

Public Alerts

317.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for alerting the public to important information and soliciting public aid when appropriate.

317.2 POLICY

Public alerts may be employed using the Emergency Alert System (EAS), local radio, television and press organizations and other groups to notify the public of incidents, or enlist the aid of the public, when the exchange of information may enhance the safety of the community. Various types of alerts may be available based upon each situation and the alert system's individual criteria.

317.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

317.3.1 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department shall notify the Shift Supervisor or Shift Commander as soon as practicable upon learning of a situation where public notification, a warning or enlisting the help of the media and the public could assist in locating a missing person, apprehending a dangerous person or gathering information.

317.3.2 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The Shift Supervisor apprised of the need for a public alert is responsible to make the appropriate notifications based upon the circumstances of each situation. The Shift Supervisor or Shift Commander shall promptly notify the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, and Public Information Officer (PIO) through the chain of command when any public alert is generated.

The Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation to which the alert relates is responsible for the following:

- (a) Updating alerts.
- (b) Canceling alerts.
- (c) Ensuring all appropriate reports are completed.
- (d) Preparing an after-action evaluation of the investigation to be forwarded to the Bureau Commander.

317.4 AMBER ALERT

The AMBER Alert™ Program is used to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding abducted children.

317.4.1 CRITERIA

The following criteria are utilized to determine if an AMBER Alert should be issued:

- (a) There is confirmation that the child has been abducted.

Public Alerts

- (b) The child is under the age of 18.
- (c) The circumstances surrounding the abduction indicate that the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.
- (d) There is enough descriptive information about the child, abductor and/or suspect's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help.
- (e) The child is believed to still be in the broadcast area.
- (f) The child's name and other critical elements have been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

317.4.2 PROCEDURE

After verifying a report that a child has been abducted and is in danger of serious bodily harm, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall:

- (a) Immediately notify the Shift Commander, who will notify the Operations Bureau Commander.
- (b) After confirming that the AMBER Alert criteria have been met, the field supervisor shall contact the Maryland State Police (MSP) headquarters duty officer and request an AMBER Alert activation.
- (c) Provide all necessary information to the MSP Missing Child Recovery Unit.
- (d) Be prepared to follow up the verbal request with a written request made via fax to the MSP headquarters duty officer.

317.5 BLUE ALERT

The National Blue Alert System™ is used to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding a violent criminal who has seriously injured or killed a local, state or federal law enforcement officer (Md. Code PS § 3-605).

317.5.1 CRITERIA

The following criteria are utilized to determine if a Blue Alert should be issued:

- (a) An officer must have been killed or seriously injured by an offender.
- (b) It has been determined that the offender poses a serious risk or threat to the public and other law enforcement personnel.
- (c) A detailed description of the offender's vehicle, vehicle tag or partial tag must be available for broadcast to the public.

317.5.2 PROCEDURE

The following are the procedures for a Blue Alert:

- (a) Upon confirmation of the Blue Alert criteria, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall recommend activation of the Blue Alert to the MSP.
- (b) Once this department apprehends a missing offender who is the subject of a Blue Alert, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall immediately notify the

Public Alerts

MSP and any law enforcement agency that filed the report resulting in the Blue Alert that the missing offender has been apprehended (Md. Code PS § 3-605).

317.6 SILVER ALERT

Silver Alerts are used to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding a missing person who has a cognitive disorder (Md. Code PS § 3-604).

317.6.1 CRITERIA

The following criteria are utilized to determine if a Silver Alert should be issued:

- (a) The whereabouts of a person at least 60 years old is unknown.
- (b) The person suffers a cognitive impairment, including a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease or dementia to the extent that the individual requires assistance from a caregiver.
- (c) The disappearance poses a credible threat to the health and safety of the person due to age, health, mental or physical disability, and environment or weather conditions, as determined by this department.
- (d) The person is traveling in a vehicle and there is enough descriptive information about the missing person and the vehicle to issue an alert.
- (e) The department has already activated a local or regional alert by contacting media outlets in the jurisdiction and the missing person has been entered into NCIC.

317.6.2 PROCEDURE

The following are the procedures for a Silver Alert:

- (a) Upon confirmation of the Silver Alert criteria, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall contact the MSP headquarters duty officer and request a Silver Alert.
- (b) Once the department confirms that the missing person has been located, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall notify the MSP that the missing person has been located.

317.7 YELLOW ALERT

Yellow Alerts are used to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding a suspect in a hit-and-run involving serious injury or death (Md. Code PS § 3-606).

317.7.1 CRITERIA

The following criteria are utilized to determine if a Yellow Alert should be issued:

- (a) The whereabouts of a person suspected of leaving the scene of an accident involving serious bodily injury or death are unknown (Md. Code TR § 20-102).
- (b) The suspect's vehicle can be described, including any information about the vehicle's license plate number.

317.7.2 PROCEDURE

The following are the procedures for a Yellow Alert:

Public Alerts

- (a) Upon confirmation of the Yellow Alert criteria, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall contact the MSP headquarters duty officer and request a Yellow Alert.
- (b) Once the department confirms that the vehicle or suspect has been located, the Shift Supervisor in charge of the investigation shall notify the MSP.

317.8 LOCAL MEDIA ALERT

317.8.1 CRITERIA

A local media alert should be used for the rapid dissemination of information to assist in finding a missing person regardless of whether the criteria for a state alert are met.

317.8.2 PROCEDURE

Regardless of whether a public alert is activated, the following procedures to alert the media and other local law enforcement agencies shall be followed:

- (a) The PIO will prepare an initial press release that includes all available information that might aid in locating a child, suspect or missing person, such as:
 - 1. The person's identity, age and description.
 - 2. A photograph, if available.
 - 3. Pertinent vehicle description.
 - 4. Details regarding the location of the incident, last known direction of travel and potential destinations, if known.
 - 5. The name and contact number of the PIO or other authorized media liaison.
 - 6. A contact number for the public to call with leads or information.
- (b) The press release shall be emailed to local television and radio stations.
- (c) The information in the press release should also be forwarded to local law enforcement agencies.
- (d) The activating official or other individual responsible for making notifications shall prepare and send to the previously described locations, follow-up press releases with updates regarding the search and investigation, or immediately upon locating the person identified in the public alert.

The PIO is responsible for providing relevant communication-related updates (e.g., media inquiries, misinformation/rumor control, etc.) to the supervisor in charge of the investigation.

317.9 CAMPUS CRIME ALERTS

The UMBPD will immediately notify the campus community upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health and safety of students, faculty, or staff. Before doing so, the UMBPD must verify that an emergency or dangerous situation actually exists on campus. Once the UMBPD verifies that an emergency or dangerous situation exists on campus, the following shall occur:

Public Alerts

- (a) The Shift Supervisor will provide the Shift Commander with the appropriate information (e.g., Incident Summary) detailing the circumstances involving the incident. The Shift Commander will then make the determination as to whether the incident has a significant impact on the UMB community.
- (b) If so determined, the Shift Commander will notify the Operations Bureau Commander and forward them the Incident Summary prepared by the Shift Supervisor.
- (c) Upon being notified, the Operations Bureau Commander will notify the Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, and the PIO through the chain of command so that a crime alert is disseminated to the UMB community as expeditiously as possible.
- (d) The Chief of Police, Deputy Chief of Police, authorized designee, or PIO will activate the notification system by disseminating the crime alert.

More detailed procedures about campus crime alerts are included in the UMB Communications Annex, a part of the University's Emergency Operation Plan. <https://www.umaryland.edu/media/umb/emergency-management/2024-UMB-Emergency-Operations-Plan-Version-2.pdf>

317.9.1 METHODS TO DISSEMINATE INFORMATION

- (a) The Communications Center can disseminate information by use of the Public Address Amplifier System (Voice Announcements in campus buildings)
- (b) Telephone (voice and SMS)
- (c) Email
- (d) Web-based notifications (e.g., banner on the UMB website)
- (e) Mobile UMB App
- (f) Social media, including Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram accounts for UMB, UMB Police, UMB Emergency Management, and UMB Parking and Transportation Services
- (g) Media - Television, radio and newspaper outlets
- (h) Building coordinators
- (i) Emergency Management Team members
- (j) Office of Community and Civic Engagement employees may share pertinent information with the West Baltimore Community

317.9.2 TESTING

Testing of the Emergency Notification System will be accomplished at least annually with drills and exercises and follow-through activities scheduled regularly by the Executive Director of Emergency Management. The test shall evaluate emergency plans and capabilities and can be simulated or live and may include shelter-in-place contingencies and evacuation drills.

317.10 PURPLE ALERT

Purple Alerts are used to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding a missing person who has a hearing impairment or who has a cognitive impairment,

Public Alerts

mental disorder, intellectual or developmental disability, or a brain injury that is unrelated to Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or substance abuse (Md. Code PS § 3-608).

317.10.1 CRITERIA

The following criteria are utilized to determine if a Purple Alert should be issued:

- (a) The whereabouts of a person is unknown.
- (b) The person has either:
 - 1. A cognitive impairment, mental disorder, intellectual or developmental disability, or brain injury that is unrelated to Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or substance abuse.
 - 2. A hearing impairment (e.g., deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing).
- (c) The disappearance poses a credible threat to the health and safety of the person due to age, health, mental or physical disability, environment, or weather conditions, as determined by this department.
- (d) The person does not meet the criteria for the activation of a Silver Alert.
- (e) Any other criteria required by the MSP prior to issuing the Alert are met.

317.10.2 PROCEDURE

The following are the procedures for a Purple Alert:

- (a) Upon confirmation of the Purple Alert criteria, the supervisor in charge of the investigation shall contact the MSP headquarters duty officer and request a Purple Alert.
- (b) Once the department confirms that the missing person has been located, the supervisor in charge of the investigation shall notify the MSP that the missing person has been located.