

Naples City Police Department

Code Veronica multi-jurisdictional Policy and Response Criteria

332.1 Definition: (Child) For this policy a Code Veronica response will be activated and steps followed on all missing children up to the age of 13. This response will also be activated for children and adults whose mental capacity has only developed to the age of 13.

332.2 Purpose and goal: Child abductions, although rare, cannot be taken lightly in the first stages of the investigation. Typically when a child is declared abducted it is several hours from the initial call of the parent or guardian notifying authorities that child cannot be found. This policy not only puts into motion a detailed, organized and documented effort immediately, but also gives officers practice to perfect these procedures, investigative ideas and to achieve a joint multi-agency effort to eliminate mistakes or at least minimize them by joining forces and sharing resources for when the time comes a child is actually abducted.

332.3 Agencies involved: Naples City Police Department, Uintah County Sheriff's Office, Vernal City Police Department, Utah Highway Patrol, Adult Probation and Parole, Utah Department of Public Safety Vernal Consolidated Dispatch, Uintah Basin Animal Control.

332.4 Operation: When dispatch or any officer receives a complaint from a parent, guardian or a person in charge of a child that has not been seen for any amount of time but is being reported as missing or "can't find", dispatch or the officer receiving the report, will advise dispatch that a Code Veronica alert be issued and officers will respond accordingly.

332.5 The dispatcher will acquire as much applicable information as instructed by dispatch policy and the criteria set up by the National Missing and Exploited Children pertaining to a missing child call. The dispatcher will send an alert tone over the main operational channel stating Code Veronica and giving the address followed by all relevant information such as clothing, time frame, circumstances etc.

332.6 All available officers including detectives and administration will immediately activate their in-car video cameras if so equipped, regardless of location and respond to the designated location given by the dispatcher.

332.7 OIC responsibility: The first officer arriving at the address regardless of agency and what jurisdiction the call originated in, will assume the Officer in Charge (OIC) role, until otherwise replaced by another officer, and this notification must be relayed by radio to dispatch and will state to dispatch that they are assuming the OIC position, and dispatch repeating this change on the radio to all officers. The OIC will be the only communication to dispatch during the incident in regard to exchanging information or asking for additional resources etc. All information must be relayed to the OIC and then to dispatch in order to keep the progression of the investigation smooth and without assumptions.

332.8 The OIC will follow the Missing Child Checklist and assign the first three arriving officers to search the house or immediate location where the child was last seen. The OIC will then assign the next arriving officer to the parent or guardian to gather more information and fill out the Child Information Sheet in the checklist. That officer will as soon as possible relay gathered information from the parent or guardian to the OIC to be relayed to dispatch if needed. The officer assigned to the parent(s) or guardian(s) will stay with the parent(s) or guardian(s) until relieved or the child is found in a safe condition.

332.9 The OIC will then assign the next arriving officer as a perimeter supervisor. (See Section 332.10.) All other responding officers will be directed to the perimeter supervisor for instruction.

332.10 Perimeter Supervisor responsibility: Based on incident circumstances (i.e. age of child, duration of time last seen, possible transportation the child may have and all other pertinent information,) the OIC will place the perimeter supervisor accordingly. The Perimeter Supervisor will stay in one spot designated by the OIC and assign arriving officers in pairs to strategically and in a thorough manner make contact with neighbors and persons on the street, etc. The Perimeter Supervisor will be responsible to make sure a complete door to door and area search is done outside the initial search area or address of incident.

332.11 Paired officer's responsibilities: The paired officers, in a through method will make contact with all neighbors and persons on the street documenting in writing date, time, person's name and any response given to the officer when inquiring about the child.

332.12 When the child has been found safely regardless of the point of time in the Code Veronica response, the responsible jurisdiction will make a written officers report documenting the incident and all related information for later reference if needed.

332.13 When the investigation deems the possibility that an actual child abduction has occurred, all involved officers will release all video and written information as well as officers reports to the responsible investigating jurisdiction as soon as possible.

