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of VIRGINIA**

STU-003: Notifications Regarding Students Missing from University Housing

Date: 03/01/2010 Status: Final Policy Type: University

Contact Office: [Dean of Students \(Office of the\), Police Department \(University\)](#)

Oversight Executive: Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Applies To: Academic Division.

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Reason for Policy:

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA) requires the University to establish a missing student notification policy and related procedures for students living in University housing.

Definition of Terms in Statement:

- **Emancipated Individual:**
A person less than 18 years of age who has been declared by a court to be independent of his or her parents.
- **Student (1):**
A person enrolled in one or more courses at the University of Virginia.
- **University Housing:**
Residential living areas managed by the University's Housing Division.

Policy Statement:

The University of Virginia will provide every student living in University housing the opportunity and means to identify an individual to be contacted in an emergency, including whenever the University determines that a student is missing. Contact information provided by a student will be registered confidentially, accessible only to authorized University officials and may not be disclosed except to law enforcement personnel in furtherance of a missing person investigation.

In accordance with the procedures established under this policy, within 24 hours after a student

living in University housing has been reported missing and the student is not known to have returned to University Grounds or otherwise been located, the Dean of Students or his/her designee will notify the individual the student has designated as his/her emergency contact. If the missing student is under 18 years of age and not an emancipated individual, the Dean of Students or his/her designee also will notify the student's custodial parent or guardian.

The University Police Department shall investigate all reports of missing students and will notify and cooperate with other law enforcement agencies, as necessary, to further the investigation.

Procedures:

Any individual who believes a student living in University housing may be missing should contact the Office of the Dean of Students (ODOS) or the University Police Department (UPD). Whichever office first receives the report will notify the other office of the report. Upon receiving such report, both ODOS and UPD will attempt to determine whether the student is, in fact, missing. Among other steps that may be taken depending on the circumstances:

- ODOS will attempt to contact the student through all reasonable and available means.
- UPD will investigate the validity of the missing person report and manage the information according to its established investigative standards.
- UPD may notify appropriate University personnel and seek their aid in the investigation (e.g., ODOS Residence Life staff, Counseling and Psychological Services staff, etc.).
- UPD will contact any other appropriate law enforcement agencies as necessary to further its investigation.

If, within 24 hours of the report, UPD is unable to locate the missing student and the student is not known to have returned to University Grounds or otherwise located, UPD will notify ODOS and ODOS shall take the following action(s):

- The Dean of Students or his/her designee will promptly notify the individual the student has designated as his/her emergency contact and document the date and time of the notification.
- If the missing student is under 18 years of age and not an emancipated individual, the Dean of Students or his/her designee also will notify the student's custodial parent or guardian and document the date and time of the notification.

UPD and ODOS will coordinate their efforts to locate the missing student. The Dean of Students will notify the Vice President and Chief Student Affairs Officer and update him/her on the status of the investigation as appropriate.

When the missing student is located, the Dean of Students or his/her designee will contact the student to offer any appropriate support, as well the emergency contacts and/or parents to confirm the student has been located.

If the initial investigation is unsuccessful in locating the missing student, UPD will continue to investigate according to established police procedures. The Dean of Students will decide what further action, if any, should be taken by ODOS.

Major Category: Students and Student Programs

Approved by, Date: Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, 03/01/2010

Revision History: Updated 8/27/13.

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