



INVESTIGATIVE CHECKLIST

for Investigative Officers

The Investigative Officer Checklist below is a resource to facilitate effective communication and documentation of valuable information in response to reports of endangered missing or abducted children. Investigative processes are crucial to all parties involved in the search and recovery of a missing or abducted child. This checklist presents specific techniques for handling non-family abductions, family abductions, and runaways, and important considerations for obtaining information and transitioning the incident from patrol first responders. Investigative officers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with this checklist prior to any reports of missing or abducted children.

- 1. Obtain a briefing from the first responding officer(s) and other on-scene personnel. Verify the accuracy of all descriptive information and other details developed so far during the preliminary investigation.**

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ TIME COMPLETED: _____

2. Conduct initial neighborhood/area canvassing operations using a standardized approach and questionnaire to create consistency of approach and questions, and thorough documentation, by all officers involved.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____

3. Obtain a brief, recent history of family dynamics.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____

4. Identify and further investigate reasons for any conflicting witness and/or interviewee information, working toward resolution of the conflicting elements.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____

5. Collect article(s) of the child's clothing for scent-tracking purposes. Review and evaluate all available information and evidence collected. Secure the child's latest medical and dental records.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ TIME COMPLETED: _____

6. If applicable, contact landfill/ transfer station management and request they delay or at least segregate garbage and dumping containers from key investigative areas in cases where it is suspected there may be imminent danger to the missing child.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ TIME COMPLETED: _____

7. Develop an investigative plan to focus the investigation and ensure it remains on track.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ TIME COMPLETED: _____

8. Conduct a criminal history background check on all principal suspects, witnesses, and participants in the investigation.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ TIME COMPLETED: _____

9. Determine what additional resources and specialized services are required to support the investigation.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ TIME COMPLETED: _____

- 10. Report all case information to NCMEC and work with your communications department or assigned investigators to update case details with NCMEC as the investigation progresses.**

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____

- 11. Prepare and update bulletins for local law enforcement agencies, the state missing children clearinghouse, the FBI, and other appropriate agencies.**

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____

- 12. Establish a phone hotline for receipt of tips and leads. Consider establishing an email address and other methods of electronically receiving leads as well.**

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____

13. Establish a leads management system to prioritize leads and help ensure each one is reviewed and followed up on.

NOTES:

DATE COMPLETED: _____ *TIME COMPLETED:* _____