



2.4.4 Missing Student Notification Policy

This policy is established by the University of San Diego in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 and applies to all students enrolled at the University of San Diego.

For the purpose of this policy, a student may be considered to be missing if the student's absence from campus is contrary to his or her usual pattern of behavior and the university has reason to believe that unusual circumstances may have caused the absence. Such circumstances may include, but not be limited to, a report or suspicion that the student may be a victim of foul play; the student has expressed suicidal thoughts or may be in a life threatening situation; the student has exhibited behavior suggesting that the student is unable to care for himself or herself; or if the student is overdue returning to campus and is not heard from after giving a specific return time to family or friends.

If a member of the university community has reason to believe that a student is missing, or receives a report of a missing student, that individual must immediately contact the university's Department of Public Safety at (619)260-7777. Public Safety will collaborate with the Division of Student Affairs, other university officials, and/or the appropriate law enforcement agency to make an effort to locate the student and determine his or her state of health and well-being. Public Safety will gather pertinent information about the student from the reporting person or others. Such information may include but is not limited to the student's description, cellular phone number, clothes last worn, vehicle description, information about the student's health or well-being, or an up-to-date photograph.

University officials also will endeavor to determine the student's whereabouts by contacting friends, associates, faculty members, and/or employers of the student, and/or determining whether the student has been attending classes, scheduled organizational or academic meetings, and work. If the student is an on-campus resident, Public Safety may make a welfare entry into the student's room. If the student resides off-campus, Public Safety may enlist the aid of the neighboring police agency having jurisdiction.

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 from the campus for a period of less than 24 hours.

The missing student notification policy applies to any student, whether or not they reside in an on-campus student housing facility, regardless of their age, status, or whether they have registered a confidential emergency contact person.

Designation of Confidential Emergency Contact

Students are given the opportunity through the university's online portal to designate an individual to be contacted by the university no later than 24 hours after the student is determined to be missing. The designation will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student. This contact is strictly for missing person notifications but can be the same as their general emergency contact. The contact information will be confidential and will be accessible only to authorized university officials or law enforcement personnel in furtherance of a missing person investigation.

Notifications

For residential students and for students who live off-campus, notices will be made to each of the following individuals within 24 hours of Public Safety's determination that the student is missing:

- The student's **designated confidential emergency contact** (if any). If the student has not registered a confidential emergency contact person, the university will notify their general emergency contact.
- If a student is **under age 18 and not emancipated**, the student's **parent or guardian**. In addition to notifying a designated confidential contact, the university is required by law to notify the student's custodial parent or guardian if the student is under age 18 and is not emancipated at the time he or she is determined to be missing.
- **Local law enforcement personnel**. Regardless of whether the student has identified a contact person, is above the age of 18, or is an emancipated minor, Public Safety will notify the local law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction in the area within 24 hours of the determination that the student is missing, unless the local law enforcement agency was the entity that made the determination that the student is missing.

Follow Up

After the student has been located, Public Safety will attempt to verify the student's state of health, well-being, and intention of returning to campus. When and where appropriate, a referral may be made to the Counseling Center, the Student Health Center, and/or a community provider.

If the search for the missing student is deemed unsuccessful, the Division of Student Affairs, Public Safety, and other necessary university officials will decide what further action(s) should be taken.

(November 11, 2024)