

## **University of West Georgia University**

### **Missing Residential Student Notification Policy and Procedures**

***The following procedures have been developed to provide required notifications within twenty-four (24) hours after the time a campus resident student is deemed to be missing. This plan is a good faith effort to comply with the August 14, 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, Section 485 (j) until specific guidelines or requirements are published by the U.S. Department of Education.***

#### **Registration Procedure**

- 1) Residential students will be informed each academic year that each student, age 18 or above, has the option to identify a person designated as a confidential contact to be notified by the University not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the time the student is determined to be missing. The confidential contact may be a person designated by the student in addition the emergency contact listed with the University of West Georgia Registrar. Students who are under age eighteen (18) and are not emancipated will be informed each academic year that the institution is required to notify the custodial parent no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the time the student is determined to be missing.
- 2) A form will be provided to each student by the Office of Housing and Residence Life at the beginning of Fall Semester. The form will be completed and return to the resident's Resident Adviser (RA). The RA will make a good faith effort to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to complete the form. Once the forms have been completed, they will be turned over to the Office of Housing and Residence Life where they will be placed in alphabetical order by residence hall. The forms will then be given to the Communications Center at the University of West Georgia Police Department.

Students moving into the halls in Spring Semester will be provided a form by his/her RA. The same procedures will be followed in the processing of the form as used during Fall semester.

- 3) Each student who files a confidential contact registration form is solely responsible for the accuracy of the contact phone number. Any update of information should the confidential contact person and/or number change. A student may update information by filing a new form with the Office of the Housing and Residence Life..

#### **Missing Person Procedures**

A student is determined to be missing when a report is made to the University of West Georgia Police Department and its personnel determine the report to be credible. Credibility may be established if any of the following circumstances are verified:

- a) No one has been able to contact the student in the last 24 hours even though reasonable efforts have been made by phone, email, and in-person attempts to do so.
- b) Evidence indicates a criminal act may have taken place. (If this occurs, the 24 hour waiting period will be discarded)
- c) Based on a reliable source, information exists that the student is in danger due to physical issues, mental illness, or consumption of drugs or alcohol. (If this occurs, the 24 hour waiting period will be discarded);
- d) Information exists that the person may be suicidal. (If this occurs, the 24 hour waiting period will be discarded);

### **Investigative Follow-up**

- 1) To report a student missing, a complainant should call the University of West Georgia Police Department at 678-839-6000 and inform the dispatcher that you wish to file a missing person report.
- 2) An initial incident report will be taken by a University Police Officer. Included in the report will be the following information:
  - a) Name and physical description of the missing person
  - b) Does the missing person own a car or have access to one
  - c) Physical and mental condition of the missing person
  - d) Any situations or events that may have contributed to the disappearance
  - e) The last time the student was seen and whom he/she was seen with. Included with this information is any statements made by the missing person as to his/her future plans.
  - f) Campus residence and any phone number he/she could be reached at.
  - g) List of family and friends that may be aware of the location of the student.
  - h) Contact information of the person reporting the missing student.
- 3) The responding officer and other shift personnel will conduct a search of the campus for the student and his/her vehicle. If the student cannot be found, the on-call investigator will be notified as will the Chief of Police or his designee.
- 4) The investigator will begin an inquiry into the whereabouts of the student. The investigator will notify local law enforcement agencies and place the student's name and information on the Georgia Crime Information System.
- 5) The Chief of Police will notify the President and Vice Presidents for Student Services and Business and Finance as well as the Director of Housing and Residence Life.
- 6) Unless circumstances dictate differently, the person listed by the student to be contacted after 24 hours will be notified. The person may be contacted prior to the 24 hours if warranted by the information developed by the investigator.

#### Dates and times of notifications made

The President, Vice President of Student Services and Director of Housing and Residence Life will be informed by the University Police Department after initial attempt to contact the student does not successfully establish contact or lead to information that results in actual contact being made with the student. Each will be updated by University Police as the investigation of the incident progresses. If necessary, University Marketing and Communications will be requested to assist with contacting the media for assistance.

The emergency contact listed by the student as well as any confidential contact listed under Banner will be notified as part of the investigation in attempting to establish contact with the student reported missing. In the case of a student under the age of eighteen (18) and not emancipated, the contact will be with the custodial parent. The contact will be initiated by the University of West Georgia Police Department.