I. PURPOSE & INTENT

To establish policy and procedures for the University of South Florida System (USF System) regarding the reporting, investigation and required emergency notification when a student is deemed to be missing.

While the scope of policy and procedures is directed primarily to the staffs of the Division of Student Affairs and the USF System Police Departments, all members of the academic community, students, faculty, staff, and administrators, share the responsibility of reporting to designated USF System officials when they believe that a student is missing.

II. STATEMENT OF POLICY

If a person has reason to believe that a student is missing, they may file a report with the USF Police Department or the Department vested with law enforcement authority at the institution or campus in question (herein “designated Police Department”). Students and Employees have additional mandatory reporting requirements as noted in Section V. of this policy. In collaboration with the Dean for Students Office and/or the Office of Housing and Residential Education (if the missing student is a resident student) or the office designated with student affairs oversight, all efforts will be made immediately to locate the student to determine his or her state of health and well-being. These efforts may include, but are not limited to, checking the student’s residence hall room, class schedule, friends, and ID card access; locating the resident’s vehicle; reviewing e-mail contacts; calling a cell phone number and contacting the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of the College, if applicable.
III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A. Student – For purposes of this policy, any person who is currently enrolled as a full or part-time student in the USF System.

B. Resident Student – For purposes of this policy, a student who resides in on-campus housing under a housing contract and is currently enrolled.

C. Missing – For purposes of this policy, a student is presumed missing if the student is overdue in reaching home, campus, or another specific location past the student’s expected arrival for more than 24 hours, or additional factors lead a reasonable person to believe the student is missing.

D. On-Campus Housing – For the purposes of this Policy, any student housing facility that is owned or controlled by the USF System, or is located on property that is owned or controlled by the USF System, and is within the reasonably contiguous geographic area that makes up USF System campuses, is considered an on-campus student housing facility.

IV. NOTIFICATION AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Any USF System employee or student who receives a report that a student is missing, or has independent information that a student is missing, must immediately report the information or evidence to one or more of the following:

- The designated Police Department;
- Dean for Students Office*; and/or
- The Office of Housing and Residential Education (HRE)* if the missing student is a resident student.

*The Dean and the Office of HRE have a duty to report to the designated Police Department.

When the student is an on-campus resident, the designated Police Department will open an official investigation and retain status as the primary investigative agency.

When the student is an off-campus student, appropriate family members and/or associates will be encouraged to make an official missing person report to the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction which will serve as the primary investigative agency. The designated Police
Department will cooperate, aid and assist the primary investigative agency in all ways prescribed by law.

If the student is not located, notification to the student’s emergency contact (parent or guardian) —indicated in the Banner system and/or Housing Emergency Contact Information—will be made within 24 hours of the designated Police Department’s receipt of the initial report. In addition, if the student is under 18 years of age and not emancipated, notification will also be made to the custodial parent or guardian.

V. STUDENT EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION:

Students may update their emergency contact information through the University’s Student Information System (OASIS/Banner) at any time. The OASIS/Banner Terms of Usage, which must be accepted by students every 180 days, informs that while students may receive written notification from the University, all students are responsible for regularly monitoring and maintaining information in their records, including detailed emergency contact information. Resident Students may choose to designate an alternative emergency contact in the event of a Missing Person Report as a part of their documentation to live on campus or at any time by contacting the Office of HRE. Emergency contact information registered with the University is confidential and will not be released—except in the event of an emergency to individuals that are legally authorized to obtain it.

*Current Responsible Office: Student Affairs

*Refer to the appropriate Responsible Office website for a current name of the Vice President or other Responsible Officer.