Missing Residential Student Notification Policy and Procedures

The following procedures have been developed to provide required notifications within twenty-four (24) hours after the time a campus resident student is deemed to be missing. This document contains the official notification procedures of Southern Polytechnic State University in accordance with the requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, Section 485 (j).

**Registration Procedure**

1) Residential students will be informed annually that each student has the option to identify a person designated as a “confidential contact” to be notified by the University not later than twenty-four (24) hours after the time the student is determined to be missing by the designated officials authorized to make that determination, specifically the University Police. The “confidential contact” may be a person designated by the student in addition the emergency contact listed with the Southern Polytechnic State University Registrar’s Office and the Department of Housing and Residence Life. Should the student not declare a “confidential contact”, the emergency contact on record will be notified.

2) Students who are under age eighteen (18) and are not emancipated, the University will notify the legal parent or guardian in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act. These students may also declare an additional, separate “confidential contact”.

3) Notification of this policy will be made directly to all students residing in University Housing annually and be made available in conjunction with the “Annual Crime Report” that provides information in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Security Crime Statistics Act.

4) All students attempting to register for University Housing will be notified of this policy at the time they complete the Online Housing Application and Housing Contract. During the Online Application Process, specific campus housing emergency related contact information will be captured, and the student will have the opportunity to provide a separate “confidential contact”. All information submitted Online during the housing registration process will remain of file and be considered accurate until the student voluntarily provides different information. Update contact information may be emailed to the Department of Housing and Residence Life at housing@spsu.edu.
**Missing Person Procedures**

A student is determined to be missing when a report is made to the University Police at Southern Polytechnic State University and its personnel determine the report to be credible. Credibility may be established if any of the following circumstances are verified:

- a. No one has been able to contact the student in the last 24 hours even though reasonable efforts have been made by phone, email, and in-person attempts to do so.
- b. Evidence indicates a criminal act may have taken place. (If this occurs, the 24 hour waiting period will be discarded)
- c. Based on a reliable source, information exists that the student is in danger due to physical issues, mental illness, or consumption of drugs or alcohol. (If this occurs, the 24 hour waiting period will be discarded);
- d. Information exists that the person may be suicidal. (If this occurs, the 24 hour waiting period will be discarded).

**Investigative Follow-up**

1) To report a student missing, a complainant should call University Police at 678-915-5555 and inform the dispatcher that you wish to file a missing person report.

2) An initial incident report will be taken by a University Police Officer. Included in the report will be the following information:

- a. Name and physical description of the missing person
- b. Does the missing person own a car or have access to one
- c. Physical and mental condition of the missing person
- d. Any situations or events that may have contributed to the disappearance
- e. The last time the student was seen and whom he/she was seen with. Included with this information is any statements made by the missing person as to his/her future plans.
- f. Campus residence and any phone number he/she could be reached at.
- g. List of family and friends that may be aware of the location of the student.
- h. Contact information of the person reporting the missing student.
3) The responding officer and other shift personnel will conduct a search of the campus for the student and his/her vehicle. If the student cannot be found, the on-call investigator will be notified as will the Chief of Police or his designee.

4) The investigator will begin an inquiry into the whereabouts of the student. The investigator will notify local law enforcement agencies and place the student’s name and information on the Georgia Crime Information System.

5) The Chief of Police will notify the Vice President(s), the Dean of Students, the Director of Auxiliary Services, as well as the Director of Housing and Residence Life in a timely manner.

6) Unless circumstances dictate differently, the person listed by the student to be contacted after 24 hours will be notified. The person may be contacted prior to the 24 hours if warranted by the information developed by the investigator.

7) The Vice President(s), the Dean of Students, the Director of Auxiliary Services, as well as the Director of Housing and Residence Life will be informed by the University Police Department after initial attempt to contact the student does not successfully establish contact or lead to information that results in actual contact being made with the student. Each will be updated by University Police as the investigation of the incident progresses. If necessary, the Department of Public Relations will be requested to assist with contacting the media for assistance.

8) The emergency and “confidential contact” listed by the student on the StarRez Housing Application Portal, as well as any emergency contact listed with the Southern Polytechnic State University Registrar’s Office will be notified as part of the investigation in attempting to establish contact with the student reported missing. In the case of a student under the age of eighteen (18) and not emancipated, the contact will be with the custodial parent. The contact will be initiated by the University Police with the assistance of the Department of Housing and Residence Life and the Registrar’s Office.