



## POLICY

**Title:** Missing Student

### Policy Statement

The University of Vermont is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students and other community members and to providing a prompt response and appropriate action when the University has been made aware that a student may be missing.

### Reason for the Policy

The University has adopted this Policy in compliance with 20 U.S.C. 1092(j), section 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, with respect to students residing in University Housing, and to provide a mechanism to report and respond to notice of a missing student.

Although this policy is limited to students who live in University Housing, if a member of the University community has reason to believe that any student is missing and makes a report, efforts will be made to locate the student to determine their state of health and well-being. University Police Services will assist local authorities in their investigation of an off-campus missing student.

### Applicability of the Policy

The requirements of this policy apply to all University administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

### Definitions

**Emergency Contact:** The person, designated by a student, to be contacted in the event of an individual health or safety emergency.

**Missing Student:** A student is considered missing when UVM Police Services has determined the student to be missing. Concerns that may give rise to a missing student investigation may consist of but are not limited to:

- Medical or health related problems;
- The student has not regularly attended classes and has not been seen elsewhere;
- A UVM official has made an inquiry of concern;
- A parent, roommate, suitemate, or apartment-mate of the student has reported such disappearance due to irregular contact with the student;
- Residential staff believes that a student may be missing based upon absence from University Housing or other information received by staff.

While an unexplainable absence of more than 24 hours gives rise to heightened concern, a student may be determined to be missing even if the student has been absent for a period of less than 24 hours.

Missing Student Contact: The person, designated by the Missing Student, who will be notified in the event a residential student is ever determined to be a Missing Student. Only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers, in furtherance of a missing person investigation, may have access to this information. Missing student contact information is separate and distinct from emergency contact information, which may be used by authorized campus officials in a variety of circumstances. Students may choose to identify the same individual for both their Missing Student Contact and more general emergency contact. In the absence of a Missing Student Contact, the student's Emergency Contact will be used.

University Housing: Residential units that Residential Life has oversight of, which includes on campus housing at the University of Vermont, and off campus housing that is managed and controlled by Residential Life at the University of Vermont.

## Procedures

### **Designation of Missing Student Contact**

At the beginning of each academic year, the University will notify all residential students of the right to identify an individual to be contacted by the University in the event that the student is deemed missing pursuant to this Policy ("Missing Student Contact"). Missing Student Contact Information will be maintained confidentially and only be used by authorized University personnel in the event that the student is determined to be missing pursuant to this Policy. Additionally, the University will notify the custodial parent(s) or guardian of a student who is under the age of 18 and not emancipated in the event such a student is determined to be missing.

Students should minimally update their Missing Student Contact information at the beginning of each academic year, and are solely responsible for the accuracy of the information provided and updating the information when needed. Students are also encouraged to notify their Missing Student Contact that they have been designated as such.

All enrolled students, regardless of their living circumstances, should also designate an Emergency Contact, which may or may not be the same as their Missing Student Contact to be used in the event of an individual health or safety emergency. Every student (resident and non-resident) may enter or change a designated Emergency Contact or Missing Student Contact at any time by updating their contact information through MyUVM.

### **Reporting Concerns about Missing Students**

University officials, including all University administrators, faculty and staff, are required to notify University Police Services if they obtain information that a student is or may be missing. Students are urged to promptly report concerns directly to the University of Vermont Police Services if a student is missing or thought to be missing, as well as to Residential Life if the student is living in University Housing. In the event the student does not reside in University Housing, University Police Services will notify and work with appropriate local law enforcement.

## Missing Student Investigation and Contact Protocol - Residential Students

Upon notification that a residential student is or may be missing, University Police Services shall respond through the exercise of reasonable professional judgment to investigate and make a determination as to whether the student is missing. University Police Services may notify the Vice Provost and Dean of Students Office ("VPDOS") upon receipt of a missing student report. When receiving such report, both VPDOS and University Police Services will attempt to determine whether the student is, in fact, missing. Among other steps that may be taken, depending on the circumstances, reasonable measures may include, but are not limited to, checking the student's University Housing unit, class schedule and attendance records, contacting friends, faculty or other known associates of the student, locating the student's vehicle, reviewing a student's CATcard access records, and contacting the student's cell phone.

If, within 24 hours of the report, University Police Services determines that a residential student is missing, Police Services shall notify VPDOS. VPDOS shall notify the Director of Residential Life, or designee, and any other appropriate University officials. No later than 24 hours after a residential student is determined to be missing, VPDOS shall notify the student's Missing Person Contact. In addition, custodial parent(s) or legal guardians of an un-emancipated residential student under the age of 18 shall also be notified by VPDOS.

University Police Services and VPDOS shall continue to coordinate their efforts to locate the Missing Student following these notifications. When the Missing Student is located, VPDOS will contact the student to offer any appropriate support, as well as the Missing Person Contact and custodial parent(s) / legal guardian, if applicable, to confirm the student has been located.

## Missing Student Investigation and Contact Protocol - Non-Residential Students

Although the requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act are limited to students who live in University Housing, University Police Services will assist local authorities in their investigation of an off-campus Missing Student.

University Police Services will work with VPDOS to determine appropriate notifications if local authorities determine a non-residential student to be missing.

## Contacts

<b>Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this policy should be directed to the following (in accordance with the policy elaboration and procedures):</b>	
<b>Title(s)/Department(s):</b>	<b>Contact Information:</b>
University Police Services	(802) 656-3473
Vice Provost and Dean of Students Office	(802) 656-3380
Residential Life	(802) 656-3434

## Forms/Flowcharts/Diagrams

- None

## Related Documents/Policies

- None

## Regulatory References/Citations

- 20 U.S.C. 1092(j), section 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008

## Training/Education

Training will be provided on an as-needed basis as determined by the Approval Authority or the Responsible Official.

## About This Policy

<b>Responsible Official:</b>	Vice Provost for Student Affairs	<b>Approval Authority:</b>	President
<b>Policy Number:</b>	2.22.3	<b>Effective Date:</b>	June 10, 2019
<b>Revision History:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• V.2.22.2 approved March 2, 2015</li><li>• V.2.22.1/V.3.4.17.1 approved March 3, 2010</li></ul>		