

Missing Person Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for the College's response to reports of missing residential students as required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008. For purposes of this policy, a Coastal Alabama Community College residential student may be considered to be a "missing person" if the person's absence is contrary to his/her usual pattern of behavior and unusual circumstances may have caused the absence. Such circumstances could include, but not be limited to, a report of suspicion that the missing person may be the victim of foul play, has expressed suicidal thoughts, is drug dependent, is in a life threatening situation or has been with persons who may endanger the student's welfare. It is the policy of the Coastal Alabama Community College Police Department to actively investigate any report of a missing person(s) as defined. There is no waiting period before the commencement of an investigation and procedures will be governed by federal, state and local laws.

I. Procedures for designation of emergency contact information

- Residential students age 18 and above and emancipated minors: Student will be given the opportunity during each semester registration process to designate an individual or individuals to be contacted by the College no more than 24 hours after the time the student is determined missing in accordance with the procedures set forth below. A designation will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student.
- Residential students under age 18: Students will be given the opportunity during each semester registration process to designate an individual or individuals to be contacted by the College no more than 24 hours after the time the residential student is determined missing in accordance with the procedures set forth below. A designation will remain in effect until changed or revoked by the student. A student's emergency contact can be updated in the Registrar's Office or via the student's online self-service portal at anytime during attendance.

II. Official notification procedures for missing persons

- Any individual on campus who has information that a residential student may be a missing person must notify Coastal Alabama Police as soon as possible.
- Coastal Alabama Police will gather all essential information about the residential student from the reporting person and from the student's acquaintances (description, clothes last seen wearing, where student might be, who student might be with, vehicle description, information about the physical and mental well-being of the student, an up-to-date photograph, and class schedule, etc.). Appropriate Coastal Alabama staff will be notified to aid in the search for the student. If the student is determined missing, the Coastal Alabama Police will issue a Regional Welfare Alert for the missing person through the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Further investigatory measures will be taken or additional notifications made based upon the circumstances of the individual case.
- If the above actions are unsuccessful in locating the student, or it is immediately apparent that the student is a missing (e.g., witnessed abduction) person, the Coastal Alabama Community College Police will contact the appropriate local law enforcement agency to report the student as a missing person and request assistance as needed.
- No later than 24 hours after determining that a residential student is missing, the Dean of Enrollment Management, or designee, will notify the emergency contact (for students 18 or older) or the parent/guardian (for students under the age of 18) that the student is believed to be missing. All inquiries to Coastal Alabama Community College regarding missing students, or information provided to any individual at the College about a missing student, shall be referred to the Coastal Alabama Community College Police immediately.