

## Step guide to missing or absent persons



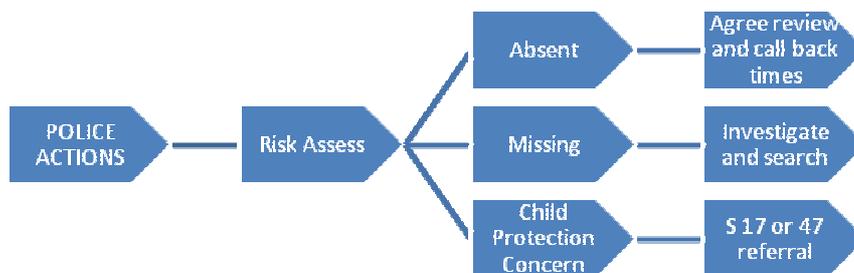
This is the initial moment that someone's whereabouts is considered to be unknown, regardless of the circumstances.



The parent or carer is expected to make reasonable enquiries at this time to establish where the person may be. This would include checking obvious places where they might be, asking friends, etc. In circumstances of immediate risk of harm, the police should be contacted immediately.



When reasonable enquires have been made and there is still no trace of the person and there are concerns for their well-being, a report should be made to the police.



The initial assessment must determine the circumstances of the disappearance and make an assessment of the level of risk, including checks of police records.

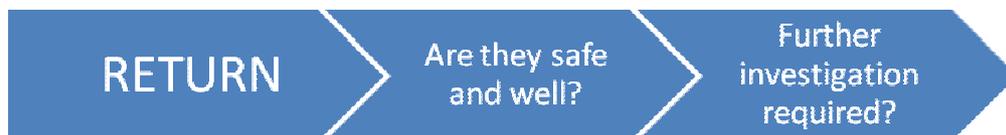
If the absence category is deemed appropriate, this must be recorded and a review process that includes actions to be taken and timescale agreed with the caller. All reports of absence must be considered as an ongoing situation that has the potential to escalate into a missing person report or adult/child protection response.

If the person is deemed to be missing, an investigation and search must be commenced in accordance with ACPO Guidance and force procedures.



Supervisors must take responsibility for all risks, including absent and missing persons and confirm that cases have been correctly categorised. This responsibility sits with the Inspector or equivalent in the control room or call centre, or the response or neighbourhood Inspector depending on force structures.

All reports must be kept under review to ensure that they are being responded to and resourced appropriately.



When a person is located or returns, the investigation does not end until the circumstances of their absence are understood. In either case the police must be satisfied that they are safe and well and, in the case of a missing person, that a return interview is arranged or undertaken. It is also important to consider any wider issues that may be the cause of their disappearance and whether any further action or engagement with other agencies is necessary.



The role of the Missing Person Co-ordinator or someone performing these functions is essential. They should have oversight of all reports to identify those that need to be referred to other agencies or otherwise dealt with in a multi-agency forum. This oversight can also identify trends and patterns relating to individuals or more collectively and indicate other forms of risk or offending.

**\*\*For further details of these processes, please see ACPO Guidance documents on Missing Persons.\*\***