

HOUSE BILL 25-478

By Senator(s) Harrison
also Representative(s) Mitchell, Simmons

**AN ACT
CONCERNING MISSING CHILDREN**

Be It Enacted by the General Assembly of the State of San Andreas:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This act may be known and cited as the “Missing Children Act of 2025”

SECTION 2. LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION.

The General Assembly finds and declares that:

- (a) The first 48 hours following a child’s disappearance are the most critical for ensuring the child’s safe recovery.
- (b) Current procedures requiring a 48-hour waiting period before a missing child report is treated as a priority endanger public safety and delay critical search efforts.
- (c) Children who go missing—regardless of perceived intent to “run away” or “return home”—are inherently vulnerable and must be treated with the same urgency and investigative seriousness as any other missing person.

Therefore, it is the intent of the General Assembly to eliminate waiting periods for missing child investigations and to mandate immediate, full-scale responses by law enforcement agencies upon receipt of a missing child report.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

As used in this Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

- (a) “Child” means any person under the age of eighteen (18) years.
- (b) “Missing child report” means a report filed with a law enforcement agency concerning a child whose whereabouts are unknown and whose safety or welfare may be in danger, regardless of whether the child is believed to have left voluntarily.
- (c) “Law enforcement agency” means any agency or department of the state, county, or municipality authorized to enforce criminal laws.

SECTION 4. ELIMINATION OF 48-HOUR DELAY IN MISSING CHILDREN CASES.

- (a) No law enforcement agency within this state shall impose a waiting period before accepting or investigating a report of a missing child.
- (b) Upon receiving a missing child report, the law enforcement agency shall:

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- (I) Immediately enter identifying information into all state and federal missing persons databases, including the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and any state equivalents;
 - (II) Notify the parent, guardian, or person who filed the report of all investigative steps taken;
 - (III) Initiate a full investigation without delay, treating the case as a potential endangerment situation until proven otherwise; and
 - (IV) Coordinate with local, state, and federal authorities as necessary.
- (c) No report of a missing child may be classified as a “runaway” case or “non-urgent” matter for purposes of delaying investigation or response.

SECTION 5. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY GUIDANCE AND TRAINING.

- (a) The Department of Public Safety shall, within ninety (90) days of this Act’s effective date, develop and distribute uniform statewide protocols for handling missing child cases.
- (b) Such protocols shall include:
 - (I) Procedures for immediate notification and coordination among law enforcement agencies;
 - (II) Guidelines for communication with parents, guardians, and the public;
 - (III) Standards for issuing public alerts (including AMBER Alerts) when criteria are met; and
 - (IV) Training materials emphasizing trauma-informed response and rapid mobilization.

SECTION 6. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECORDKEEPING.

- (a) Each law enforcement agency shall maintain written records of all missing child reports, including the date, time, and manner of response.
- (b) Agencies shall submit annual reports to the Department of Public Safety summarizing the number of missing child reports received, investigations initiated, and outcomes achieved.
- (c) The Department shall publish a statewide summary each year to ensure transparency and identify trends.