

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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RUNAWAY/MISSING CHILDREN REPORTING AND DOCUMENTATION IN ABDUCTED RUNAWAY KIDS SYSTEM (ARKS) AND THE CHILD WELFARE SERVICES/CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CWS/CMS)

This FYI provides updated instruction on how to properly report and document information in ARKS and within CWS/CMS regarding children and Non-Minor Dependents, (NMD's) who are missing or have run away from foster care and are at risk of being, commercially sexually exploited as required by All County Letter 16-15 (April 28, 2016). These instructions explain the policies and procedures counties are required to develop to locate and respond to dependents or wards, who go missing from foster care.

Child/Nonminor Dependent is Missing or has Run Away from Placement, Shelter Care (TSC) or from Home of a Parent

Case-Carrying CSW/ROU/Dependency Investigator (DI) Responsibilities

1. Direct the caregiver to immediately make a Missing Person's Report to the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction to obtain the report number and record from the law agency to which the report was made. For non-minor dependents (NMD) whose circumstances of their disappearance warrant such action, the CSW is to file a Missing Person's Report to the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction, get the report number and document the information in the CWS/CMS Contact Notebook.
2. Contact the caregiver by the next business day and confirm the Missing Person's Report was filed with law enforcement. Obtain the report number and document the information in the Contact Notebook. CSWs will ensure that a Missing Persons Report is filed within twenty four (24) hours of notification.
3. Within 24 hours of learning that a child or nonminor dependent has run away:



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- a.) For children ages seventeen (17) and under, complete the [DCFS 729](#) Protective Custody Warrant Request and forward it to the SCSW for approval. Forward the approved [DCFS 729](#) to court immediately and document in CWS/CMS. For nonminor dependents, complete a [DCFS 729B](#), Report of Runaway Event/Return of Youth Age 18 or Older.
- b.) Forward a copy of the approved [DCFS 729](#) or [DCFS 729B](#) and [ARKS Worksheet](#) with identifying information, and a color photograph of the child (black and white photos are accepted if color is not available) to the office [ARKS LIAISON](#). Photographs must be sent via email or by mail along with the warrant request.

The ARKS Liaison will immediately upload the information into the ARKS database and a Runaway worker will be assigned.

This process acts as a referral to the Runaway Outreach Unit (ROU) to pick up the case and assign it to a secondary Runaway Outreach Unit CSW who will then assist the primary case carrying CSW in locating, placing and stabilizing the runaway child/nonminor dependent.

- ROU CSWs will also assist primary CSW with social media site searches, referrals to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), referrals to the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Human Trafficking Bureau's Locate Team, actively mine the case records for possible leads to locations of the child's/nonminor dependent's whereabouts, conduct educational and social welfare investigations and provide intensified secondary research to locate runaway and missing children/nonminor dependents.

The ROU will contact the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department's Locate Team to determine whether it has jurisdiction over the case and may be able to help locate the child/nonminor dependent. Note: LASD's Locate Team prioritizes cases that are known or suspected CSEC or have a LASD nexus.

Office ARKS Liaison Responsibilities

1. By the following business day from receipt of the [DCFS 729 / DCFS 729B](#) and [ARKS Worksheet](#), enter the information accurately into ARKS.
2. Review Justice Partner Portal (Odyssey) regularly to confirm the court issued a protective custody warrant and record the date the warrant was issued into ARKS. **A Minute Order is not necessary to enter runaway episodes into ARKS; however, please follow up with Odyssey on a daily basis to assure one was issued and upload the information once it is obtained.**



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3. Contact the case-carrying CSW and secondary case-carrying ROU CSW monthly or as often as possible to get an update about efforts made to find the youth in the past month. Record and update all efforts to find the child/nonminor dependent into ARKS.

For questions or information on Runaway / Missing Children Reporting and Documentation, please contact Runaway Outreach Unit Manager, Eric Ball at (213)765-7310 or balle@dcs.lacounty.gov



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