

Missing Student Notification Policy

The risk that a student might go missing is a concern for all educational institutions. A report of a missing student can come from a variety of sources, including family, friends, or fellow students. Because of our concern for student safety, and in accordance with federal law, we have established this missing student notification policy and procedure.

A. Scope of Policy

1. Non-Residential Students:

All students at The John Marshall Law School live off campus and are thus non-residential. Concerns about a student who is or may be missing should be reported to Campus Security. But the JMLS Security Department's scope of authority is limited to the campus. Therefore, when a JMLS student is believed to be missing, the reporting person also should immediately notify local law enforcement authorities.

2. Study-Abroad Students:

For JMLS students on school-sponsored study-abroad programs, report concerns about potentially missing students both to local law enforcement authorities and to the JMLS onsite Resident Director. Students traveling in JMLS study-abroad programs will be provided with instructions about notifying the Resident Director about multi-day travel away from the program housing location. The Resident Director will follow up in an attempt to locate any student who fails to timely return from a planned trip or otherwise appears to have gone missing. The follow up will include contacting the U.S. Embassy and law enforcement officials as necessary. Concerns about JMLS students studying abroad at another university in a program not sponsored by JMLS should be reported first to local law enforcement and the appropriate official at that university, then to the JMLS Dean's Office.

3. Students Traveling for Law-School Activities:

On occasion, students travel with JMLS-sponsored activities, such as competitions, professional organization activities, and the like. In those instances, the faculty or staff member in charge of the trip is responsible for collecting confidential emergency information and enforcing procedures for monitoring the whereabouts of students. If a student appears to have gone missing, the faculty member will notify local law enforcement and JMLS as necessary.

B. Reporting Procedures

1. Any faculty or staff member outside JMLS Security who believes a student is missing, or who receives a report that a student is or may be missing, should report that concern to JMLS Security. In addition, faculty members should contact the Registrar's Office when a student has missed more than two consecutive class sessions without notice or other contact.
2. JMLS Security will initiate an investigation and will attempt to obtain all reasonably necessary information about the missing student. Information typically will include descriptions of the student and what the student was wearing when last seen; any individuals with whom the student may be; vehicle description; information about the student's habits and patterns; and any concerns about the student's physical or mental well-being. JMLS Security will obtain a photo from JMLS records, if available, along with the student's class schedule and emergency contact information from the Registrar's Office.
3. JMLS Security will conduct a quick, but thorough, search of campus properties and will contact the Information Technology Department to determine that last time the student's ID card was used and when the student last logged onto email or other JMLS systems. JMLS Security will also review security videos as needed. JMLS Security will notify the Dean and the Student Support and Emergency Team (SSET), and—with the Dean—will contact the student's faculty members, and known friends and acquaintances to try to determine the student's whereabouts.
4. If JMLS Security determines from the report (e.g., that someone witnessed an abduction) that the student is a missing person, or when the search efforts described above do not locate the student, JMLS Security will contact the appropriate law-enforcement agency to report the student as a missing person. This contact will occur as soon as possible, and not later than 24 hours after determining a student in the U.S. is missing. The law enforcement agency will then take charge of the investigation.
5. No later than 24 hours after determining that a student is missing, the Law School—through the Dean unless otherwise designated—will notify the student's emergency contact (for students 18 and over) or parent/guardian (for students under 18).

C. Possible Missing Student Outcomes

Multiple outcomes are possible in the case of a missing student. The three most likely possibilities are:

1. **After a search, the student is safe and well:** In this situation, JMLS Security will contact the individual who reported the student as missing and give that person basic assurances without disclosing confidential information.
2. **After a search, the student is in difficulty:** JMLS Security will obtain as much information as possible about the student's difficulty, offer assistance as appropriate, and refer the matter to the SSET for further assessment and support. If the student is in any immediate danger, JMLS Security will contact law enforcement.
3. **After a search, the student does not respond:** If all efforts to contact a student have been exhausted and the law school has been unable to verify that the student is safe, JMLS Security will notify law enforcement and the student's emergency contact (for students 18 and over) or the parent/guardian (for students under 18).

D. Campus Communications

1. **In General:** In cases involving missing persons, law enforcement personnel are typically best suited to provide information to the media that is designed to elicit public assistance in the search. Therefore, unless otherwise approved by the Dean, communications regarding missing students generally will be handled by outside law enforcement authorities. Internal communication to the JMLS community (other than Security Alerts issued by the Public Safety Department) will generally be handled by the Dean, or by the Office of Marketing and Communications with the Dean's approval.
2. **Outside Inquiries:** All outside inquiries to the JMLS regarding missing students, or information provided to any individual at JMLS about a missing student, will be referred to the Office of Marketing and Communications. The Office of Marketing and Communications, in collaboration with JMLS Security and the Dean, will determine whether to handle or refer to law enforcement any such inquiries and information. Before providing the JMLS community with any information about a missing student, the Office of Marketing and Communications will consult with JMLS Security, the Dean, and local law enforcement authorities as needed to ensure that communications do not hinder any investigation.

3. **Responding to Other Students:** It is often possible that other students will be anxious about the missing student. In such circumstance, JMLS Security, in collaboration with the Dean, will coordinate education about personal safety; to the extent appropriate, let students know what effort is being made to locate the missing student; and provide emotional support and counseling referrals as warranted.

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