

Operational Area	Student Affairs
Responsible Executive	Associate Vice President/Dean of Students
Responsible Office	Dean of Students Office
Effective	August 12, 2026

Missing Student and Preliminary Wellness Assessment Policy

Student Affairs

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I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **Authority:** C.R.S. § 23-54-102, et seq. (2026) authorizes the Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver ("MSU Denver" or "University") to establish rules and regulations to govern and operate the University and its programs. The Board of Trustees ("Board" or "Trustees") retain authority to approve, interpret, and administer policies pertaining to University governance. The Trustees authorize the President of MSU Denver to approve, administer, and interpret policies pertaining to University operations.
- B. **Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for responding to reports of missing students, conducting preliminary wellness assessments, coordinating with law enforcement, and maintaining appropriate records in compliance with [Colorado Senate Bill 26-120 / C.R.S. § 23-5-141\(5\)](#), the [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act](#) ("Clery Act"), the [Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 \("HEOA"\)](#), and other applicable federal and state laws.
- 1. This policy is intended to promote student safety through timely, coordinated, and documented institutional response efforts when a student is reported missing or cannot be located.

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- C. **Scope:** This policy applies to all enrolled students at MSU Denver (including students residing in both off campus and MSU Denver-controlled housing). This policy is applicable to all MSU Denver employees, departments, units, agents, contractors, and campus partners involved in responding to missing student reports.

II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Responsible Executive:** Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Wellness/ Dean of Students
- B. **Responsible Administrator:** Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Wellness/ Dean of Students
- C. **Responsible Office:** Dean of Student's Office
- D. **Policy Contact:** Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Wellness/ Dean of Students, tatackett@msudenver.edu

III. POLICY STATEMENT

- A. MSU Denver will respond promptly and in good faith to reports that a student is missing or cannot be located. Upon receiving a report, the institution shall either:
1. Immediately notify the institution's police department ([Auraria Campus Policy Department](#)) or appropriate law enforcement agency; or
 2. Conduct a preliminary wellness assessment in accordance with this policy.
- B. If MSU Denver conducts a preliminary wellness assessment and the student is not located within six (6) hours after receipt of the report, the Dean of Students Office shall notify law enforcement as required by Colorado law.
- C. Nothing in this policy prevents the institution from immediately contacting law enforcement at any time where there is credible evidence of risk to the student's health or safety.

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IV. DEFINITIONS

A. Academic and Social Inquiry:

1. An inquiry conducted by the institution with available faculty members, classmates, advisors, coaches, or other appropriate individuals regarding the student's recent attendance, participation, or known whereabouts, limited to information reasonably necessary to determine the student's location.

B. Digital Contact Attempt:

1. An attempt to contact the student through institutionally available communication methods, including but not limited to:
 - a. Institutional email;
 - b. Learning management systems;
 - c. Student portal systems;
 - d. Telephone numbers;
 - e. Text messages; and
 - f. Emergency notification contact information provided by the student.

C. Emergency Contact Attempt:

1. An attempt to contact the emergency contact person identified in the student's official institutional record.

D. University Housing:

1. Residence halls, apartments, or other residential facilities owned or managed by the institution.

E. Missing Student:

1. A student whose whereabouts are unknown and who has been reported to the institution as missing or unable to be located by a family member, legal guardian, faculty member, staff member, student, roommate, friend, or other reporting party.

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F. Preliminary Wellness Assessment:

1. A good faith assessment conducted by the institution to determine the student's safety and location prior to referral to law enforcement, consisting of the minimum required steps identified in this policy.

G. Residential Verification:

1. A physical verification attempt conducted at a student's residence within institution-controlled housing by an authorized institutional employee or agent.

V. PROCEDURAL PROCESSES

- A. Refer to the [Missing Student Flowchart Document.docx](#)** that outlines the below processes.

B. Reporting a Missing Student:

1. Any person who has reason to believe a student may be missing or unable to be located should immediately report the concern to:
 - a. Auraria Campus Police Department;
 - b. The Dean of Students Office;
2. Employees receiving a missing student report shall immediately escalate the matter to the Dean of Students Office for initiating a preliminary wellness assessment.
3. No waiting period is required before making a report.

C. Preliminary Wellness Assessment Procedures:

1. Upon receipt of a missing student report, the Dean of Student's Office may initiate a preliminary wellness assessment. The assessment shall be initiated as promptly as practicable and may include simultaneous actions when appropriate.
2. At minimum, the preliminary wellness assessment shall include:

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a. **Digital Contact Attempt**

- i. Reasonable attempts to contact the student using all institutionally available communication methods.

b. **Residential Verification**

- ii. If the student resides in institution-controlled housing, authorized personnel may conduct a physical check of the student's assigned residence.
- iii. Authorized personnel may include:
 - a) Campus police or public safety personnel;
 - b) Residence life professional staff;
 - c) On-call housing staff;
 - d) Trained student affairs administrators; and/or
 - e) Other employees designated by the institution.
- iv. At least one authorized category of personnel shall be available outside normal business hours.

c. **Academic and Social Inquiry**

- i. Reasonable inquiries regarding the student's recent attendance, participation, or contact with institutional community members (i.e. faculty and students).

d. **Additional Wellness Assessment Measures**

- i. The institution may conduct additional measures as appropriate, including but not limited to:
 - a) Reviewing class attendance information;
 - b) Reviewing card access;
 - c) Attempting contact through roommates, friends, teammates, or coworkers;
 - d) Locating a vehicle registered to the student and/or parking validations;

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- e) Coordinating with counseling or student support personnel consistent with applicable privacy laws.

D. Escalation to Law Enforcement:

1. The institution shall immediately notify Auraria Campus Police Department or the appropriate law enforcement agency when:
 - a. The institution elects not to conduct a preliminary wellness assessment;
 - b. The student is not located within six (6) hours after receipt of the report; or
 - c. There is credible evidence suggesting a threat to the student's health or safety.
2. Notification shall be made to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction over the student's local address on file or permanent address if no local address is available.
3. Following notification, the Dean of Students Office shall cooperate fully with law enforcement agencies conducting the investigation.

E. Emergency Contact Notifications

1. If the institution conducts a preliminary wellness assessment and the student is not located within six (6) hours, the institution shall attempt to contact the student's designated emergency contact.
2. For students under eighteen (18) years of age who are not emancipated, the institution may notify a parent or legal guardian in accordance with applicable law.
3. Students residing in institution-controlled housing shall have the opportunity to designate a confidential emergency contact in accordance with Clery Act requirements.
4. Emergency contact information shall:
 - a. Be maintained confidentially;
 - b. Be accessible only to authorized institutional officials; and
 - c. Be disclosed only as permitted by law.

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F. Documentation and Recordkeeping

1. The Dean of Students Office shall maintain contemporaneous electronic (via Maxient) documentation of each preliminary wellness assessment, including:
 - a. The date and time the report was received;
 - b. The identity and role of the employee receiving the report;
 - c. The date, time, method, and outcome of all contact attempts;
 - d. The identity of personnel involved in the assessment;
 - e. Any incomplete assessment steps and the reason they could not be completed;
 - f. The date and time law enforcement was notified; and
 - g. Additional actions taken by the institution.
2. Records shall be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years following receipt of the report and made available to law enforcement upon request.
3. Where required by law, records may be disclosed to the student's designated emergency contact consistent with applicable federal and state privacy laws.

G. Privacy and Confidentiality

1. All disclosures made pursuant to this policy shall be limited to information that is reasonably necessary to locate and protect the student.
2. The institution will comply with:
 - a. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA");
 - b. Applicable Colorado student privacy laws;
 - c. Clery Act requirements; and
 - d. Other applicable confidentiality obligations.

H. Immunity

1. Institutional employees and agents acting in good faith under this policy are entitled to applicable legal immunities under Colorado law.

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VI. RELATED INFORMATION

- A. [Colorado Senate Bill 26-120 / C.R.S. § 23-5-141\(5\)](#)
- B. [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act](#)
- C. [Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008](#)
- D. [Family Educational Rights and Privacy \(FERPA\)](#)
- E. [Dean of Student's Office](#)
- F. [Auraria Campus Police Department](#)
- G. [Auraria Campus Parking and Transportation Services](#)
- H. [Missing Student Flowchart Document.docx](#)

VII. POLICY HISTORY

- A. **Effective:** August 12, 2026
- B. **Original Enactment Date:** August 12, 2026 (Interim approval)
- C. **Review:** This policy will be reviewed every three years or as deemed necessary by University leadership.

VIII. POLICY APPROVAL



Jim Carpenter
Acting President, Metropolitan State University of Denver



President's
Policy Statement
University Policy Library

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Vice President for Administration and Finance/CFO

N/A

Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver