

Simmons University – Missing Student Policy and Procedures

Simmons University is committed to promoting and providing a safe and secure environment for the entire community. As part of our commitment, and to be in compliance with Section 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, this missing student policy has been developed for “residential students” – that is, students who live in a residence hall or other housing facility that Simmons owns or operates.

The importance of communicating your whereabouts

Our experiences over the years tell us that the majority of students deemed “missing” by their parents, floor-mates, roommates, or friends are not truly missing. Rather, the “missing” students simply have changed their typical routine without keeping in communication with those who normally see or expect to hear from them. This may seem understandable given the independent lifestyle of a college student. However, in the interest of public safety, we are urging all Simmons students to be more accountable regarding the communication of their whereabouts.

If you are leaving town or traveling off campus, even for just one night, let someone know that you will be leaving and when you are planning to return.

Designating a confidential emergency contact

At the beginning of each academic year, all residential students will be asked to identify a contact person or persons who would be notified if the student is determined to be missing for 24 hours or more. This emergency contact information is imputed by the students on the Academic and Administrative Resource Center (AARC) website: <https://aarc.simmons.edu>. It will be accessible only to authorized campus officials and will not be disclosed except to law enforcement personnel in furtherance of a missing student investigation.

If a student is under 18 years of age and is not emancipated, Simmons is required to notify a custodial parent or guardian if the student is determined to be missing for 24 hours or more, in addition to any additional contact person designated by the student.

If you believe a student is missing

If you believe a student is missing, you are strongly encouraged to report your concerns to one of the following offices:

Public Safety – 617 521 1111
Residence Life – 617 521 1096
Office of the Dean for Student Life – 617 521 2124

The University's procedures for responding to a missing student report

In the event that a student is reported missing, the following procedures ordinarily will be followed:

1. The University official who receives the report will immediately:
 - refer the report to Public Safety, and
 - contact the University Administrator on Call through the Office of the Dean for Student Life on-call rotation.

2. Public Safety, or other University officials working in conjunction with Public Safety, will make reasonable efforts to determine if the student actually is missing. Those efforts may include, for example, some or all of the following:
 - attempting to contact the student by phone, email, text messaging or other means;
 - attempting to obtain information about the student's recent or planned whereabouts from the student's RA, roommates, friends or others;
 - accessing information in the student's email account; and/or
 - accessing the student's card swipe information.

3. If at any point it is determined that the student has been missing for 24 hours or more, then – within 24 hours of that determination – University officials will:
 - notify local law enforcement;
 - notify any person the student has identified as a confidential emergency contact on the Academic and Administrative Resource Center (AARC) website;
 - notify the student's custodial parent(s) or guardian(s) if the student is under the age of 18 and is not emancipated; and
 - notify the Dean of Students (or her designee).

The Dean of Students (or her designee), exercising her judgment under the circumstances, will determine whether to notify the President or other Senior University Officers and whether to notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s). As stated above, notifying a parent or guardian is required if the student is under the age of 18 and is not emancipated.