

§ 143B-1021. North Carolina AMBER Alert System established.

(a) There is established within the North Carolina Center for Missing Persons the AMBER Alert System. The purpose of AMBER Alert is to provide a statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding abducted children.

(b) The AMBER Alert System shall make every effort to disseminate information on missing children as quickly as possible when the following criteria are met:

- (1) The child is 17 years of age or younger;
- (2) The abduction is not known or suspected to be by a parent of the child, unless the child's life is suspected to be in danger of injury or death;
- (3) The child is believed:
 - a. To have been abducted, or
 - b. To be in danger of injury or death;
- (4) The child is not a runaway or voluntarily missing; and
- (5) The abduction has been reported to and investigated by a law enforcement agency.

If the abduction of the child is known or suspected to be by a parent of the child, the Center, in its discretion, may disseminate information through the AMBER Alert System if the child is believed to be in danger of injury or death.

(c) The Center shall adopt guidelines and develop procedures for the statewide implementation of the AMBER Alert System and shall provide education and training to encourage radio and television broadcasters to participate in the System. The Center shall work with the Department of Justice in developing training material regarding the AMBER Alert System for law enforcement, broadcasters, and community interest groups.

(d) The Center shall consult with the Department of Transportation and develop a procedure for the use of overhead permanent changeable message signs to provide information on the abduction of a child meeting the criteria established in subsection (b) of this section, when information is available that would enable motorists to assist law enforcement in the recovery of the missing child. The Center and the Department of Transportation shall develop guidelines for the content, length, and frequency of any message to be placed on an overhead permanent changeable message sign.

(e) The Center shall consult with the Division of Emergency Management, in the Department of Public Safety, to develop a procedure for the use of the Emergency Alert System to provide information on the abduction of a child meeting the criteria established in subsection (b) of this section.

(f) The Department of Public Safety, on behalf of the Center, may accept grants, contributions, devises, and gifts, which shall be kept in a separate fund, which shall be nonreverting, and shall be used to fund the operations of the Center and the AMBER Alert System. (2002-126, s. 18.7(c); 2003-191, s. 3; 2011-145, s. 19.1(g), (w); 2011-284, s. 103.)