Missing Persons Protocol

The Division of Student Affairs may occasionally be contacted regarding a student who has not been in touch with individuals with whom they would otherwise regularly interact. These concerns may be brought by friends, family members, roommates, or other members of the University of St. Francis community.

For concerned parties external to the institution, a missed phone call or failure to reply to an email can prompt a contact with the university. Internal constituents are more likely to express concern when a resident has failed to appear for a scheduled meeting or has failed to return to the residence halls after an extended period of time.

The professional staff member interacting with the concerned party should gain as much information as possible about the nature of the concern:

- What is the relationship of the concerned party to the student?
- How long the student has been out of contact with them?
- Should we have reason to believe the student might be in some type of distress or is there a threat of imminent harm?
- Will the concerned party be contacting security or Police?

The concerned party should be informed that Director of Security, Director of Residence Life, or the Dean of Students will make a concerted effort to contact the missing student and will instruct that student to contact the concerned party.

If a student has been missing for more than 24 hours or there is a threat of imminent harm or the possibility of foul play and the missing student cannot be immediately reached, then security should be contacted immediately. They will initiate the process of investigation and contacting the missing person’s designated emergency contact. The professional staff member initially contacted about the missing resident should notify the Dean of Students if he/she is not already participating.

If less than 24 hours have elapsed, then there are several steps that should be taken in an attempt to make contact with the missing student. They are:

1. Do a visual check if student lives on campus. Two Student Affairs staff members (or a staff member and a security officer) should go to the student's assigned room and knock on the door to perform a wellness check. These staff members may key into the missing student’s assigned space if there is no answer and perform a visual scan for signs of the student.

2. Utilize communication devices. Attempt to contact the student via cell phone, room phone, email, and, if possible, through instant messages or social networking sites.
3. Contact known associates. The missing student’s roommates or suitemates and Resident Assistant should be contacted and asked if they are aware of the missing student’s whereabouts. These students should be instructed to contact a professional staff member with any developments and, if they make contact with the missing student, to instruct him or her to contact the professional staff member as well as the concerned party.

4. Utilize university resources. If necessary, other university resources may be utilized to track a student’s activity. Web activity, swipe key logs, library activity, email activity and even security cameras should all be considered sources of information.

Once contact is made, the “missing” student should be instructed to get in touch with the concerned party. If contact has not been made within 24 hours, then the University of St. Francis will contact security.

If the missing student indicates that the concerned party may be seeking to harm him or her, then security and the Dean of Students will be contacted.