

What Is AMBER Alert?

AMBER Alert (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) is a voluntary partnership involving law enforcement, broadcasters, and transportation agencies. During an AMBER Alert, an urgent news bulletin is broadcast over the airwaves, as well as on highway alert signs, to enlist the aid of the public in finding an abducted child and stopping the perpetrator.

AMBER Alert is based on the same concept used to alert the public to a severe weather emergency. During an AMBER Alert, the Emergency Alert System (EAS), formerly called the Emergency Broadcast System, airs a description of an abducted child and suspected abductor. The purpose is to instantly galvanize the entire community in the search for and for safe return of an abducted child.

Why Was AMBER Alert Created?

The AMBER Plan was created in 1996 as a powerful legacy to nine year-old Amber Hagerman, a little girl who was kidnapped and brutally murdered while riding her bicycle in Arlington, Texas. The tragedy shocked and outraged the entire community. Residents contacted radio stations in the Dallas area and suggested they broadcast special "alerts" over the airwaves, so that they could help prevent such incidents in the future. In response to the community's concern for the safety of children, the Dallas/Fort Worth Association of Radio Managers teamed up with local law enforcement agencies in Northern Texas and developed this innovative early warning system to help find abducted children. Statistics show that, when abducted, a child's greatest enemy is *time*.

The Missouri Plan

In 2003, the Missouri Legislature passed Senate Bill 30 that created the Missouri AMBER Alert System. The Department of Public Safety was given the responsibility to develop a system that would divide the state into regions and provide a coordinated effort between local law enforcement agencies, transportation, and local media to aid in the identification and location of abducted children. The law also established an oversight committee chaired by the director of the Department of Public Safety and consisting of members from the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Department of Health and Senior Services, Department of Transportation, Missouri Lottery, Missouri Police Chiefs Association, Missouri Sheriffs Association, and the Missouri Broadcasters Association.

Timely Cooperation And Your Participation Is Crucial

"Seventy four percent of children that are kidnapped and later found murdered, are killed within the first three hours after being taken ..."
– University of Washington Study

For more information regarding the Missouri AMBER Alert Plan contact the state of Missouri AMBER Alert coordinator:

Captain Michael A. Turner

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*A Program To
Recover Abducted
Children In Missouri*



The Cooperative Effort Of:

Missouri Department of Public Safety
Missouri State Highway Patrol
Missouri Department of Health and
Senior Services
Missouri Department of Transportation
Missouri Lottery
Missouri Police Chiefs Association
Missouri Sheriffs Association
Missouri Broadcasters Association



AMBER Alert Criteria

In order for an **AMBER Alert** to be forwarded for dissemination via the Alert Missouri program the following criteria must be met:

1. Law enforcement officials have a reasonable belief that an abduction has occurred, which meets the definition in 565.110 or 565.115 RSMo. Section.
2. Law enforcement officials believe that the child is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death.
3. Enough descriptive information exists about the victim and the abductor for law enforcement to issue an **AMBER Alert**.
4. The victim of the abduction is a child age 17 years of age or younger.
5. The child's name and other critical data elements including the child abduction (CA) flag have been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) system.

*AMBER Alerts are issued by a law enforcement agency in cooperation with the media only in circumstances meeting the state **AMBER Alert** criteria.*

*If an abduction or missing person case does not meet the **AMBER Alert** criteria, many other investigative tools can be employed including the MISSOURI ENDANGERED PERSON ADVISORY. Find out more information about the Endangered Person Advisory Plan and Activation Procedures at: <http://www.mshp.dps.mo.gov>.*

Our Mission

The mission of the **AMBER Alert** Program is to develop and coordinate the efforts of law enforcement, the media, and transportation in order to increase public participation in safely recovering abducted children through targeted education, increased communication, and effective sharing of resources.

Alert Activation Process

1. Trained local law enforcement personnel in the community where the abduction occurred must first determine if all of the activation criteria are met.
2. If so, the local agency should contact the Missouri State Highway Patrol Troop F Headquarters at 573-751-1000 and request an **AMBER Alert**. Troop F radio will contact the state **AMBER Alert** coordinator or their designee and initiate a conference call between the local agency, Troop F radio, and the coordinator or designee. After a brief discussion regarding the abduction and each criteria section, the coordinator or designee will make the decision if the situation rises to the level of an **AMBER Alert**. If the decision is made to activate the **AMBER Alert** system, Troop F radio will take the abduction information over the telephone from the local agency and start the process to activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS) alert. This process can be expedited if the local agency will complete in advance the Amber Alert Request Form (AAR-QST) in MULES, which also creates a Missing Person Entry in NCIC and MULES.
3. Upon activating the EAS system the **AMBER Alert** information will also be forwarded to secondary notification providers.
4. If the coordinator or designee doesn't feel the situation rises to the level of an **AMBER Alert**, other options can be explored if a child endangerment incident is evident.

What Can You Do?

- ✗ Work with your local law enforcement agency to host a child safety seminar at your school, church, community center, civic organization, or neighborhood group.
- ✗ Know who lives in your community. Our state tracks sex offenders. Know who they are and where they live. Access the Missouri Sex Offender Registry at: <http://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov>. Select "Sex Offender Registry" button on the bar at the top of the Patrol's home page.
- ✗ Pay attention to missing children flyers and notices in stores.
- ✗ Keep current information and photos of your children.

Secondary Notifications

The **AMBER Alert** Portal is provided as a free public service. Through the **AMBER Alert** Portal, law enforcement may directly issue and update **AMBER Alerts**, which are then automatically communicated by cell phones, pagers, faxes, and e-mails to anyone who has signed up at:

www.amberalert.com

