

# Public Safety Communications Administrative Policy/Procedure

**Date:** August 1, 2005

**Approved:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Communications Center Director

**Subject:** Amber Alert Protocols for Public Safety  
Communications

**Background:** The attached policy, approved by the San Mateo County Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Association provides guidance to local law enforcement agencies when considering activation of the Amber Alert Network.

## **I. PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the Amber Alert Network is for the safe return of an abducted child by establishing an effective collaboration between the community, the media, and law enforcement. In recognition of the critical factors that timeliness and citizen assistance play in the apprehension of child abductors, this protocol is established in order to ensure the timely broadcast of critical information throughout a targeted area to enlist the assistance of the media and the public in recovering the child. Additionally, this protocol will ensure interagency cooperation and assistance during the investigation of an abduction.

Public Safety Communication's role in the activation of an Amber Alert is a support function, unless activated by the public safety agencies we directly serve.

## **II. PROTOCOL SCOPE**

The scope and design of this protocol is the simultaneous and rapid notification-alert of both law enforcement resources and the media. San Mateo County Law Enforcement may also simultaneously activate the local Child Abduction Protocol pursuant to established policy.

#### **A. Notification and alert**

Alert and notification includes activating local authorities as well as some or all components of the Amber Alert Plan. The scope of activation for these components is local, regional and statewide. Components of this plan include:

1. (EAS) Emergency Alerting System (commercial, local radio and television broadcasting)
2. (EDIS) Electronic Digital Information System (providing local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies with a direct computer link to media outlets and other law enforcement agencies (in SMC, CLETS activates this system).
3. TRAK System (Technology to Recover Abducted Kids) – via a local or direct service agency
4. (CMS) Changeable message highway display signs
5. San Mateo County Law Enforcement Allied Agencies and other governmental agencies (i.e., Fire, Parks, Ambulance)

B. PSC personnel who receive the request from an allied agency or a direct service agency will complete the attached form in an effort to efficiently obtain necessary information.

C. PSC will page PSC Management of the event and the on-duty Supervisor will assess staffing to ensure communications can be effectively managed.

### **III. ACTIVATION CRITERIA**

San Mateo County Law Enforcement Agencies requesting the Amber Alert Protocol will ensure the following activation criteria is met:

- Where there is a confirmed abduction of a child under the age of 18, or an individual with a proven mental or physical disability; and
- There is reason to believe the victim is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death; and
- There is enough information available to disseminate to the general public that could assist in the safe recovery of the victim and/or apprehension of the suspect.

### **IV. PROTOCOL ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

As a matter of information, prior to protocol activation, the originating agency should enact or consider the following in order to comply with SEMS and NIMS protocols:

- A. Establish the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage the incident
- B. Activate an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The originating agency may activate their own EOC or may request to use the County's EOC.
- C. Assign staff to positions in the ICS System, which may include but are not limited to:
  1. Incident Commander
  2. Public Information Officer
  3. Liaison Officer
  4. Operations Section

5. Planning/Intelligence (Investigations)
  6. Logistics (Staging)
- D. Identify and coordinate the activation of a “tip or hot line”. This telephone line may be at the originating agency or the originating agency may request the County Office of Emergency Services to activate the reserved “1-800” number at the County EOC. This number is in place and has been reserved for use during any local or county emergency.
1. Once a number is identified and ready for publication, the originating agency must ensure that staffing is in place to receive high call volume.

## V. **ACTIVATION**

Notification-alert may occur in the following fashion:

- A. Notification-Alert: To activate the Bay Area Amber Alert Plan, **the originating agency may handle all notifications themselves**. Should the originating agency or one of PSC’s direct service customers request (assistance with) activation of the Amber Alert Protocol, PSC personnel will take the following steps:
1. **CHP** - County Communications will act as the single point of contact for the originating agency to the CHP Dispatch Center in Benicia, ENTAC (Emergency Notification Tactical Alert Center), via the established (County and CHP) direct line or at the specified ENTAC telephone number.
  2. **EAS** - Emergency Alerting System. If the originating agency authorizes activation of the EAS, County Communications will advise ENTAC of a single or multi-region or statewide EAS activation.
  3. **EDIS** – Electronic Digital Information System - to activate this system, the originating agency may transmit all relevant data via a CLETS broadcast. They may also transmit images, graphics and data directly to the EDIS web-site ([www.EDIS.ca.gov](http://www.EDIS.ca.gov)) electronically via computer.
  4. **CMS** - Changeable Highway Signs - County Communications will advise ENTAC with all information requested to be programmed on to the highway signs.
  5. **Allied Agencies** - All other law enforcement and governmental agencies will be notified by County Communications who will ensure that the "be-on-look-out" information is broadcast either via radio or telephone. This includes but is not limited to:
    - All Fire Departments
    - All Paramedic Transports
    - Peninsula Humane Society
    - County and State Parks

## VI. **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT**

In order to manage the scope of the incident and its impact to local services and the community, the following should be considered:

- A. The originating agency is in charge of all personnel at the scene of the investigation, including those responding from other agencies.

- B. Should the originating agency exhaust their field resources, the I/C has the option of authorizing resources (from staging) to assume their community's patrol function.
- C. It can be anticipated that persons responding under this protocol will work a maximum of a 12-hour shift.
- D. When the Incident Command and the assigned Plans Officer determines that control of the incident requires a larger number of personnel than those dispatched by a Phase II, they may consider a Phase III operation. This will mobilize additional units from county agencies to respond to the scene or staging area of the incident. Advancing the Tactical Alert to Phase IV or V and activating additional operational periods will remain at the discretion of the Incident Commander and the designated Plans Officer.
- E. Officers selected for the sustained deployment-investigative process should be officers who have proven investigative skills.

## **VII. DEMOBILIZATION**

Once de-escalation has been declared, a Demobilization Officer will be assigned so that a safe, orderly and efficient demobilization and de-escalation of the event takes place. The following steps are recommended:

- A. The assigned demobilization officer will develop a plan that will effectively and accurately identify:
  - unit being released
  - unit work hours
  - unit's release priority
  - unit agency and title
  - time unit arrived and was released
- B. The Demobilization officer will ensure all sections/units understand their responsibilities for demobilization.

## **VIII. AFTER-ACTION**

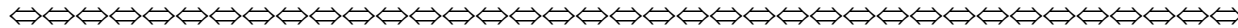
PSC personnel will track all activity throughout the event and submit the CAD document to their assigned shift supervisor, who in turn, will submit to the Law Communications Program Manager.

ATTACHMENT "A"

**SAN MATEO COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT  
COUNTY ABDUCTION PROTOCOL (CAP)**

**USER WORKSHEET**

Date/Time of Request: \_\_\_\_\_  
Authorizing Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_



**Suspect Information**

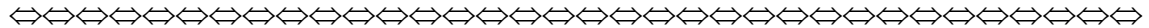
Want/Violation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location of Abduction: \_\_\_\_\_  
Time of Occurrence: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vehicle Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Color / Year / Make / Model / Body Style / Lic# / Descriptors)  
Last Seen (direction travel) \_\_\_\_\_

Suspect #1: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/ Ethnicity / Gender / Adult or Juvenile / Approximate age or DOB)  
**Descriptors:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Height / Weight / Hair / Eyes / other Physical Descriptors / Last Seen Wearing/Weapon)

Suspect #2: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/ Ethnicity / Gender / Adult or Juvenile / Approximate age or DOB)  
**Descriptors:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Height / Weight / Hair / Eyes / other Physical Descriptors / Last Seen Wearing/Weapon)

Victim#1: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/ Ethnicity / Gender / Adult or Juvenile / Approximate age or DOB)  
**Descriptors:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Height / Weight / Hair / Eyes / other Physical Descriptors / Last Seen Wearing)

Victim#2: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name/ Ethnicity / Gender / Adult or Juvenile / Approximate age or DOB)  
**Descriptors:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Height / Weight / Hair / Eyes / other Physical Descriptors / Last Seen Wearing)



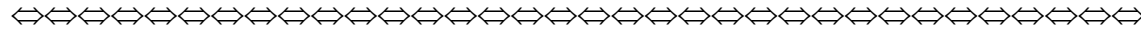
**County Mutual Aid Response**

- Has the CAP Code been activated? Yes  No
- Has a countywide Code 666 been activated? Yes  No
- Fill in each box with name of assigned personnel and cell phone number if possible:
- Operational Period Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

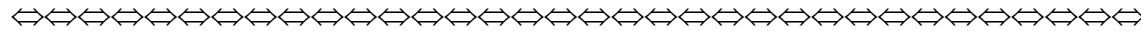
**SAN MATEO COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT  
CHILD ABDUCTION PROTOCOL (CAP) CHECKLIST**

**I. PROTOCOL CRITERIA**

- 1. Is this a confirmed abduction? Yes  No
- 2. Is child 17 or younger or an individual with mental/physical disability? Yes  No
- 3. Is the person in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death? Yes  No
- 4. Is there information, if disseminated to the public, that would assist in recovery of victim? Yes  No
- 5. Has a County Mutual Aid response been activated? Yes  No



**IF NO TO ANY OF THE LISTED PROTOCOL CRITERIA, THIS DOES NOT MEET AMBER ALERT CRITERIA. HOWEVER, YOU MAY ACTIVATE MISSING PERSONS, TRAK AND/OR EDIS NETWORKS AT THIS TIME.**



**II. PROTOCOL ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE**

- EOC activated? Location: \_\_\_\_\_
- EOC ICS Command Staff: Fill in each box with name of assigned personnel and cell phone number if possible:

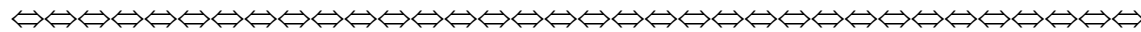
Incident Commander: _____	Ext or Cell _____
• Incident (Scribe) _____	
Public Information Officer: _____	Ext or Cell _____
Liaison Officer: _____	Ext or Cell _____
• Agency Representative: _____	Ext or Cell _____
Safety Officer: _____	Ext or Cell _____

Tip or Hot-line number: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff in place for hot line? Yes  No

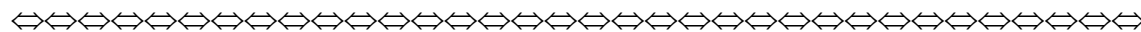
**III. PROTOCOL ACTIVATIONS:**

**Alert and Notifications**

- Has the CAP Mask been completed and transmitted? Yes  No
- Has County Communications been notified for Alert and Notification activation's? Contact them and answer: Yes  No
- Do you want EAS (Emergency Alert System-radio/TV) activated? Yes  No 
  - Bay Area Region?  Other regions?  Statewide?
- Do you want EDIS (Emergency Digital Information System)? Yes  No
- Do you want CHS (Changeable Highway Signs) activated? Yes  No 
  - Bay Area Region?  Other regions?  Statewide?



Have you developed a TRAK Flyer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you broadcast the TRAK Flyer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made the entry into MUPS?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you want a Deputy District Attorney to respond?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>



**'ATTACHMENT B'**

**CALIFORNIA CHILD SAFETY AMBER NETWORK  
San Mateo County  
Child Abduction Protocol (CAP) Decision Tree**

