

# Missing Vulnerable Persons

Every missing person report is investigated with care and compassion. Consideration is given to the person's age, medical condition, cognitive condition and unique concerns.

## **MISSING CHILD**

The Toronto Police Service follows the same investigative steps regardless of the age of the missing person. The safe and immediate recovery of missing children is always the highest priority, and as such:

- The way the investigation progresses depends on the unique features of the case.
- The level of urgency depends on the case.
- In some situations, an AMBER Alert may be issued to help locate the child quickly.

AMBER Alert refers to a co-operative effort between police, the media and the Ministry of Transportation to provide early notification to the public where:

- A person under 18 years of age is believed to have been abducted, AND
- Where circumstances lead police to believe that the abducted person is in danger of serious bodily harm or death, AND
- There is enough descriptive information about the abducted person, and/or the abductor, and/or the abductor's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help in locating the person.

An AMBER Alert will have a duration of five hours following activation, unless cancelled or extended. Not every missing child case will result in an AMBER Alert.

These alerts are only activated by the Ontario Provincial Police (O.P.P.) when these very specific conditions are met.

## **Missing Senior or Vulnerable Adult**

Older adults, especially those living with dementia, Alzheimer's disease, or adult persons with other cognitive or physical challenges, may be at greater risk when they go missing. They may be:

- Confused.
- Disoriented.
- Unable to communicate vital information, such as their name or address.

Officers are trained to recognize signs of dementia and cognitive impairment. The Toronto Police Service works closely with loved ones, healthcare providers, caregivers, and community agencies to gather important background information and tailor the search strategy accordingly.

Missing vulnerable person cases are treated with heightened priority due to the potential for rapid physical or cognitive decline, particularly if they are without:

- Necessary medication.
- Proper clothing.
- Necessary assistance.

Time is critical in these cases.

Do not wait to report a person missing. Every second counts.

### **Prevention**

The following may be helpful in preventing the vulnerable person from going missing:

- Medical alert programs.
- Identification tools such as ID bracelets.
- Location tracking services or devices (check with contacts who may have access).

The Alzheimer Society of Toronto's "Finding Your Way" Program supports families in preventing future occurrences.

To learn more, visit <https://www.tps.ca/missing> and download the "Community Guide to Report a Person Missing."

Questions? Please contact the Missing Persons Unit at [MissingPersons@tps.ca](mailto:MissingPersons@tps.ca)