

Ohio Alerts Guidebook





Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee

Mike DeWine, Governor
Ohio State Highway Patrol
Buckeye State Sheriffs Association
Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
Ohio Department of Transportation
State Emergency Communications Committee
Victim's Advocate

Ohio Attorney General's Office
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Ohio Association of Broadcasters
Ohio Emergency Management Agency
Local/Regional AMBER Plan Representative
Ohio Department of Aging

July 1, 2024

Dear Colleague,

The abduction of a child is a serious situation in which timely, coordinated and definitive action is critical to giving law enforcement the greatest possible chance of recovering the child unharmed. In light of this fact, I am extremely pleased and grateful you have decided to take the steps necessary to better prepare yourself, your agency and your community to respond to such an event. It is my sincere hope the information presented in this guidebook will be useful to you as we work as a team to ensure the safety of our children.

Should you have any training needs or alert program questions, please contact the Ohio State Highway Patrol AMBER Alert Coordinator at (614) 799-6633 or osphub@dps.ohio.gov.

Sincerely,

Captain Ronald Raines

Captain Ronald Raines
Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee

Table of Contents

AMBER Alert.....	4
Local AMBER Alert Plan	8
CART Plan	9
Endangered Missing Child Alert	10
Endangered Missing Adult Alert	13
Blue Alert.....	16
State Resources	18
Ohio Missing Persons Unit.....	20
National Resources.....	23
Airport Notification	27

AMBER Alert





AMBER Alert

AMBER Alert Criteria:

1. Law enforcement confirms the child is under 18 years of age.
2. Law enforcement believes the abduction poses a credible threat of immediate danger or serious bodily harm or death to the child.
3. There is sufficient descriptive information about the child, the suspect, and/or the circumstances surrounding the abduction to believe that activation of the alert will help locate the child.
4. A law enforcement agency determines the child is not a runaway and has not been abducted as a result of a family abduction, unless the investigation determines the child is in immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death.

AMBER Alert Initiation

Follow your local or regional AMBER Alert Activation Plan. If you do not have a local or regional plan, or if you have questions or issues regarding an AMBER Alert, contact the Ohio State Highway Patrol Communications Center at (614) 466-2660 to speak with the AMBER Alert Duty Officer.

NCIC Entry

1. Complete the LEADS/NCIC Missing Persons Entry.
2. Control Field (MNP) = AA (AMBER Alert).
3. Message Key (MKE) = **EME** (Entry Endangered) or **EMI** (Entry Involuntary) or **EMEC** (Entry Endangered Caution) or **EMIC** (Entry Involuntary Caution)

Entering a missing person record with a message key of EME, EMEC, EMI or EMIC along with a MNP value of AA for a child under 18 years of age will automatically generate an in-state AMBER Alert message to:

- All law enforcement agencies with ORIs in the entering agency's county and adjacent counties
- OSHP Central Dispatch Communications Center in Columbus
- Attorney General's Office – Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI)
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

Once the AMBER Alert (AA) entry is made into LEADS/NCIC, you will receive a call from the AMBER Alert Duty Officer. A representative with authority to make decisions needs to be available to discuss the alert and answer the following questions:

- Discuss and confirm AMBER Alert criteria.
- Have you activated the local EAS system for your region?
- If not, do you want the OSHP to activate your region?
- What regions will be activated?
- Are you requesting the issuance of an alert in another state in addition to Ohio?
- Have you notified your local Child Abduction Response Team (CART) or have you contacted the state's CART coordinator through BCI?
- What number do you want the 1-877-AMBER-OH number routed to for tips and leads from the public? By calling the 1-877-AMBER-OH number, the public will be provided with information pertaining to the alert and it will connect them directly with the investigating agency. (Recommend not to dispatch area or officer's personal phone).
- Do you have a photo of the suspect, child and/or vehicle?

Alert Actions

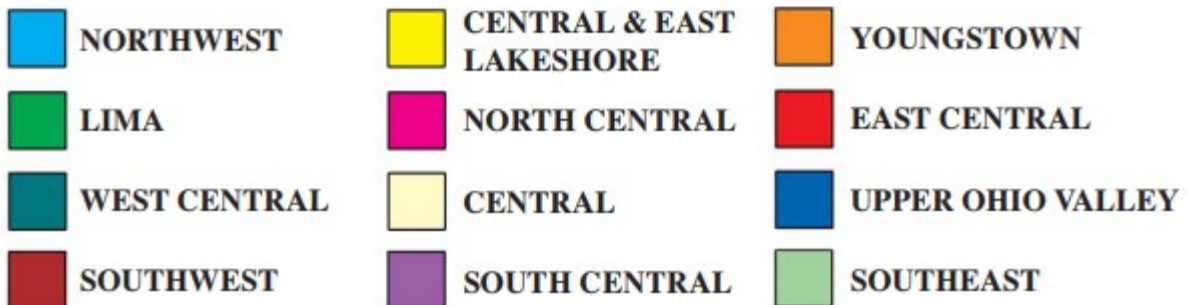
- A statewide administrative message is sent out to all law enforcement agencies.
- Statewide MCT message sent to all OSHP troopers.
- Statewide and/or regional law enforcement radio broadcast.
- 1-877-AMBER-OH telephone tipline is activated.
- Emergency Alert System (EAS) is activated in the indicated regions.
- Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) is activated in the indicated regions.
- The OHLEG Application is initiated. Automatically sends out an e-mail to media outlets and generates information on the Ohio AMBER Alert Twitter account.
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) initiates secondary notifications (lottery terminals, trucker alerts, billboards, UBER, etc.). Secondary distribution is made by NCMEC to the FBI Child Abduction Unit.
- Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigations Child Abduction Response Team (CART) Coordinator notified and will contact you. This person will help coordinate the BCI response to your investigative needs and coordinate statewide CART and/or Search and Rescue teams.
- The Ohio AMBER Plan website ohioamberplan.org is updated with suspect(s), victim(s) and vehicle information.
- Ohio Department of Transportation Highway Signs are activated if available in the affected regions.

Canceling an AMBER Alert

- Once the child is recovered, send LEADS cancellation screen.
- Once notified of cancellation, applicable alert actions above will be cancelled/removed.

Ohio

EAS Operational Areas



Local AMBER Alert Plan

**Insert local
AMBER Alert
plan here.**

CART Plan

Insert CART
plan here.

Endangered Missing Child Alert





Endangered Missing Child Alert

There are situations where you will be investigating a missing child case, where the circumstances put the child's life in immediate danger, but for some reason the AMBER Alert criteria were not met for the case. For example, an investigation has not revealed information that would lead a reasonable person to conclude the child was missing as a result of an abduction. The Endangered Missing Child Alert was created to alert the public to assist in locating the missing child. The criteria are:

1. Missing Child – Runaway, Lost Non-Witnessed / Non-Confirmed Abduction, child is missing with circumstances unknown.
2. Child's missing status confirmed by law enforcement and victim is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.
3. There is enough descriptive information concerning the circumstances, suspect, vehicle, and/or victim, where the public would be able to assist.

You should follow your local agency investigative procedures to determine if the child meets the criteria for this alert and identify additional resources needed to safely locate the missing child. Enter the child into NCIC immediately upon taking the missing child report. NCIC/LEADS allows the entering agency to include a photo with the missing child entry. This photo is crucial for a safe recovery of the child and should be included with the missing child entry. **To activate an Endangered Missing Child Alert, contact the Ohio Attorney General's Office, Missing Persons Unit at (855) BCI-OHIO (24/7 answered number).** The Endangered Missing Child Alert provides an option and resources that will distribute the endangered missing child's information to alert the public similar to the AMBER Alert system; the exception being the Emergency Alert System and the Wireless Emergency Alert system are not used for an Endangered Missing Child Alert. The following actions occur when the alert is issued:

The public display of a missing child's photo on the Ohio Attorney General Missing Persons and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children website. <https://www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement/Local-Law-Enforcement/Ohio-Missing-Persons>

- All statewide media notified by fax and e-mail.
- Utilize Facebook and Twitter to reach thousands of followers.
- The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children is notified.

- Ohio trucking companies are notified through Ohio Truckers Alert if the missing child is believed to be in a known vehicle.
- Coordination of alert activation in other states.
- The Bureau of Criminal Investigation Child Abduction Response Team Coordinator is notified and will contact you.
 - This person will help coordinate the BCI response to your investigative needs.
 - Coordinate statewide CART and/or Search and Rescue teams.

See the Resources chapter of this book that can assist you when handling a missing child investigation.

Endangered Missing Adult Alert





Endangered Missing Adult Alert

The Endangered Missing Adult Alert was created in 2008 to provide a tool to law enforcement to alert the public of a missing adult in a life-threatening situation, utilizing many of the same tools similar to the AMBER Alert to disseminate the alert. The Endangered Missing Adult Criteria are:

- The local investigating law enforcement agency confirms that the individual is missing.
- The individual meets at least one of the following criteria:
 - (a) Is sixty-five years of age or older.
 - (b) Has a mental impairment.
 - 1. Refer to ORC section 5502.522 for the definitions of Mental Disability.
 - (c) Has either autism spectrum disorder or another developmental disability.
 - 1. Refer to ORC section 5123.01 for the definitions of Developmental Disability.
- The disappearance of the individual poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the individual.
- There is sufficient descriptive information about the individual and the circumstances surrounding the individual's disappearance to indicate that activation of the alert will help locate the individual.

Before requesting an Endangered Missing Adult Alert activation, you must investigate the missing person report to verify the person is actually missing (which is a little different compared to a missing child report). You are encouraged to check with extended family, friends, neighborhood bars, local hospitals, local jails and boyfriend or girlfriends. If you have verified the person is missing and the circumstances meet all criteria, request the alert by entering the missing person into NCIC/LEADS using the "SA" code in the "MNP" field. This entry will be sent to the BCI Missing Persons Unit who will call to verify the alert request. If you do not receive a call from the BCI Missing Persons Unit within 10 minutes of making the entry, call (855) BCI-OHIO. When the alert is activated, the following will occur:

- E-mails and faxes sent to media statewide.

- Picture posted on the Attorney General's website at:
www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/Law-Enforcement/Local-Law-Enforcement/Missing-Adult-Alert
- Facebook and Twitter messages posted.
- ODOT Signboards activated if missing is in a known vehicle.
- License plate scanner activated on the Ohio Turnpike.
- An 800-toll free tip line is activated (866) 693-9171.
- LEADS Administrative message sent to all law enforcement agencies statewide.
- Coordination of additional resources if needed, including out of state alert activation.

Blue Alert





Blue Alert

Criteria for issuing a Blue Alert:

1. Law enforcement confirms that a law enforcement officer has been seriously injured or killed, and a suspect has not been apprehended, or that a law enforcement officer is missing while on duty under circumstances warranting concern for the law enforcement officer's safety.
2. There is sufficient descriptive information about the suspect or the circumstances surrounding a law enforcement officer's injury, death, or disappearance to indicate that activation of the alert may help locate a suspect or a missing law enforcement officer.

When the criteria are met, make an entry into the LEADS Ohio COP file and select "Y" under the Blue Alert drop down box.

The alert is immediately sent to all Ohio Law Enforcement LEADS Terminals.

A duty officer will call to confirm the information.

Media blasts, radio broadcast and other non-EAS systems are activated.

State Resources

State Resources

During an active alert, contact the OSHP Hub/Columbus Communications Center at 614-466-2660. Please note, the contact information below is for administrative use only.

Ohio Attorney General's Office
855-BCI-OHIO (855-224-6446)
www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/

Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police
614-761-0330
www.oacp.org

Buckeye State Sheriff's Association
614-431-5500
www.buckeyesheriffs.org

Ohio Emergency Management Agency
614-889-7150
www.ema.ohio.gov

Ohio State Highway Patrol - Hub and Intelligence Unit
614-466-2660
www.statepatrol.ohio.gov

When a missing child is reported and an AMBER Alert requested, the OSHP Hub will be notified. The Watch Desk Commander at the Hub, who is also the AMBER Alert Duty Officer, will call the agency from which the alert originated in order to confirm the criteria are met to issue an AMBER Alert. If the criteria are met, the Duty Officer provides all relevant information to the Communication Center for activation tasks. Similarly, the OSHP Intelligence Unit will provide any assistance relating to a situation involving a missing child, such as issuing a bulletin, providing additional information about a suspect and/or vehicle, license plate reader searches, etc.

Ohio Department of Transportation
614-644-7165
www.dot.state.oh.us

Ohio Association of Broadcasters
614-228-4052
www.oab.org

Ohio Child Abduction Response Team
855-BCI-OHIO (855-224-6446)

State Emergency Communications Committee
937-224-1137 x114

Ohio Missing Persons Unit

The Ohio Missing Persons Unit

www.ohioattorneygeneral.gov/missingpersons

The Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse was established in 1993 under Ohio Revised Code (ORC) Section 109.65(B) and serves as a central repository of statistics and information about missing children in the State of Ohio. It provides assistance to law enforcement and families to help locate missing children and develops and disseminates educational information through news releases, training, child abuse prevention and safety fairs, and child safety lesson plans.

Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine's office created the Ohio Missing Persons Unit in 2011 to better coordinate and convey information about services related to missing children and adults. The unit operates the Ohio Missing Children Clearinghouse and is part of the Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). In 2013, it became part of BCI's Criminal Intelligence Unit to better coordinate BCI resources, facilitate the quickest possible response to missing person cases, and provide immediate access to important investigative tools. In addition to focusing on missing children, the Missing Persons Unit plays an integral role in cases and issues involving missing adults, human trafficking, and unidentified human remains.

The Missing Persons Unit provides a toll-free hotline, **(855) BCI-OHIO**, to field calls from law enforcement, parents, community members, and the media. The hotline is answered 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The Attorney General's Office provides visibility at www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/MissingPersons for missing person cases and a central location at which families and the public can seek resources and guidance. The site features details and photos of missing children and adults and allows visitors to submit tips and print posters for specific cases. It also includes links to information about Ohio's unsolved homicides and unidentified remains. The Attorney General's Office also utilizes social networking websites, such as Facebook and Twitter, to raise awareness about missing person cases.

Staff members of the Missing Persons Unit also assist law enforcement and parents by:

- Issuing Endangered Missing Child and Endangered Missing Adult Alerts.
- Collaborating with others in the issuance of AMBER Alerts.
- Using social networking websites, public records, and law enforcement databases to help locate children.
- Providing a free program to collect DNA from a missing person's family.
- Training law enforcement, other professionals, and the public.
- Providing investigative guidance, resource recommendations, and assistance.
- Coordinate BCI investigative resources based on your assistance needs.
- Coordinate other State resources such as CART and Search and Rescue teams.
- Coordinate information with other States and National organizations.
- Assistance with poster development, posting on the Ohio Attorney General's website, posting to Facebook and other public dissemination.

Ohio Child Abduction Response Teams & Coordinators

A Child Abduction Response Team is a network of law enforcement officers, trained individuals from other public safety agencies and trained volunteers who are specially trained and prepared to respond to specific “at-risk” missing, endangered or abducted children. There are several teams located throughout the state and are available to assist your agency upon request.

A CART team is led by a CART Coordinator who is trained to assess the resources needed for the child abduction, and can advise the head of the law enforcement agency/lead investigator. The coordinator can act with the head of the law enforcement agency/lead investigator to tailor what resources are needed during a child abduction investigation. Your local agency or a neighboring agency may have personnel designated as CART Coordinators. The Ohio State Highway Patrol and BCI maintain a list of these teams and their contact information and are able to call out CART resources for your agency.

Ohio Volunteer Search & Rescue Teams

Volunteer Search & Rescue Teams (SAR) provide specialized volunteers trained according to nationally recognized standards in both Urban and Wilderness Search & Rescue. The goal of these organizations is to assist local, county and state law enforcement or responsible agency in the locating, accessing, stabilizing and extrication, transport of lost, trapped or missing persons. SAR responders are trained, competent, and able to perform the following tasks:

- Lost Person Incident Management
- Search Operations
- Consulting
- Evidence Preservation and Recovery
- Structure Search and Evacuation
- Communications Logistics
- Basic Medical Support
- Volunteer Management

The BCI CART Coordinator can assist in contacting these resources.

National Resources

National Resources

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) 1-800-THE-LOST (800-843-5678)

www.missingkids.com

NCMEC was established in 1984 as a private nonprofit organization to provide services nationwide for families and professionals in the prevention and investigation of abducted, endangered and sexually exploited children.

- Serves as a clearinghouse of information about missing and exploited children.
- Operates the CyberTipline that the public may use to report internet-related child sexual exploitation.
- Provides technical assistance to individuals and law enforcement agencies in the prevention, investigation, prosecution, and treatment of cases involving missing and exploited children.
- Provides secondary alert information about a missing child nationwide.
- Team Adam, a program of the NCMEC, provides a rapid, on-site assistance to law enforcement agencies and families in serious cases of missing children. Team Adam consultants are retired law enforcement professionals with years of investigative experience at the federal, state, and local levels.
- Assists the U.S. Department of State in certain cases of international child abduction in accordance with the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.
- Offers training programs to law enforcement and social service professionals.
- Distributes photographs and descriptions of missing children worldwide.
- Coordinates child-protection efforts with the private sector.
- Networks with nonprofit service providers and State Clearinghouses about missing children cases.
- Provides information about effective state legislation to help ensure the protection of children.

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NAMUS)

www.namus.gov

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) is a national centralized repository and resource center for missing persons and unidentified decedent records. NamUs is a free online system that can be searched by medical examiners, coroners, law enforcement officials, and the general public from all over the country in hopes of resolving these cases.

The **Missing Persons Database** contains information about missing persons that can be entered by anyone; however, before it appears as a case on NamUs, the information is verified. NamUs provides a user with a variety of resources, including the ability to print missing persons posters and receive free

biometric collection and testing assistance. Other resources include links to state clearinghouses, medical examiner and coroner offices, law enforcement agencies, victim assistance groups, and pertinent legislation.

The **Unidentified Persons Database** contains information entered by medical examiners and coroners. Unidentified persons are people who have died and whose bodies have not been identified. Anyone can search this database using characteristics such as sex, race, distinct body features and even dental information.

The **UnClaimed Persons database** (UCP) contains information about deceased persons who have been identified by name, but for whom no next of kin or family member has been identified or located to claim the body for burial or other disposition. Only medical examiners and coroners may enter cases in the UCP database. However, the database is searchable by the public using a missing person's name and year of birth.

When a new missing persons or unidentified decedent case is entered into NamUs, the system automatically performs cross-matching comparisons between the databases, searching for matches or similarities between cases.

NamUs provides free DNA testing and other forensic services, such as anthropology and odontology assistance. NamUs' Missing Persons Database and Unidentified Persons Database are now available in Spanish.

The National Runaway Safeline (NRS) 800-786-2929

www.1800runaway.org

The National Runaway Safeline is the federally designated national communications system for runaway and homeless youth giving them and their families help and hope by providing non-judgmental, confidential crisis intervention, and local and national referrals through a 24-hour hotline. Their mission is to keep America's runaway and at-risk youth safe and off the streets.

The National Runaway Safeline provides law enforcement agencies with free assistance in finding resources in a geographic area, statistics to assist with determining needs, assistance with an out-of-state placement of a runaway child, training, and resource materials.

NRS administers the Home Free program with Greyhound Lines, Inc. to help runaways get home free of charge. The process starts when the child calls the National Runaway Switchboard at 800-786-2929. NRS will talk to the child about why they ran and why they feel ready to return home. Then the NRS will place a conference call between the child and their legal guardian to talk about the child's return and determine a plan of action. As a final step, NRS contacts Greyhound with the child to make travel arrangements home.

A Child Is Missing (ACIM) 1-888-875-2246

www.achildissing.org

- ACIM provides a free service to law enforcement and operates 24 hours a day providing a "first responder" program to law enforcement.
- The program's rapid response telephone system alerts residents in a targeted area about a missing child, missing elderly person (i.e., suffering from Alzheimer's), or mentally disabled individual.
- A local law enforcement officer initiates the alert by calling ACIM (888-875-2246 or fax 954-763-4569). You must set up a free account before using them.
- Information about the child's last known location will be required so that calls can be placed to residences in the area to alert the public to assist in recovering the child.
- One thousand telephone alert calls are placed to nearby residences and businesses in designated areas in less than 1 minute.

U.S. Department of Justice

www.amberalert.gov

Fox Valley Technical College

[NCJTC - National Criminal Justice Training Center \(fvtc.edu\)](http://NCJTC - National Criminal Justice Training Center (fvtc.edu))

AMBER Training and Technical Assistance

www.amber-net.org

Federal Bureau of Investigation

www.fbi.gov

Airport Notification

Airport Notification

If your situation involves a flight risk and suspects or individuals may travel by airplane, alert your local airport.

Port Columbus authorities have partnered with the Ohio AMBER Alert Advisory Committee to develop and implement an airport alert system for times when it is believed suspects or individuals might be attempting to leave the area by air travel. The system will utilize multiple screens throughout the airport typically listing arrival and departure information, as well as, video screens at the TSA screening points.