

Public Alerts

317.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for alerting the public to important information and soliciting public aid when appropriate.

317.2 POLICY

Public alerts may be employed using the Emergency Alert System (EAS), local radio, television and press organizations and other groups to notify the public of incidents, or enlist the aid of the public, when the exchange of information may enhance the safety of the community. Various types of alerts may be available based upon each situation and the alert system's individual criteria.

317.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

317.3.1 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the Reno Police Department should notify their supervisor, Watch Commander or Investigations Division Supervisor as soon as practicable upon learning of a situation where public notification, a warning or enlisting the help of the media and the public could assist in locating a missing person, apprehending a dangerous person or gathering information.

317.3.2 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

A supervisor apprised of the need for a public alert is responsible to make the appropriate notifications based upon the circumstances of each situation. The supervisor shall promptly notify the Chief of Police, the appropriate Captain and the Public Information Officer when any public alert is generated.

The supervisor in charge of the investigation to which the alert relates is responsible for the following:

- (a) Updating alerts
- (b) Canceling alerts
- (c) Ensuring all appropriate reports are completed
- (d) Preparing an after-action evaluation of the investigation to be forwarded to the Captain
- (e) Ensuring all appropriate notifications are completed to participating members of the Statewide Alert System (SAS) including, but not limited to:
 1. Media outlets
 2. Other communication centers established by the Department of Public Safety (DPS)
 3. Organizations that provide information relating to crimes to residents through the use of Internet-based technology
 4. Any other public or private organizations that participate in the SAS

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317.4 AMBER™ ALERTS

The Nevada AMBER Alert is a voluntary partnership among law enforcement agencies and broadcasters to assist in the search for and safe return of abducted children (NRS 432.340).

317.4.1 AMBER ALERT CRITERIA

This department may activate an AMBER Alert when (NRS 432.370):

- (a) The Department confirms that the child has been abducted.
- (b) The child is in danger of serious physical harm or death.
- (c) The Department has sufficient descriptive information about the child or the person who is suspected of abducting the child, or other pertinent information, to warrant immediate broadcast of the information.
- (d) Absent extenuating circumstances that indicate the AMBER Alert broadcast would endanger an abducted child, the AMBER Alert should be activated within two hours of the abduction or as soon as possible after the abduction is discovered.

There is no mandate for activation of the SAS for the Safe Return of Abducted Children (NRS 432.200).

317.4.2 AMBER ALERT ACTIVATION REGIONS

The Watch Commander or Investigation Supervisor will determine the area of coverage for the activation. Activations may cover a county, region, state or multiple states. Nevada is divided into three regions and two sub-regions of broadcast coverage:

- **Region 1** - Western Nevada/Eastern California
- **Region 2** - Southern Nevada/Inyo County, California, Arizona
- **Region 3** - Eastern Nevada
- **Sub-Region 4** - Winnemucca
- **Sub-Region 5** - Ely

Activating personnel should consider that the nature of the crime of child abduction can involve wide areas where broadcasting information can be helpful in the safe return of an abducted child.

AMBER Alert activations must be initiated by broadcasters in each of the state's three regions because no Nevada broadcast radio, television or cable operator provides statewide signal coverage. The discretion for statewide AMBER Alert activations will rest with the Department. The Watch Commander or Investigation Supervisor will notify DPS of the decision to activate the AMBER Alert on a statewide basis.

AMBER Alert activations may be requested in other states directly or through DPS. If requests are made directly to another state, DPS should be notified.

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The Department may not initiate an AMBER Alert activation based on a request from outside the State of Nevada. However, this does not prohibit the Department from otherwise assisting in the safe recovery of an abducted child.

The law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the abducted child will be the only agency to determine if the AMBER Alert should be activated.

317.5 SILVER ALERT SYSTEM

The Nevada Silver Alert System is a voluntary partnership among DPS, the Department of Transportation, state and local law enforcement agencies, media outlets and other public and private organizations to assist in the search for and safe return of missing endangered older persons (NRS 427A.867).

317.5.1 CRITERIA

This department may activate a Silver Alert when it has (NRS 427A.869):

- (a) Confirmed that the whereabouts of a person 60 years of age or older are unknown.
- (b) Confirmed that the person:
 - 1. Has been diagnosed with a medical or mental health condition that places the person in danger of serious physical harm or death; or
 - 2. Is missing under suspicious or unexplained circumstances that place the person in danger of serious physical harm or death.
- (c) Received sufficient descriptive information about the person or other pertinent information to warrant dissemination of the information.
- (d) Considered and eliminated alternative explanations for the disappearance.
- (e) Confirmed that not more than 72 hours have elapsed since the time of discovery of the disappearance of the person.
- (f) Confirmed, if applicable, all descriptive information of a suspect and/or vehicle involved in the disappearance of the person, to sufficiently include for dissemination in the SAS.
- (g) Completed the activation form prescribed by DPS.

317.5.2 PROCEDURE

The Watch Commander or Investigation Supervisor activates this alert using DPS protocols (NRS 427A.868).

317.5.3 SILVER ALERT ACTIVATION AREAS

The Watch Commander or Investigation Supervisor will determine the area of coverage for the activation. Activations may cover a neighborhood, county, region, state or multiple states (NRS 427A.869).