

# Runaway Youth

## 402.1 PURPOSE

### Agency Content

To establish a uniform, legally compliant, and trauma-informed response protocol for identifying, location, reporting, and supporting children and nonminor dependents (NMDs who are missing from foster care, including those at risk of or experiencing Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE), with specific provisions for Indian children under the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

## 402.2 DEFINITIONS

### Agency Content

- (a) Missing from Foster Care (WIC 16501.35(c)(1)): A child is considered missing when:
  - 1. Their whereabouts are unknown to the Probation Department; or
  - 2. They are located in a court-unapproved setting that may pose a risk, considering the child's age, mental/physical condition, and intelligence.
- (b) Missing Nonminor Dependent (NMD) (WIC 16501.35(c)(2)): An NMD is considered missing only if:
  - 1. They did not voluntarily leave care, or
  - 2. They are at risk of substantial harm based on the totality of circumstances.

## 402.3 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS AND TIMELINE

### Agency Content

- (a) Determination of Missing Status. Upon learning that a youth is missing:
  - 1. Assess whether the child meets the definition of "missing" per WIC 16501.35.
  - 2. For NMDs, assess voluntariness and risk of harm
  - 3. Timeline: within one hour of receipt of information
- (b) Mandatory Notifications (within 24 hours). Notify the following individuals/agencies immediately, and no later than 24 hours:
  - 1. Parents/Indian custodians, unless rights terminated or limited
  - 2. Legal Guardian, unless rights terminated or limited
  - 3. Attorneys for Parents/Guardians, if court notification not limited
  - 4. Youth's Attorney (WIC 317(c)/634, always
  - 5. CASA, if appointed
  - 6. Court of Jurisdiction, always
  - 7. Tribe/Tribal Representative, if the youth is, or may be, an Indian child
  - 8. Siblings (10+), if not contrary to their safety/well-being

# Plumas County Probation Department

## Procedures Manual

### Runaway Youth

---

9. Local law enforcement, always
  10. Tribal law enforcement, if Indian child is missing
  11. INCLUDE CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE PROBATION OFFICER AND SUPERVISOR IN ALL NOTICES
- (c) Reporting to NCMEC and Law Enforcement. If the youth meets CSE criteria or is considered high risk:
1. Report NCMEC
    - (a) Phone: 1-800-THE-LOST
    - (b) Online: <https://cmfc.missingkids.org/reportit/Account/LogOn>
  2. Include the following in reports:
    - (a) Recent photo
    - (b) Description: height, weight, sex, race/ethnicity, hair, eye color
    - (c) Endangerment factors (e.g., CSE risk, medications, suicidal tendencies)
    - (d) Tribal name and status under ICWA, if applicable
    - (e) Note: CDSS recommends all youth missing from care be reported to NCMEC, regardless of CSE status.

#### 402.4 ACTIVE EFFORTS TO LOCATE MISSING YOUTH

##### Agency Content

- (a) Initial and ongoing search efforts. All search attempts must be documented in CWS/CMS contact notes and include:
  1. Contact with parents, relatives, teachers, attorneys, tribal reps, and peers
  2. Home visits to potential locations
  3. Police welfare checks (if necessary)
  4. Social media checks (if authorized)
  5. Consultation with internal Runaway/Missing Youth Liaisons
  6. Searches of public databases
  7. Engagement of Tribe (for Indian children)
- (b) Update search efforts at each status review hearing and case plan update.

#### 402.5 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR INDIAN CHILDREN

##### Agency Content

- (a) Per ACL 24-18 and WIC 224.1(f)(3):
  1. Notify Tribe within 24 hours of learning the child is missing
  2. Collaborate with the Tribe to:

## *Runaway Youth*

---

- (a) Assist with locating the child
  - (b) Plan return and future placement
  - (c) Engage in Child and Family Team (CFT) discussions
- 3. Document active efforts in case record and coordinate culturally appropriate supports.

### **402.6 RESPONSE UPON LOCATING THE YOUTH**

#### **Agency Content**

#### **Return and Stabilization Plan**

When a youth is located:

- (a) Arrange return to placement or alternative safe setting.
- (b) Debrief the youth using the Missing/Runaway Youth Debriefing Tool (ACIN 1-13-17).
  - 1. Must occur within 3 business days
  - 2. Allow youth time to decompress before debrief
  - 3. Ideally conducted by a trusted adult of the youth's choosing
- (c) Engage the CFT to assess:
  - 1. Placement suitability
  - 2. Trauma supports needed
  - 3. Any new services required
- (d) Update Integrated Practice CANS within 30 days if trauma or conditions have changed
- (e) Assess for CSE involvement and refer to services if applicable

If youth refuses to return

- (a) Attempt face-to-face contact for safety checks
- (b) Hold CFT meeting to explore support options
- (c) Develop a youth-led plan for safe return when ready
- (d) Maintain ongoing supportive contact

### **402.7 HARM REDUCTION STRATEGY**

#### **Agency Content**

#### **Preventative Measures**

Develop individualized, youth-informed harm reduction safety plans that include:

- (a) Emergency contacts and safe adults
- (b) Youth-preferred safe places

# Plumas County Probation Department

## Procedures Manual

### *Runaway Youth*

---

- (c) Social media handles
- (d) Emergency supplies (hygiene kits, bus passes, etc.)
- (e) Check-in protocols while missing

#### Engagement while missing

- (a) Maintain non-punitive, supportive communication
- (b) Use youth's preferred communication channels
- (c) Coordinate with CFT and avoid over-contacting
- (d) Reassess safety risk continually
- (e) If danger suspected, notify law enforcement

### **402.8 CSE-SPECIFIC PROCEDURES (PC 11166)**

#### **Agency Content**

For youth identified as at-risk of or victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation:

- (a) Document CSE risk/status in CWS/CMS and relevant files
- (b) Ensure appropriate trauma-informed services
- (c) Train all relevant staff in identifying and supporting CSE youth
- (d) Maintain communication with NCMEC and law enforcement post-report

### **402.9 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Agency Content**

- (a) Probation Officer: Primary locator, notifier, documenter, support planner
- (b) Supervisor: Oversight, ensure timeliness, approve plan for return
- (c) Runaway Liaison: Support search and re-engagement efforts
- (d) Tribal representative: Collaborate on Indian youth cases

### **402.10 DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Agency Content**

All efforts and reports must be documented in CWS/CMS, including:

- (a) Missing youth alerts
- (b) All notifications (date/time/recipient)
- (c) Search efforts and contact attempts
- (d) Debriefing outcomes
- (e) CSE risk assessments
- (f) Tribal engagement activities (if applicable)

### *Runaway Youth*

---

- (g) Updated case plan and CANS (if required)
- (h) Refer to Attachment A for detailed data entry guidance

#### **402.11 PROTOCOL REVIEW AND UPDATES**

##### **Agency Content**

- (a) Review annually
- (b) Revise as needed: To reflect legal updates, community input, and best practices
- (c) Stakeholder engagement required: Including tribes, youth with runaway experience, and local runaway/homeless youth providers
- (d) Reach out to local Continuum of Care for assistance (CSOC).

#### **402.12 APPENDICES**

##### **Agency Content**

See attachment: [ACL 25-67 AB 2108 Runaway youth with CWS.CMS Data Entry Instructions.pdf](#)

See attachment: [SPECIAL INCIDENT REPORT.pdf](#)

See attachment: [Substitute Care Provider Incident Report.pdf](#)

See attachment: [Special Incident Report - Runaway Addendum.pdf](#)

See attachment: [Safety and Support Plan.pdf](#)

See attachment: [Runaway youth debrief form.pdf](#)