

4.13. MISSING RESIDENT

It is the policy of this facility to protect the safety of our residents through early assessment of their risk for exit seeking behaviors. Once identified, we mitigate this “flight risk” by preparing an individualized care plan in accordance with the policies found in the facility’s nursing manual(s). This care plan is reinforced with clear communication among staff, the resident’s family and/or representative, volunteers, and other visitors regarding the resident’s supervision needs. If despite these efforts, a resident is identified as missing, the following actions will be implemented immediately:

PROCEDURE

INITIAL RESPONSE: See Rapid Response Guide – Missing Resident.

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE:

Incident Commander and Planning Chief:

- In coordination with the Operations Chief, ensure completion of the initial search procedure to ascertain whether or not the resident is actually missing.
 - Assign staff to double check resident’s medical record for explanation such as discharge or family leave.
 - If no explanation can be determined from the record, continue the floor-to-floor, room-by-room and campus search.
 - Provide all staff involved in search with basic information about missing resident.
- If the resident cannot be found and the larger community must be engaged in the search, prepare messaging for staff with consideration for the reputation of the facility and the HIPAA rights of the missing resident.
- Notify law enforcement and provide details of the incident, as well as the missing resident’s identifying information:
 - Height, weight, hair color, etc.
 - Any available photos
 - Distinguishing features
 - Clothing worn at the time of elopement
 - Medical equipment in use, etc.
- Provide law enforcement with surveillance camera footage, facility maps, blueprints, master keys, card access, search grids, and other data as requested.
- Notify the resident’s family or representative, the nursing home executive leadership, the State Survey Agency, and other appropriate officials of situation status; continue to brief them as the situation evolves.

Operations Chief:

- Ensure continuation of resident care and essential services; coordinate the search with law enforcement as needed.
- If elopement was caused by a breach in facility security, immediately mitigate the issue to ensure the safety of residents, staff, and visitors (e.g. fix broken gates, windows, etc).
- After staff recall and any necessary screening, orient additional volunteers to search.

Logistics Chief:

- Recall additional staff or volunteers if more help is needed to search for the resident.
- Notify operators of planned deliveries or pickups if there is a need to reschedule.

Finance/Admin Chief:

- Monitor staff and volunteer usage, begin a timeline of all search processes.
- Document all costs, including claims, lost revenue, and expanded services and provide report to IC.

<Insert additional facility-specific actions as needed>

RECOVERY:

Incident Commander and Planning Chief:

IF RESIDENT IS FOUND SAFE:

- Ensure the resident's representative is briefed on the status of the lost resident and is aware of the situation prior to the release of any information to media.
- Report final status to law enforcement, State Survey Agency; develop information for release to the media, if needed.
- Initiate a post-incident review to determine if the plan of care and/or operating systems need to be modified based on this event.

IF RESIDENT IS FOUND INJURED OR DECEASED:

- Ensure the resident's representative is briefed on the status of the lost resident and is aware of the situation prior to the release of any information to media.
- Report final status to law enforcement, State Survey Agency; develop information for release to the media, if needed.
- Contact nursing home executive leadership, legal counsel, insurance agent, and/or other public relations resources.
- Initiate a post-incident review to determine if the plan of care and/or operating systems need to be modified based on this event.
- Review medical records, documentation of search process, and timeline of the situation.

Operations Chief:

IF RESIDENT IS FOUND SAFE:

- Once missing resident is found, immediately assess for injuries or other harm that might have been sustained during the incident.
- Initiate medical exam in the facility.

IF RESIDENT IS FOUND INJURED OR DECEASED:

- Transfer to the ER for further assessment and treatment if necessary.