outlets within and immediately surrounding their jurisdiction; and

11.2.2.5. The missing person has been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

11.2.3. Supervisors should ensure that the appropriate PIO, on-call Bureau Commander, and investigative units are notified prior to the Silver Alert being placed.

11.3. **Purple Alerts:** Purple Alerts are a collaborative approach between broadcasters, MSP, and area law enforcement agencies for response to missing persons with cognitive impairment, mental disorder, intellectual or developmental disability, or brain injury or are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or late-deafened that does not have Alzheimer's, dementia or a physical mental or emotional disability related to substance abuse. Once an investigator or MCP Search Coordinator verifies the missing person meets the criteria set forth by MSP (listed below), they may contact the MSP Duty Commander in Pikesville to request a Purple Alert be issued.

11.3.1. A missing person whose whereabouts are unknown, and

11.3.2. Who has a cognitive impairment, mental disorder, intellectual or developmental disability, or brain injury that is NOT:

11.3.2.1. Alzheimer's Disease

11.3.2.2. Dementia; or

11.3.2.3. A physical, mental, or emotional disability related to substance abuse;  
or

11.3.3. Who is deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or late-deafened,

11.3.4. Whose disappearance poses a credible threat to the health and safety of the individual due to age, health, mental or physical disability, environment, or weather conditions, as determined by the law enforcement agency; and

11.3.5. Who does not meet the criteria for activation of a Silver Alert.

11.3.6. Supervisors should ensure that the appropriate PIO, on-call Bureau Commander, and investigative units are notified in the event a Purple Alert is placed.

## 12. CHILD CUSTODY DISPUTES

12.1. Under Maryland Law, either parent of a child is presumed to have an equal right to have custody of the child unless a court order states otherwise. A child custody order of a Maryland court will supersede any custody order issued by a court in another jurisdiction unless:

12.1.1. The order from the outside jurisdiction was issued after the Maryland order, and

12.1.2. The lawful custodian of the child:

12.1.2.1. Consented to the more recent order; or

12.1.2.2. Personally participated in the legal process in the other jurisdiction.

12.2. Officers should request a copy of a court order that grants custody and follow that order's dictates in determining which party may be allowed to take the child. If no legal custody order is present, officers should make no judgment on their own accord as to which party should have custody and should advise all parties to seek the advice of an attorney.

12.3. When a custody order involving a child under the age of 16 has been violated, the lawful custodian must make a demand to the person with the child for the child's return. If that demand is not met within 48 hours, the person holding the child may be charged criminally under the Family Law Article, Title 9-304. In such a case, officers will contact the Missing Children Section, SVID.

12.4. Officers may take any child into custody if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the child is in immediate danger from the child's surroundings and that removal is necessary for protection. In such instances, Child Welfare should be contacted for assistance at [REDACTED].

### **13. AUTISM/IDD (INTELLECTUAL & DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES), ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA OUTREACH UNIT (A/IDD)**

13.1. **Follow-Up Investigation:** The Montgomery County Police Autism/IDD, Alzheimer's, and Dementia Outreach Unit is responsible for proactive follow-up with the subject, family, and caregivers who go missing to provide resources to reduce the likelihood of additional elopement/missing situations. To facilitate this follow-up, officers or their supervisors should email [REDACTED] a copy of the report by the end of the shift when a subject falls into these categories.

13.2. If it is believed that a member of the A/IDD's immediate notification would assist officers on the scene of a missing subject, the A/IDD can be contacted via the PSCC.