

Missing Student Notification

Operations - Health and Safety

EWU Policy 603-07

Effective: May 29, 2020

Authority: EWU Board of Trustees

Proponent: Vice President for Business & Strategy

Summary: This policy prescribes notification and procedural standards for handling reports of missing students, who reside in university housing.

Applicability: This policy applies to all students of Eastern Washington University who reside in university housing.

History: This policy replaces the previous version dated January 29, 2010. It was adopted by the EWU Board of Trustees on May 29, 2020. Housekeeping edits to position titles were made on October 21, 2025.

1. INTRODUCTION

1-1. Purpose

This policy establishes university standards and procedures for notifying law enforcement, parents or guardians, and student identified contacts when a student, who resides in university housing, is reported as missing or has been determined to be missing. This policy applies to students who reside in campus housing, including off-campus apartment units leased by the university for student residents.

1-2. Missing Person

For purposes of this policy, a student may be considered to be a "missing person" if the person's absence is contrary to his/her usual pattern of behavior and unusual circumstances may have caused the absence. Such circumstances could include, but not be limited to, a report or suspicion that the missing person may be the victim of foul play, has expressed suicidal thoughts, is drug dependent, is in a life-threatening situation, or has been with persons who may endanger the student's welfare.

1-3. Student Disclosures

At the beginning of each academic year, students who reside in campus housing will be informed of the following:

1. Students may identify a person to be contacted if they are determined to be missing (section 1.4)
2. The university will notify the University Police Department if a student is reported missing (section 2-1b); and,
3. The university is required to notify a custodial parent or guardian if a student, who is under 18 years of age and not an emancipated individual, is determined to be missing (section 2-3).

1-4. Student Disclosures

Students may register an individual to be contacted if the student is determined to be missing. Prior to occupying university housing, students will be given the opportunity to designate an individual or individuals to be contacted by

the university in the event that the student is determined to be missing (per chapter 2). A designation will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student. The missing student contact information provided will be treated as confidential, and will be used strictly for missing person purposes. Only authorized campus officials, and law enforcement officers in furtherance of a missing person investigation, may have access to the confidential contact information.

2. PROCEDURES

2-1. Reporting

- a. Any individual on campus who has information that a residential student may be a missing person should immediately notify a university official from the list below:
 1. University Police Department
101 Red Barn
609 W 7th St
Cheney, WA 99004
509-359-7676
 2. Dean of Students
301 Pence Union Building
526 5th St.
Cheney, WA 99004
509-357-7924
 3. Associate Vice President for Campus Life
104 snyamncut
1027 Cedar St.
Cheney, WA 99004
509-359-2451
- b. Anyone who is notified of a missing student must immediately notify the University Police Department. The University Police Department must be notified regardless of whether the student has registered a contact person.

2-2. Investigation and Response

Upon receipt of a report that a student may be missing, the University Police Department will investigate. If University Police determine that the student has been missing for more than 24 hours and has not returned to campus, they will initiate the notification procedures described in section 2-3. University Police will also initiate the notification procedures when a student has been missing for less than 24 hours, if circumstances clearly indicate that the student is a missing person (e.g., witnessed abduction).

2-3. Notification

Within 24 hours after officially determining that a student is missing, the University Police Department will notify the registered contact(s) for the student. The University Police Department will also notify the City of Cheney Police Department and the Spokane County Sheriff's Office that the student is missing. If the student is under 18 years old and not emancipated, the University Police Department will notify the student's custodial parent or guardian in addition to the confidential contact listed, if any, within the same 24 hours.

2-4. Campus Communications

In cases involving missing persons, law enforcement personnel are best situated to provide information to the media that is designed to elicit public assistance in the search for a missing person. Therefore, all communications regarding missing students will be handled by the University Police Department, who may consult with the university's Marketing and Communications department. All inquiries to the university regarding missing students, or information provided to any individual at the university about a missing student, shall be referred to the University Police Department.

Prior to providing the community with any information about a missing student, the Marketing and Communications department shall consult with the University Police Department to ensure that communications do not hinder the investigation.