

AMBER Alert in Washington is a program of voluntary cooperation between broadcasters, cable systems, and local and state law enforcement agencies to enhance the public's ability to assist in recovering abducted children. The AMBER Alert Web Portal and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) support AMBER Alert notification. The Federal Communications Commission has authorized activation of the EAS for AMBER Alerts using the "child abduction emergency" code.

Law enforcement agencies participating in this plan are: The Walla Walla County Sheriff, City of Walla Walla Police Department and the City of College Place Police Department.

This plan is a cooperative effort between local law enforcement agencies, Walla Walla County Emergency Management and Walla Walla Emergency Services Communications Center.

### **AMBER Alert Program Guidelines**

The AMBER Alert Program Plan is a voluntary enhancement of the Emergency Alert System. The Washington AMBER Alert Statewide Plan takes effect when the local law enforcement agency has determined in its investigation that the incident qualifies under the criteria herein and the local law enforcement agency requests the WSP to initiate activation of the EAS and the AMBER Portal.

Activation of an AMBER EAS alert will send a statewide voice message to all cooperating broadcast stations, which includes those radio and television stations and cable operators who have agreed to participate. The cooperating broadcast station will automatically retransmit the voice message, which interrupts scheduled programming.

An AMBER alert is a one-time event. Alerts may not be repeated. If additional information becomes available that would significantly increase its effectiveness, another AMBER alert may be sent, but no sooner than 30 minutes following the previous alert. The decision to send another alert must be warranted.

Law enforcement agencies wishing to utilize AMBER activation must coordinate with Washington State Patrol for activation. Law enforcement must provide the information on the AMBER Information Form on page 9.

An AMBER alert does not allow for detailed information in the message itself. Before issuing an AMBER alert, the law enforcement jurisdiction must be prepared to provide detailed information via the AMBER Portal. This may include detailed descriptions, locations and photographs.

Once the child is found or if is necessary to cancel the alert, local law enforcement must contact the WSP.

### **AMBER Alert Activation Approval and Scope**

Approval for activation of an AMBER Alert will be by the local investigating agency.

When an agency decides to activate an AMBER Alert the agency must notify the WSP. The WSP will provide the local agency secured access to the Portal. The WSP, as the sole point of contact, will coordinate all AMBER Alert activities with the Washington State Emergency Management Division and the Department of Transportation on the local agency's behalf.

The Washington State Emergency Management Division (EMD) will activate the EAS for an AMBER Alert and is the only agency authorized to do so.

The local law enforcement agency is authorized to use the Portal to activate, update and cancel the AMBER Alert as the case warrants. Upon request of the local law enforcement agency, the WSP may activate the Portal. The portal is at <http://www.WashingtonAMBERAlert.com>.

It is very important that before requesting an AMBER Alert, the local law enforcement agency must identify a Public Information Officer for media and a point of contact for other law enforcement agencies.

When an incident does not qualify under the criteria for an AMBER Alert, the law enforcement should consider other alternatives such as press releases, the Missing Children Clearing House, CISD staff to work the tip line, TRAK system, HITS Unit, and other notification methods available at that time.

The incident must be reported to and investigated by a local law enforcement agency.

Walla Walla County Emergency Management will be prepared to partially activate the EOC to support local law enforcement when requested by the incident commander.

- a. EMD can provide limited support of the incident by providing an Emergency Public Information Officer to support the incident commander who can help coordinate news releases, news conferences and interviews.
- b. Within the three incoming telephone line capability, EMD can provide telephone-answering support of a tip or media inquiry hot line. If EOC is activated, use (509) 527-3223. This number forwards calls to two other lines in the EOC. If all three are busy, voice mail is available.
- c. Staffing the EOC may take additional time, so alert EMD as soon as possible.
- d. EMD has the capability to scan photos and post information to the Washington State AMBER web portal.
- e. EMD can provide electronic or hard copy mapping support to the incident commander.

### Local Law Enforcement Checklist

All of the first four (4) elements should be satisfied, after considering all the facts and circumstances of the incident, for the incident to qualify as an AMBER Alert.

- Verify that the child is under eighteen (18) years of age and is known to be abducted and is not a runaway or thrown-away from home.**
- Verify that the abducted child is believed to be in danger of death or serious bodily injury.**
- Verify that the abduction occurred within the last 4 hours, qualifying under the criteria as an AMBER Alert, unless circumstances or the timeliness of the information warrant otherwise.**
- Verify that there is enough descriptive information available to believe that AMBER Alert activation will assist in the recovery of the child. (Must include as much of the following information as possible)**
  - Where the abduction took place. A specific physical description of the child [can include clothing worn when last seen; height, weight, age, hair and eye color, hair length, any additional distinguishing physical characteristics]
  - A physical description of the abductor [can include approximate height, weight, hair color/length, eye/skin color, clothing; any distinguishing physical characteristics.]
  - Place last seen.
  - Description of the vehicle color, make, model, and license number.
- Alert Walla Walla County EMD, if EOC support is desired.
- Complete the alert information form on page 9.
- Assemble any victim, suspect and vehicle photographs that may be available.
- Fax the form to the Yakima WSP Communications Center at (509) 249-6771). Cite on the form whether photos are available. If a victim's photo is not available, a statement in bold "NO PHOTO OF VICTIM AVAILABLE" should accompany the document.
- Follow-up the fax with an immediate phone call at (800) 283-7803. Advise WSP that you are activating an AMBER Alert and that Walla Walla County has an approved AMBER Plan.
- From WSP, obtain the web portal UserID, Password and URL to activate a Statewide AMBER Alert.
- Prepare a written news release that provides detailed information to the public. Include the information on the Alert Information Form on page 9. Include as much Victim, Suspect and Vehicle Data as is available.
- Scan photos and save in digital format such as .jpg. Post the news release and photos to the web portal <http://www.WashingtonAMBERAlert.com>
- Request WA-EMD forward tip line calls to a local number. If you choose to open the EOC, use (509) 527-3223.
- Be prepared to deal with a high volume of public tips and media inquiries.
- Prepare news releases as new information becomes available, post to the portal.
- Once the child is found or if is necessary to cancel the alert, contact WSP.

Walla Walla County Abducted Minor Broadcast Emergency Response (AMBER) Plan

**Responsibilities Matrix**

<i>Process Event</i>	<i>Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA)</i>	<i>Washington State Patrol (WSP)</i>	<i>WA State Emergency Management Division (EMD)</i>	<i>Broadcasters</i>	<i>WA Dept. of Transportation (WSDOT)</i>
Investigate Incident <i>(External Processes)</i>	1. Investigate and compile the initial information				
<b>1A. Pre-authorized and Immediate Access</b> <i>(For those having a previously approved AMBER Alert Plan or having a developed mutual aid agreement with another LEA with an approved plan.)</i>	1. Determine that the AMBER Alert criteria is met 2. Notify WSP that LEA is activating an AMBER Alert 3. Reference you have a previously approved AMBER Plan	1. Check list of approved plans and proceed immediately with providing the LEA with a UserID, Password and URL to activate a Statewide AMBER Alert 2. Begin coordination with EMD, DOT			
<b>1B. Initial Review of AMBER Alert Request</b> <i>(For those without a previously approved AMBER Alert Plan or having a developed mutual aid agreement with another LEA with an approved plan.)</i>	1. Determine that the AMBER Alert criteria is met 2. Request WSP to issue an AMBER Alert	1. Review and approve / disapprove LEA's request based on the approved statewide criteria 2. Notify LEA of approval			

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<p><i>If AMBER Alert criteria are not met: Issue a Missing Child Alert (non-AMBER)  (External Process)</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive notification of disapproval</li> <li>2. Utilize other means (from WSP) to communicate “missing child” information</li> <li>3. Examples:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Missing Children Clearing House</li> <li>- CISD staff to work the tip line</li> <li>- TRAK system</li> <li>- HITS Unit</li> <li>- other resources</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Notify LEA of disapproval</li> </ol>			

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<b>2. Issue Initial AMBER Alert</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive Portal User ID &amp; Password</li> <li>2. Issue the AMBER Alert via the Portal</li> <li>3. May request EMD to forward the statewide tip line</li> <li>4. Staff the tip line that was forwarded from EMD</li> <li>5. Responsible for the on-going investigation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Issue a Portal User ID &amp; Password to the LEA</li> <li>2. Notify a single point of contact in EMD to issue the AMBER Alert via EAS</li> <li>3. Notify a single point of contact in WSDOT to activate the Electronic Highway Signs and the Highway Advisory Radio</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive the directive from WSP to issue the AMBER Alert via EAS using code "CAE"</li> <li>2. Receive AMBER Alert information via the Portal</li> <li>3. Issue the AMBER Alert via EAS</li> <li>4. Activate NAWAS (911 centers)</li> <li>5. If requested by LEA, forward the statewide tip line to the LEA for staffing incoming tips</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive the AMBER Alert via EAS</li> <li>2. Receive the AMBER Alert via Portal</li> <li>3. Broadcast the AMBER Alert</li> <li>4. Make follow-up AMBER Alert announcements (Ref: #6 above)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive the request from WSP to activate the Electronic Highway Signs and the Highway Advisory Radio</li> <li>2. Receive the AMBER Alert information via the Portal</li> <li>3. Activate the Electronic Highway Signs and the Highway Advisory Radio</li> </ol>

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<b>3. Issue Updated AMBER Alert</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disseminate updated information via Portal and other means as appropriate</li> <li>May request WSP to disseminate updated information via PIO network</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive updated information via Portal</li> <li>If requested by LEA, disseminate updated information via PIO network</li> <li>If conditions warrant, request EMD to issue update via EAS and DOT to update the Electronic Highways Signs and the Highway Advisory Radio</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive updated information via Portal</li> <li>If requested by WSP, issue update via EAS</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive updated information via Portal</li> <li>Broadcast updated AMBER Alert information</li> <li>Go to AMBER Alert Web Portal to obtain information</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Receive updated information via Portal</li> <li>Update the Electronic Highway Signs and the Highway Advisory Radio (after conferring with WSP if necessary)</li> </ol>

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<b>4. Cancel AMBER Alert</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine that the AMBER Alert Activation is no longer warranted</li> <li>2. Enter information into the Portal</li> <li>3. Notify WSP to cancel the AMBER Alert</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive cancellation request from LEA</li> <li>2. Notify a single point of contact in EMD of cancellation</li> <li>3. Notify a single point of contact in DOT of cancellation</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive cancellation notice from WSP</li> <li>2. Issue cancellation using EAS code "ADR"</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive cancellation via EAS (using "ADR" code)</li> <li>2. Receive cancellation via Portal</li> <li>3. Broadcast cancellation as a news item or other means -- but do not rebroadcast EAS cancellation message</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Receive cancellation via Portal</li> <li>2. Receive cancellation notice from WSP</li> <li>3. Cancel the Electronic Highway Signs and the Highway Advisory Radio</li> </ol>



**Alert Information Form**

<p>AGENCY INFORMATION</p> <hr/> <p>Agency</p> <hr/> <p>Officer's Name/Rank</p> <hr/> <p>Internal Contact # / Public Contact #</p> <hr/> <p>Supervisor's Approval <i>(Include Name/Rank)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Date</p>
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Y	N*	
___	___	Is this believed to be a child abduction?
___	___	Was this child under the age of 18 years?
___	___	Is there reason to believe the victim is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death?
___	___	Is there information to send to the public that could assist in the safe recovery of the victim or apprehension of a suspect?
___	___	Did the abduction occur within the last four (4) hours? Or are there circumstances that warrant an alert?

**INCIDENT DATA**

Time and Date of Event \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location of Abduction \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last Known Direction of Travel \_\_\_\_\_

**VICTIM DATA**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_ and Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hair Color, Length, and Style \_\_\_\_\_ Height/Weight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eye Color \_\_\_\_\_ Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal Items or Distinguishing Marks \_\_\_\_\_

**VICTIM DATA #2**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_ and Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hair Color, Length, and Style \_\_\_\_\_ Height/Weight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eye Color \_\_\_\_\_ Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal Items or Distinguishing Marks \_\_\_\_\_

**SUSPECT DATA**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_ and Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hair Color, Length, and Style \_\_\_\_\_ Height/Weight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eye Color \_\_\_\_\_ Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal Items or Distinguishing Marks \_\_\_\_\_

**SUSPECT DATA #2**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Race \_\_\_\_\_ and Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hair Color, Length, and Style \_\_\_\_\_ Height/Weight \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eye Color \_\_\_\_\_ Clothing \_\_\_\_\_  
 Personal Items or Distinguishing Marks \_\_\_\_\_

**VEHICLE DATA**

Color and Year \_\_\_\_\_ Make, Model, and Style \_\_\_\_\_  
 License Plate Number and State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Distinguishing Marks \_\_\_\_\_

Attach Additional Data as Necessary

**Sample AMBER Alert EAS Message Script (for use by WA-EMD)**

This is an activation of the AMBER Alert System.

We have just received this important information regarding an abducted child in

\_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_ is  
(Area, District, City and/or County) (Law Enforcement Jurisdiction(s))

looking for a child who was last seen at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Location)

and is believed to be in danger. The child's name is \_\_\_\_\_. He/She is  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_ years old, \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_ hair and was last seen wearing \_\_\_\_\_  
(age) (gender) (color)

\_\_\_\_\_. Authorities say that the child may be in the  
(Description of clothing)

company of \_\_\_\_\_ and they may be traveling in a  
(Name, Description, clothing, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ that was last seen heading \_\_\_\_\_  
(Vehicle make, model, color, license plate #)

\_\_\_\_\_. If you have any information on the whereabouts of  
(Direction and street/city location)

this child, \_\_\_\_\_, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ immediately.  
(Name or Description of Child) (contact telephone number)

**Sample AMBER Broadcaster Follow-up Announcement Text**

"K\*\*\* has an Amber Alert advisory. An Amber Alert has been issued for Washington State. K\_\_\_ (listeners/viewers) are advised to look for (vehicle description), driven by (suspect description). The victim is (victim details) has been abducted by a non-family member and is at risk of physical harm. If you see a (vehicle description), please dial 911 immediately, and tell the operator you have an Amber Alert sighting for the Washington State Patrol dispatch. Again, if you see (vehicle description), please dial 911."