

DEFINITIONS

- ★ “Missing Child” means a person under 18 years of age whose whereabouts are unknown to the child’s legal custodian, and the circumstances of whose absence indicate that:
 - a) The child did not voluntarily leave the care and control of the custodian, and the taking of the child was not authorized by law; or
 - b) The child voluntarily left the care and control of the legal custodian without the custodian’s consent and without the intent to return; or
 - c) The child was taken or retained in violation of the terms of a court order for possession of or access to the child; or
 - d) The child was taken or retained without the permission of the custodian and with the effect of depriving the custodian of possession of or access to the child unless the taking or retention of the child was prompted by the commission or attempted commission of family violence.

- ★ “Missing Person” means a person 18 years of age or older whose disappearance is possibly not voluntary. A “Missing Person” also includes a person of any age who is missing and is:
 - a) under proven physical or mental disability or is senile; or
 - b) missing under circumstances indicating that the missing person’s safety is in doubt; or
 - c) unemancipated as defined by the laws of this state; or
 - d) missing after a catastrophe.

MISSING PERSONS CLEARINGHOUSE
INTELLIGENCE & COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
PO BOX 4087
AUSTIN TX 78773-0450

TEXAS DEPARTMENT
OF PUBLIC SAFETY

MISSING PERSONS CLEARING- HOUSE



Toll-Free Helpline
1-800-346-3243

TEXAS MISSING PERSONS CLEARINGHOUSE

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
INTELLIGENCE & COUNTERTERRORISM DIVISION

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Article 63

Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

- ★ The Missing Persons Clearinghouse serves as a central repository of information about Texas' missing and unidentified persons. Through the Clearinghouse, information is compiled in a centralized database, providing for the exchange and dissemination of information with the aim of helping law enforcement locate missing persons and identify unidentified persons.
- ★ All Texas law enforcement agencies, upon receiving a report of a missing child/adult, shall immediately enter the name of the person into the Clearinghouse. These entries are made automatically by entering the information into the National Crime Information Center's (NCIC) Missing Person File.
- ★ Texas law enforcement agencies shall enter unidentified living/deceased into the Clearinghouse and the National Crime Information Center's (NCIC) Unidentified Person File.

SERVICES PROVIDED

★ Toll-Free Helpline 1-800-346-3243

- a) An incoming toll-free telephone line for parents, law enforcement agencies, and others to report information about missing persons and unidentified living/deceased
- b) Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

★ Missing Persons Internet Website www.dps.texas.gov

The MPCH website features pictures and descriptions of missing and unidentified persons as well as access to the MPCH forms that are utilized by both law enforcement and the general public. To access an 8.5" x 11" printable poster of a missing or unidentified person, simply click on the photograph or name.

The website allows for timely posting and is continuously updated. It offers the most current information pertaining to missing and unidentified persons. For nationwide information, this website provides a link to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children Internet website at www.missingkids.com.

***If Internet access is not available,
contact the Clearinghouse for a bulletin.***

★ Brochures

Educational and informational brochures regarding missing and runaway children

★ Networking

- a) Serve as a liaison between the general public and law enforcement agencies in Texas
- b) Serve as a liaison between Texas law enforcement agencies and law enforcement agencies in other states, usually through the clearinghouse in other states
- c) Maintain contact with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children
- d) Coordinate efforts with the Texas Education Agency in identifying missing children who may be enrolled in Texas public schools

★ Education and Public Awareness

Educate law enforcement agencies and the general public about the Clearinghouse and its functions through presentations

A missing person report should be filed with the local law enforcement agency having jurisdiction over the place where the individual was last seen or the place where the individual was last known to reside.

Under Texas law there is no waiting period before a record of a missing person can be filed. The law requires that a law enforcement agency immediately enter a record of a missing child into the National Crime Information Center's (NCIC) Missing Person File (Article 63.009, Code of Criminal Procedures).