



FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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Issue 23-17

Date: 11/3/23

Obtaining Cell Phone “Pings”

Overview:

A warrant is no longer needed to initiate a Ping of a phone number to locate and recover abducted, concealed, and AWOL youth. It can now be initiated by County Counsel with the phone carrier (if they accept an exigent request/order), under exigent circumstances. The CSW must demonstrate immediate danger of death or serious physical injury to the youth in order to request an Exigency Order.

Procedure:

The CSW must have all the following in order to request an Exigency Order:

- a. A WIC 300 petition has been filed in the juvenile court;
- b. A Missing Person’s Report for the youth has been filed with law enforcement;
- c. DCFS has an active cell phone number that is likely to assist in locating the youth;
- d. There is an active WIC 340(a) protective custody warrant issued for the youth;
- e. Exigency

To request the Ping, contact the DCFS Child Abduction Unit by email at

Child_Abduction_Unit@dcfs.lacounty.gov or call (323)881-1303 and ask to speak with the child abduction liaison of the day and provide all of the following:

- a. Details of current investigation and summary of the allegations of abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation.
- b. Missing Person's Report number for the youth.
- c. Copy of the active protective custody warrant issued by the Juvenile Court pursuant to WIC 340(b).
- d. How the target cell phone number is connected to the family, and how it is likely to assist in locating the youth. Please make sure the phone is active.

Be available via phone to discuss with County Counsel any questions related to exigency and/or any results received from the phone carrier. Ping data is time sensitive and must be acted upon immediately. The CSW may consult with County Counsel on different response options.

If you have any questions regarding this release, please e-mail your question to:

Policy@dcfs.lacounty.gov

(right click to open footer section and access link)



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Child Safety – Permanency – Effective & Caring Service