Definitions

“approved verifier” – a person involved in providing care or services to a found missing person, who is familiar with their current circumstances, including:
   (a) A parent or caregiver;
   (b) A social worker, youth/child protection worker or group home worker;
   (c) A transition house worker or antiviolence worker;
   (d) A doctor, psychiatrist, counsellor or other health care provider;
   (e) A victim services worker;
   (f) A shelter or outreach worker;
   (g) A lawyer or legal advocate; or
   (h) An Aboriginal support worker.

“Missing person” – anyone reported to police or by police as someone whose whereabouts are unknown, whatever the circumstances of their disappearance, and who are considered missing until located.

“Safe and well check” – personal face-to-face communication with a found missing person to confirm their identity and assess their well-being.

Standards

The chief constable, chief officer, or commissioner must ensure that:

Closing a missing person investigation

(1) A missing person report or investigation is not closed until:
   (a) The missing person has been located and a police officer or an approved verifier has completed a safe and well check; or
   (b) The BC Coroners Service has confirmed the identity of a deceased person or found human remains as that of the missing person; or
   (c) If the investigation is being transferred to another police force, the other police force has confirmed its receipt of the report and responsibility for the investigation.
(2) Closure of a missing person report or investigation must be reviewed and approved by a supervisor with such approval being documented in the case file.

(2.1) Notwithstanding Standard (1)(a) above, a supervisor may approve the closure of a missing person report or investigation without the completion of a safe and well check provided that the supervisor:

(a) is satisfied that the missing person’s identity and well-being have been established by other means; and
(b) has determined that the completion of a safe and well check is either:
   (i) not in the best interest of the missing person, having due regard to their privacy, their degree of vulnerability, and their continuing safety, or
   (ii) clearly impracticable given the presence of extenuating circumstances; and
(c) documents the reasons supporting his or her decision in the case file.

(3) Information systems (e.g., CPIC and PRIME entries) are updated as soon as possible when a missing person is located.

Disclosure

(4) The location or whereabouts of a found missing person that is a competent adult are not disclosed to the family/reportee without the missing person’s consent.

(5) The following are considered before disclosing the location or whereabouts of a found missing person under the age of 19:

(a) The minor’s age and competency;
(b) Whether the minor consents to the disclosure; and
(c) The minor’s relationship to the family/reportee.

Policies and procedures

(6) Policies and procedures regarding missing persons are consistent with these BC Provincial Policing Standards.