

# Missing Student Policy

## Scope

This policy applies to students who reside in campus housing.

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the college's response to reports of missing students, as required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

For purposes of this policy, a student will be considered missing, if a roommate, classmate, faculty member, family member or other campus person has not seen the person in a reasonable amount of time. A reasonable amount of time may vary with the time of day and information available regarding the missing person's daily schedule, habits, punctuality and reliability. Individuals will be considered missing immediately if their absence has occurred under circumstances that are suspicious or cause concerns for their safety. If the initial report that a person is missing is made to a department other than Campus Safety, the employee receiving the report will ensure that Campus Safety is contacted immediately.

## Procedure for Designation of Emergency Contact Information

### Students 18 and Above and Emancipated Minors

Students will be given the opportunity during each semester registration process to identify a general emergency contact person. Students residing in on-campus housing have the option to identify confidentially a separate person to be contacted by Colby-Sawyer in the event that the student is determined to be missing for more than 24 hours. Students are not required to designate a separate individual for this purpose, and if they choose not to do so, then Colby-Sawyer will assume that they have chosen to treat their general emergency contact as their missing person contact. Students who wish to identify a confidential missing person contact should complete the Missing Student Contact Form. A student's confidential missing person contact information will be accessible only by authorized campus officials and by law enforcement in the course of an investigation and will not be disclosed outside of a missing person investigation. The contact designee will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student.

### Students Under 18

In the event a student who is not emancipated is determined to be missing, pursuant to the procedures set forth below, the college is required to notify a custodial parent or guardian of such disappearance within 24 hours.

## Official Notification Procedures for Missing Persons

Any individual on campus who has information that a residential student may be a missing person must notify Campus Safety as soon as possible. Note: In order to avoid jurisdictional conflicts when a commuter student is believed to be missing, the reporting person should immediately notify local law enforcement authorities. Campus Safety will assist outside agencies with these investigations as requested.

Campus Safety will gather information about the residential student from the reporting person and from the student's acquaintances (description, clothes last worn, where student might be, who student might be with, vehicle description, information about the physical and mental wellbeing of the student, an up-to-date photograph, class schedule, etc.). Appropriate campus staff will be notified to aid in the search for the student.

If the above actions are unsuccessful in locating the student within four hours of the report or it is apparent immediately that the student is a missing person (e.g., witnessed abduction), Campus Safety will contact the New London Police Department to report the student as a missing person, and the local law enforcement agency will take over the investigation.

No later than 24 hours after determining that a residential student is missing, the vice president for student development and dean of students or their designee will notify the emergency contact (for students 18 and over\*) or the parent/guardian (for students under 18) that the student is believed to be missing.

\*Contact is contingent upon the correct emergency or missing student contact information being made available by the student.

## Campus Communications About Missing Students

In all cases of a missing student, where the student is declared missing by Campus Safety after an initial investigation, the law enforcement agency conducting the subsequent investigation will provide information to the media that is designed to obtain public assistance in the search for any missing student. The Office of Marketing & Communications is available to provide consultation on communication with the investigating law enforcement agency. Any media requests to the college will be directed to Marketing & Communications. Prior to providing the Colby-Sawyer College community with any information about a missing student, Marketing & Communications will consult with Campus Safety and law enforcement authorities to ensure that communications do not hinder the investigation.