

# Vermont

TITLE TWENTY. INTERNAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY  
PART 5. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
CHAPTER 112. **MISSING PERSONS**

20 V.S.A. § 1820 (2004)

## § 1820. Definitions

As used in this chapter:

(1) "**Missing person**" means an individual whose whereabouts is unknown and who is either physically disabled, mentally disabled or an unemancipated minor.

(2) "Unemancipated minor" means an individual under the age of majority who has not married and who resides with a parent or legal guardian.

## § 1821. **Missing person** complaint

(a) A **person** filing a **missing person** complaint with a law enforcement agency shall provide at a minimum the following information:

(1) the name, age, address, and identifying characteristics of the **missing person**;

(2) the length of time the **person has been missing**;

(3) the name of the complainant and the relationship of the complainant to the **missing person**;

and

(4) any other relevant information provided by the complainant or requested by the law enforcement agency.

(b) All law enforcement **personnel** on active duty shall be notified forthwith that the **person is missing**.

## § 1822. **Missing person** report

Upon receiving a complaint, the law enforcement agency shall forthwith prepare a **missing person** report. The report shall include all information contained in the **missing person** complaint and any information or evidence gathered by a preliminary investigation, if one was made.

## § 1823. Dissemination of **missing person** report

(a) Upon completion of the report, a copy shall forthwith be forwarded to the commissioner of public safety, all law enforcement agencies within the jurisdiction where the **missing person** lives or was last seen and other law enforcement agencies that can reasonably be expected to be involved in any investigation.

(b) A copy of the report shall also be forwarded to:

- (1) all law enforcement agencies to which the complainant reasonably requests the report be sent;
- (2) any law enforcement agency requesting a copy of the **missing person** report; and
  - (1) all media in the region in which the **missing person** lives, or was last seen, unless such disclosure would impede an ongoing investigation or unless otherwise requested by the complainant.

§ 1824. Searches for **missing persons**

- (a) A law enforcement agency shall commence a search for a **missing person** as soon as a report is received.
- (b) Any rule specifying an automatic time limitation before commencing a **missing person** investigation shall be invalid.

§ 1825. **Missing person** complaints regarding unemancipated minors

If a **missing person** complaint involves an unemancipated minor, including a runaway **child** as defined in section 1311 of Title 13, the law enforcement agency shall transmit the report, as soon as it is complete, to the department of

§ 1827. Commissioner of public safety; cooperation

The commissioner of public safety shall cooperate with and support all law enforcement agencies in this state in matters relating to **missing persons**. When necessary to protect a **missing person** from harm, the commissioner shall coordinate local and state efforts to search for and rescue the **missing person**.

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§ 1828. Vermont Amber alert program

The department of public safety shall establish the Vermont Amber alert program to aid in the identification and location of abducted children. The department shall administer the program pursuant to the following:

- (1) A law enforcement agency which verifies the abduction of a child shall notify the department of public safety.
- (2) The department shall establish a procedure for verifying the need to issue an Amber alert.

(3) The department of public safety shall issue an alert over the Vermont emergency alert system if:

(A) a law enforcement agency notifies the department of the abduction of a child;

(B) there is sufficient information about the child or the person suspected of abducting the child that an immediate broadcast might help locate the child; and

(C) the child is in danger of imminent death or serious bodily harm.

(4) An alert issued under this section shall be sent to the Federal Communications Commission's designated state emergency alert system broadcaster in Vermont. Participating radio and television stations shall broadcast the alert at intervals established by the department. The alert shall include all information which the department determines may assist in the safe recovery of the abducted child and instructions explaining how a person with information related to the abduction may contact a law enforcement agency.

(5) A law enforcement agency which locates a child who is the subject of an alert issued under this section shall immediately notify the law enforcement agency which requested the Amber alert.

(6) An alert issued under this section shall be canceled:

(A) if the department notifies the Federal Communications Commission's designated state emergency alert system broadcaster in Vermont that the child has been located; or

(B) at the expiration of a notification period specified by the department.

(8) A radio or television station that accurately broadcasts information pursuant to this section shall not be liable for civil damages as a result of the broadcast of such information.

TITLE THREE A.  
EXECUTIVE  
APPENDIX  
EXECUTIVE ORDERS  
CHAPTER 20. INTERNAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

3A V.S.A. 82-90 (2004)

E.O. 82-90. (No. 82-90) [Designation of Vermont State Police as State Clearinghouse for Missing and Exploited Children]

WHEREAS, the Missing Children's Assistance Act, passed by the United States Congress in 1984, established a National Center for Missing and Exploited Children; and

WHEREAS, the National Center is designed to help in establishing, maintaining and providing support information networks for state clearinghouses on missing and exploited children; and

WHEREAS, a state clearinghouse is necessary in order to maintain records, disseminate information on reported missing children and to assist local, state and federal agencies as well as family members on cases relating to missing and exploiting children; and

WHEREAS, each state clearinghouse serves as a state based extension of the national effort to provide training, education, and public information relating to missing and exploited children; and

WHEREAS, the Vermont General Assembly by enactment of Title 20, chapter 112, has mandated that the Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety cooperate with and support all law enforcement agencies in matters relating to missing persons, and when necessary in order to protect a missing person from harm, to coordinate all efforts to search for the missing person.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Madeleine M. Kunin, by virtue of the powers vested in me as Governor of the State of Vermont, do hereby designate the Vermont State Police, Department of Public Safety, as the state clearinghouse for missing and exploited children. The Vermont State Police shall contract with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and coordinate with other state clearinghouse agencies in order to receive and provide training, education, and public information relating to missing and exploited children.

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