

Policy Title: Missing Student Policy

Policy Statement

In compliance with § 485(j) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, it is the policy of Georgia College to investigate any report of a missing student who resides in on-campus housing.

Definitions

Missing Student

A student is determined to be missing when a report comes to the attention of a Georgia College official and the Department of Public Safety determines the report to be credible. Circumstances may include, but are not limited to establishing that:

- a) A student is out of contact after reasonable efforts to reach that student by phone calls, emails, and/or in-person attempts to establish contact;
- b) Circumstances indicate an act of criminality involved, even if twenty-four (24) hours have not elapsed;
- c) Circumstances indicate that a student may be in danger, even if twenty-four (24) hours have not elapsed;
- d) Circumstances become known that medicine dependence may threaten life or health, even if twenty-four (24) hours have not elapsed; or
- e) Existence of a physical / mental disability indicates that the student's physical safety is in danger, even if twenty-four (24) hours have not elapsed;

Keywords

Missing Student
Public Safety
Emergency Contact
Confidential Contact

Reason for Policy

To provide a plan to inform students who reside in University Housing about the Georgia College policy governing required notifications within twenty-four (24) hours after the time a student is deemed to be missing, in accordance with § 485(j) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and to provide Georgia College with a set of procedures and guidelines for reporting and investigating such an event.

Proposed Outcomes

That all students know of the existence of the option to designate a confidential contact.
That the offices responsible for reporting and investigating such an event have clear procedures and guidelines.

Applicability of the Policy

This policy affects all students who reside in University Housing at Georgia College, the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Student Affairs, and University Housing.

Related Policies

None

Procedures

Information Procedure

Students will be informed each academic year that each student, age 18 or above, may designate a confidential contact to be contacted by Georgia College in the event the student is determined to be missing. The confidential contact may be a person designated by the student in addition to the emergency contact listed with the Office of the Registrar. Students who are under age eighteen (18) and are not emancipated will be informed each academic year that the institution is required to notify the custodial parent no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the time the student is determined to be missing.

Students shall be informed that Georgia College officials will notify the Department of Public Safety immediately upon determining the student is missing. Such notification shall occur no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the time the missing determination is made.

Registration Procedure

A student may register a confidential contact during the first two weeks of each semester by filing a form (see Appendix A) that is available at the Office of Student Affairs and/or University Housing. The confidential contact may be a person designated by the student in addition to the emergency contact listed with the Office of the Registrar.

Each student who files a confidential contact registration form is solely responsible for the accuracy of the contact information and the updating of information should the confidential contact person and/or number change. A student may update information by filing a new form with the Office of Student Affairs and/or University Housing.

Missing Student Procedure

Any person receiving a report regarding a missing student shall forward such report to the Department of Public Safety, immediately.

Any official missing persons report relating to a student requires that the Department of Public Safety must be notified immediately to investigate and make a determination that a student who is the subject of a missing report has been missing for more than 24 hours and has not returned to campus.

During the investigation, the following information should be established and documented in a police incident report:

a) Name and location / contact information of the person reporting the missing student;

- b) Name / vital information of the student reported to be out of contact;
- c) Nature of the circumstances supporting the determination that the student is out of contact (time /date last seen or in contact with);
- d) Avenues to establish that the student remains out of contact (failure to respond to phone, email and in-person attempts to contact by a Georgia College official; parental notice or notice from reporting person outside the University; establishment of lapse of time of class attendance, lapse in affiliation with roommates and friends, or use of Georgia College facilities / services; concern of incident of criminality or safety, etc.); and
- e) Dates and times of notifications made.

The Executive Director of University Housing (if the incident occurs within University Housing) and the Dean of Students will be informed by the Department of Public Safety after the officer's initial attempt to contact the student does not successfully establish contact or leads to information that results in actual contact being made with the student. In no circumstances should the notification to the Dean of Students after an initial report to the Department of Public Safety exceed twenty-four (24) hours in time. During business hours, the Dean of Students may also involve other Georgia College faculty, staff or administrators to assist in establishing contact or avenues to pursue contact. The Dean of Students will be notified by the Department of Public Safety as the investigation of the incident progresses.

The emergency contact listed with the Office of the Registrar as well as any confidential contact listed with the Office of Student Affairs 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 Department of Public Safety.

Contact one of the following offices if you have reason to believe a student is missing:

Office	Phone	Contact
Department of Public Safety	478-445-4400	Director of Public Safety
Office of Student Affairs	478-445-5169	Dean of Students
University Housing	478-445-5160	Executive Director of University Housing

Responsibilities for Offices

The responsibilities each party has in connection with the Missing Student Policy are:

Party	Responsibility
Office of Student Affairs	Provide Confidential Contact Form upon request by student.
University Housing	Annual notification and providing Confidential Contact Form to students upon request.
Department of Public Safety	Policy and procedure implementation.

Notification

Notification will be made by University Housing, annually. In addition, the Annual Security Report, which provides information in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Security Crime Statistics Act, will be published on the Department of Public Safety's website at <http://www.gcsu.edu/publicsafety/annualreport.htm>.

Forms

Confidential Contact Registration Form

Contacts

Maureen Horgan, Chair, RPIPC, 478-445-7319, Maureen.horgan@gcsu.edu
Qiana Wilson, Associate General Counsel, 478-445-2037, Qiana.wilson@gcsu.edu
Director of Public Safety, Department of Public Safety, 478-445-5800, scott.beckner@gcsu.edu
Dean of Students, Office of Student Affairs, 478-445-5169, andy.lewter@gcsu.edu
Executive Director of University Housing, University Housing, 478-445-5160, larry.christenson@gcsu.edu

Approval Date

RPIPC

University Senate

University President

Website Address for This Policy

<http://www.gcsu.edu/publicsafety/notification.htm>

Related Documents/Resources

None

Appendices

Appendix A. Georgia College Confidential Contact Form

Supporting Documents

Missing Student Notification Protocol



**Georgia College Missing Student Policy
Confidential Contact Registration Form**

Please print legibly. The confidential contact information is intended to be utilized as a contact person to be notified by Georgia College no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the time a student, age 18 or older, is determined to be missing. The confidential contact is a person designated in addition to the emergency contact listed with the Office of the Registrar. The emergency contact person, supplied upon enrollment to Georgia College, may also be contacted by Georgia College. For students who are below age 18 and not emancipated, the custodial parent will be notified.

Name of Student:

Residence Address: _____

Phone or Cell: _____

Person designated as Confidential Contact: _____

Contact number(s): (Home) _____

(Cell) _____

(Alt.) _____

(Please confirm that these are valid numbers.)

I understand the information supplied above is to be utilized in case it is established that I am a missing student, and the contact information may be utilized in establishing that circumstances support a missing persons report. I understand I am solely responsible for the accuracy of the information of my confidential contact and for updating this information as needed.

NOTE: *You are encouraged to notify the person that you have identified as your confidential contact that you have provided Georgia College their contact information and they will be contacted in the event you are deemed missing.*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Return completed form to one of the following:
Office of Student Affairs – 206 Parks Hall (Campus Box 027)
University Housing – 007 Sanford Hall (Campus Box 060)