

**Cottonwood, Inc.
Policies and Procedures**

SECTION: Consumer Related

POLICY NO: 05-019

SUBJECT: Missing Consumers

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1987

Policy:

It is the policy of Cottonwood, Inc. to provide adequate support for the safety of each individual. A consumer is considered to be missing after he/she has been away from appropriate support for two hours unless the person's support needs dictate otherwise. The following steps are to be taken in sequence when a person is determined to be missing.

Note: Some consumers have adequate self-preservation skills and independence to manage their attendance and participation on their own. Self-preservation skills are documented in the Person Centered Support Plan (Support Plan). Cottonwood, Inc. will consider an individual "Out of Service" and on their own if they leave voluntarily and possess self-preservation skills and a stated desire for autonomy. A history of poor decision making (i.e. criminal behavior) does not necessarily mean that they can't be autonomous and no longer in our supervision but Cottonwood, Inc. will advise the individual about potential risks and unsafe practices.

Procedures:

The staff person who discovers that a consumer is missing must first determine if the person is simply not where they are expected to be or is truly missing. This determination is individualized, based on the consumer's past behavior and ability. The staff person would then conduct a search of the premises. The supervisor must note the time the person was determined to be missing so that a two hour count can begin. After a search has passed, and after consultation with the case manager, service director or on-call manager the following calls should be made.

1. Call the appropriate law enforcement agency.
2. Call Lawrence Memorial Hospital Emergency Room.
3. Call the Highway Patrol or have the message transferred through the Lawrence police.
4. Call the County Sheriff's office or have the message transferred through the Lawrence police.
5. The below staff should be apprised of the situation, especially if a serious outcome is expected.

- a. CEO
 - b. Administrator of Services
 - c. Support Services Director
6. The Case Manager, on-call person or administrative staff may notify the emergency contact person noted on the consumer ID sheet.
7. An incident report is to be written by the staff members involved, and should be submitted by the next day.
8. Follow-up will be handled by the appropriate staff person.