

§ 143B-1022. North Carolina Missing Endangered System established.

(a) There is established within the North Carolina Center for Missing Persons the Missing Endangered System. The purpose of the Missing Endangered System is to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding a missing person or missing child who is believed to be suffering from dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or a cognitive impairment that, in light of the person's or child's missing status, requires the person or child to be protected from potential abuse or other physical harm, neglect, or exploitation.

(b) If the Center or a law enforcement agency receives a request that involves a missing person or missing child as described in subsection (a) of this section, and at the time of receipt no more than 72 hours have passed since the person or child went missing, the Center or law enforcement agency shall issue an alert providing for rapid dissemination of information statewide regarding the missing person or missing child. The Center or law enforcement agency shall make every effort to disseminate the information as quickly as possible when the person's or child's status as missing has been reported to a law enforcement agency.

(c) The Center and all law enforcement agencies shall adopt guidelines and develop procedures for issuing an alert for missing persons and missing children as described in subsection (a) of this section and shall provide education and training to encourage radio and television broadcasters to participate in the alert. The guidelines and procedures shall ensure that specific health information about the missing person or missing child is not made public through the alert or otherwise.

(d) The Center and all law enforcement agencies shall consult with the Department of Transportation and develop a procedure for the use of overhead permanent changeable message signs to provide information on the missing person or missing child meeting the criteria of this section when information is available that would enable motorists to assist in the recovery of the missing person or missing child. The Center and the Department of Transportation shall develop guidelines for the content, length, and frequency of any message to be placed on an overhead permanent changeable message sign. (2007-469, s. 5; 2008-83, s. 1; 2009-143, s. 1; 2010-96, s. 16; 2011-145, s. 19.1(w); 2016-87, s. 3; 2023-86, s. 4(a).)