

## Missing Resident Policy

Original Effective Date: January 12, 2015

Updated Effective Date: January 15, 2024

### *Purpose & Context*

To provide direction to staff when a resident is determined to be missing or has eloped according to the definitions below and is incapable of taking appropriate action for self-preservation under emergency conditions.

### *Definition*

In **Assisted Living**, “Elopement” means when a secured dementia unit resident leaves the secured dementia unit, including any attached outdoor space, without the level of staff supervision required by the resident's most recent nursing assessment.

In **Care Centers**, “Elopement” means a situation in which a resident leaves the premises or a safe area without the site’s knowledge and supervision, if necessary. A situation in which a resident with decision-making capacity leaves the facility intentionally would generally not be considered an elopement unless the site is unaware of the resident’s departure and/or whereabouts.

### *Procedure*

1. When a resident is believed missing, by any staff member, the following steps are promptly implemented:
  - a. Notify the Person in Charge (PIC)
    - i. The PIC to implement the missing resident plan as follows.
  - b. Determine if the resident is away from the building and/or with family, friends, or a staff escort. Check with other staff on duty, communication logs, sign out log, contact family, etc.
  - c. If unable to determine where the resident is, notify other staff in the building and promptly search the facility & premises.
    - i. **Contact all departments** to meet in a central location and dispatch a search. Search all rooms (resident rooms, apartments, commons areas, etc.) and grounds.
    - ii. PIC assign individual to notify the Clinical Administrator and the Campus Administrator.
    - iii. **Prepare information about the resident:** a description of resident, obtaining a picture of the resident from the Medication Administration Record or resident chart. Try to determine if someone knows what the resident was wearing at the time of disappearance. Prepare a list of likely places resident may frequent. Consider the previous history of resident behavior or special clues to assist with locating the resident. Record the time that the resident was discovered missing and when/where last seen.
    - iv. **Person in Charge (PIC) will assign staff to specific areas of the building.** Give them a central phone number to call back to and a number at which they can be contacted or send with a walkie-talkie.  
All resident and/or employee areas must be checked at least twice.
    - v. All public areas, including stairwells, grounds and parking lots must be checked at least twice.
    - vi. Await a report from all those searching the areas.

## Missing Resident Policy (cont).

2. If missing resident is not found following an expedient search (approximately 30 minutes), call 9-1-1 and provide:
  - a. Name of resident
  - b. Date/time resident was last seen
  - c. Name of primary contact / designated representative
  - d. Description including any identifying characteristics and last known clothing.
  - e. Provide a photo of the resident upon request
3. PIC assign someone to update the resident's designated representative of the situation and steps taken to locate the resident.
4. PIC assign someone to update PHS Management and Services.
5. Search efforts will remain ongoing until the resident is found or until authorities advise to discontinue search proceedings. Search efforts will be expanded to include other people from Presbyterian Homes and Services, including Management and Services staff.
6. The Campus Administrator or management services staff members are the only staff authorized to speak with the media. Consider use of the media for community search/awareness (see Media Policy).
7. When the resident is located, update all parties involved including the police, management staff, nurse on-call, family, physician, etc.
8. Complete an incident report. Complete notification to appropriate state agency if appropriate.
9. Upon return to the campus, the resident should be thoroughly examined for injuries/exposure by a nurse. If necessary, the attending physician and/or ambulance should be called.
10. a. Assisted Living: The RN will complete an assessment including approaches to decrease risk of elopement in the future; and will appropriately update any other necessary documentation such as service plans, individual abuse prevention plans, etc. The incident will be thoroughly investigated by an interdisciplinary team.
  - b. Care Center: The Resident Services/Household Coordinator or designee will complete an assessment including approaches to decrease risk of elopement in the future; and will appropriately update any other necessary documentation such as service plans, etc. The incident will be thoroughly investigated by an interdisciplinary team.

### *References/Notes*

Minnesota Rules – 4659.0110 Missing Resident Plan

Assisted Living Statutes – 144G.42 Business Operation, Subd. 10 Disaster Planning and Emergency Preparedness Plan

Policy also located in the [PHS Emergency Operations Preparedness Plan](#)

[Appendix PP SOM -](#)

State Chapters if definition included (i.e., IA Chapter 58)

***See Next (2) Pages for Missing Resident Checklist***

# Missing Resident Checklist

When a resident is believed missing, by any staff member, the following steps are promptly implemented:

- Notify the Person in Charge (PIC)
- Learn if resident is away from building. Record name of who assigned. Check the following:
  - Sign out log
  - Communication log
  - Activities schedule
  - Nurse - to learn if resident is away on appointment
  - Family (write down name/number here):
  
- **Contact all departments** to meet in a central location and dispatch a search.
- Give one phone number to all searchers to text once area is clear. Phone:
- Search (record who is searching where) **CHECK EACH AREA TWICE**
  - Resident rooms
  - Apartments
  - Commons areas
  - Grounds
  - Garage
  - Stairwells
  - Parking lots
  - Fitness/therapy/pool
  - Other
  
- PIC assign individual to notify the Clinical Administrator and the Campus Administrator. Time:
- **Prepare information about the resident**
  - Description of resident
  - Picture of the resident from the Medication Administration Record or resident chart
  - Description of what resident is wearing:
  
  - List of places resident may frequent and who is checking.
  
  - Time resident last seen:
  - Time discovered missing:

**If missing resident is not found following an expedient search (approximately 30 minutes), call 9-1-1 and provide:**

- a. Name of resident.
  - b. Date/time resident was last seen.
  - c. Name of primary contact / designated representative.
  - d. Description including any identifying characteristics and last known clothing.
  - e. Provide a photo of the resident.
- PIC assign someone to update the resident's designated representative of the situation and steps taken to locate the resident.
  - PIC assign someone to update PHS Management and Services.

## **Missing Resident Checklist (cont).**

- When the resident is located, update all parties involved including:
  - Police
  - Management staff
  - Staff
  - Family
  - Physician
- Complete an incident report.
- Complete notification to appropriate state agency if appropriate.