

Georgia Department of Public Safety

Policy Manual

SUBJECT MISSING PERSONS RESPONSE	POLICY NUMBER 17.10
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	REVISED DATE 5/16/2024
	POLICY REVIEWED 5/16/2024

17.10.1 Purpose

To establish procedures for members of the Georgia Department of Public Safety (DPS), who may be called upon to assist local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies concerning search and rescue operations and/or missing persons.

17.10.2 Policy

It is the policy of DPS to treat all incidents involving the disappearance of any person, especially a juvenile or a person with disabilities, as being of a serious nature requiring immediate investigation.

17.10.3 Procedures

It cannot be assumed that a juvenile who has been reported as a runaway has indeed run away and will return home safely with no further consequences. It is imperative that sworn members take an aggressive role in attempting to locate any missing person, regardless of their age or circumstances.

Therefore, it is the position of the Department that all reported incidents of missing persons shall be investigated thoroughly.

- A. Upon receiving notification of a missing person, DPS shall contact the relevant local agency with jurisdiction and release the pertinent information to them. When the local agency assumes the responsibility for the search, DPS shall assist as requested.
- B. The assisting sworn member shall notify the relevant Troop Communications Center, providing as much information as possible, so that a lookout may be broadcast to all units as a "BOLO" for a missing person.
- C. When requested to assist with search and rescue operations for juveniles or persons with disabilities, members should consider the missing person's mental and physical conditions and their ability to provide for their own safety. Depending upon the missing person's situation, certain individuals shall be consulted when required (e.g., relatives, physicians, juvenile officers.)
- D. DPS will provide all reasonable assistance to local, state or federal law enforcement agencies, when requested to assist them in search and rescue operations for missing persons.

- E. The Work Unit Supervisor shall initially serve as the Department's liaison to coordinate assignments for sworn members participating in search and rescue for missing persons.
- F. Any reasonably available department resource can be utilized in an effort to locate the missing person (e.g., Aviation, SWAT, Dive Team, and ground support).
- G. The Public Information Office (PIO) or the Post PIO when required, unless the appropriate law enforcement agency assumes the responsibility, shall conduct media relations. PIO will provide whatever assistance and personnel may be needed to assist news media during a "Levi's Call" alert.