

POLICY: MISSING STUDENTS

As required by federal law, East Central Community College (ECCC) has established the following policies and procedures to address situations when a student who resides in on-campus housing is determined to have been missing for 24 hours.

This policy applies only to students who reside in ECCC's on-campus housing, which is defined as housing that is owned or controlled by ECCC or located on property that is owned or controlled by ECCC.

The policy does not apply to students residing in apartments or other residences not leased or licensed from ECCC.

A. Policies

Definition of a Missing Student

A student is considered to be "missing" when a student who resides in on-campus housing has been absent from ECCC for more than 24 hours without any known reason.

Reporting Missing Students

All reports of missing students should be directed to ECCC's Police Department, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Housing/Student Activities.

Any reports made to the Dean of Students or the Director of Housing/Student Activities will be referred immediately to ECCC's Police Department.

Designation of a Contact Person

All undergraduate students who apply for student housing must designate on their application for housing a contact person whom ECCC will notify within 24 hours of the determination that the student is missing.

The Director of Housing/Student Activities will keep information about a student's designated contact person confidential. The information will be disclosed only to authorized campus officials and to law enforcement personnel, but only when it is necessary to further a missing person's investigation.

Mandatory Notifications

Students under the age of 18 (who are not emancipated) should be aware that ECCC is legally required to notify a parent or guardian within 24 hours of the determination that the student is missing. In such cases, ECCC will notify both the parent/guardian and any additional contact person that has been designated by the student.

In addition, all students should be aware that ECCC will notify the Decatur Police Department (DPD) within 24 hours of a determination that any student is missing, regardless of that DPD student's age or whether that student has designated a contact person.

B. Procedures

Immediate Response

Once it has been determined that a student who resides in on-campus housing has been missing for 24 hours, ECCC will take the following immediate steps:

1. The Police Department personnel designated by the Campus Police Chief for the applicable campus will respond to the scene and interview the individual who reported the student missing and any other witnesses to obtain all pertinent facts including an accurate description of the student, what he or she may be wearing, and the location and time where and when he or she was last seen.
2. The Police Department personnel responding to the scene as provided above will notify the Campus Police Chief for the applicable campus of all pertinent facts prior to initiating any additional action.
3. The Campus Police Chief, or his or her designee, will:
 - I. Contact the Director of the Housing Department, or such other personnel as they may select, to determine if he or she is aware of the student having left campus for other reasons;
 - II. Contact the Dean of Students, and such other personnel as they may select (which may include the Vice President of Student Services, and
 - III. Obtain copies of the student's ID card from Student Services and distribute copies to all guard posts at campus.
4. If the location where the student was last seen was a ECCC building, a search team will be formed to perform a thorough search of the building and the outside perimeter. The search team will then broaden its search to the rest of the campus buildings and grounds.
5. The Police Department will contact the following appropriate local police departments to inquire if the missing student has been the subject of any police action.

Decatur Police Department

- (601) 635-3555

Newton County Sheriff Department

- (601) 635-2101

Newton Police Department

- (601) 683-2041

Union Police Department

- (601) 774-9211

7. The Police Department for campus will prepare an Incident Report.

Response Within 24 Hours

Within 24 hours of making the determination that a student who resides in on-campus housing is missing, ECCC will take the following steps:

1. The Police Department, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Housing/Student Activities will notify the student's designated contact person (if the student has designated one) that the student is missing.
2. If the student is under the age of 18 (and not emancipated), the Police Department, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Housing/Student Activities will notify the student's parent or guardian that the student is missing.
3. The Police Department, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Housing/Student Activities will notify the Decatur Police Department.

Cooperation with the Decatur Police Department

Once the DPD has been notified, ECCC will cooperate with the DPD as follows:

- I. The ECCC Police Department will advise the DPD of all actions taken by the ECCC Police Department and other ECCC personnel up to that point.
- II. The ECCC Police Department will be utilized as a police headquarters for all law enforcement agencies.
- III. The Police Department will work with the DPD to ascertain whether the DPD Missing Persons Investigators have gathered any information about the student.
- IV. The Police Department will request that the DPD Communications Division broadcast a description of the missing student to All area patrol units.

The Campus Police Chief Department will request that the DPD enter the missing person into the Federal N.C.I.C. system at the conclusion of the DPD investigation.

If the Police Department, the Dean of Students, or the Director of Housing/Student Activities is properly notified that a missing student has been located, they may inform the student's parent or guardian (in the case of students under the age of 18 who are not emancipated) and/or the student's designated contact person (if any).