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[INTRODUCTION TO THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#)

Recent highly publicized child abductions throughout the country have put the spotlight on the AMBER ALERT, a cooperative effort between law enforcement agencies and the media to quickly disseminate public information about an abducted child.

The Northeast Ohio AMBER Alert Committee along with the Ohio Attorney General's Office, local law enforcement, the Cuyahoga County Department of Public Safety, Cuyahoga Emergency Communications Systems (CECOMS) and local Media stations have worked in partnership to bring the AMBER ALERT to our community. Speed is essential when trying to rescue an abducted child. That is why it is imperative that law enforcement and the media react quickly and get the word out to the community. [THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#) is the answer because it activates an alert that can engage the entire community to look for both the child and the alleged abductor(s). Experience has shown that a significant number of child abductions have been resolved because of extensive radio and television coverage.

[THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#) was modeled after several plans already established throughout the United States.

[THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#) covers (9) counties:

1. Ashtabula County
2. Cuyahoga County
3. Erie County
4. Geauga County
5. Huron County
6. Lake County
7. Lorain County
8. Medina County
9. Summit County

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AMBER ALERT: AMERICA'S MISSING BROADCAST EMERGENCY RESPONSE



In January 1996, nine year old Amber Hagerman was riding her bicycle when a neighbor heard the girl scream. The neighbor saw a man pull Amber off her bike, throw her into the front seat of his pickup truck, and drive away at a high speed. The neighbor called police and provided a description of the suspect and his vehicle, but couldn't recall much else. Arlington, Texas police and the FBI interviewed other neighbors and searched for the suspect and vehicle. Local radio and TV stations covered the story in their regular newscasts. Four days later, Amber's body was found in a drainage ditch four miles away. Her throat had been cut. Her kidnapping and murder remain unsolved.

A concerned citizen contacted a Dallas, Texas radio station suggesting the idea that Dallas radio stations should repeat news bulletins about abducted children just like they do severe weather warnings. The idea was presented to the general managers of the radio stations in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. They agreed that such a program would provide an important public service and might help save the life of a child.

Although the Amber Plan is named after Amber Hagerman, this national program is dedicated to all children nationwide who've been abducted. According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, nearly 262,100 children are abducted every year. Specifically, 58,200 are non-family abductions and 203,900 are family abductions.

The Amber Alert Plan was launched in Ohio on January 1, 2003.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to establish procedures to be followed in child abductions, endangered missing children. This plan will outline the law enforcement agency's response in a manner that holds the greatest chance for the safe return of the child and the apprehension of the alleged abductor(s). The first few hours of the investigation of an abducted child may determine whether the eventual outcome is successful or not. Experience has shown that in cases where children have been victims of stranger abductions, there exists a "window of opportunity" lasting only a few hours in which police are likely to successfully recover the child unharmed. To capitalize on this opportunity; it is imperative that the investigation be "front loaded" with as much intense investigative efforts and resources as possible. The reasons for stranger abductions are many and varied. The motivation involved may be related to sexual gratification, narcotics, revenge, money and any other provocation the mind can imagine. It is therefore crucial that the law enforcement agency research their respective activities and files to determine if any connection or motive can be established related to the child's disappearance.

THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT COMMITTEE

I. CONTACT PERSON FOR MORE INFORMATION

Committee Chairman: Chief John Majoy, Newburgh Heights Police Dept. 216.641.5545

Law Enforcement: Chief Terry Grice, Montville Township Police Dept. 330.725.2204

Broadcaster: Toni Garbo, Community Relations Director, WJW TV-8, 216.432.4240

Cuyahoga County Department of Public Safety/CECOMS Cuyahoga County:

Christopher Minek, CECOMS Operations Supervisor 216.501.7041

Transportation: Dennis O'Neil, ODOT District 12 Representative, 216.581.2100

II. PARTICIPATING AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN is a cooperative effort between local area law enforcement, radio and television stations, and Cuyahoga County Department of Public Safety/CECOMS.

III. STEPS FOR ACTIVATION

The AMBER ALERT can **ONLY** be implemented by a law enforcement agency. Should a citizen call in and request a broadcast, the citizen would be referred to their local law enforcement agency.

A. Law enforcement agencies participating in this plan will call CECOMS (Cuyahoga Emergency Communication System) at 216.771.1363 to request an AMBER ALERT.

B. Law enforcement will also fax to CECOMS at 216.443.5705:

1. AMBER ALERT URGENT FAX forms
2. Exact message faxed to CECOMS on agency letterhead

C. Law enforcement shall contact but not limited to the following:

1. Enter the missing juvenile through LEADS and NCIC.
2. Send a LEADS administration broadcast to all Ohio law enforcement terminals.
3. Send a NLETS (National Law Enforcement Tele Communication System) broadcast message to adjacent states.
4. Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to report the child abduction case at 1.800.843.5678; this is a 24-hour hot-line.
5. Have both liability and authorization form signed (optional, not required).
6. Follow your department's policy for all available resources that could be of help in locating the child.

IV. SCOPE OF AMBER ALERT

THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT will include those communities that are reachable by all broadcast stations participating in this plan.

V. CRITERIA FOR ACTIVATION

The AMBER ALERT requires an executive officer at a participating law enforcement agency to verify that all four (4) specific criteria listed below have been satisfied:

- A. The child is under eighteen (18) years of age.
- B. There is credible information that suggests that the child was forcibly or intentionally removed or lured away from their location and remains missing.
- C. The law enforcement agency believes the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.
- D. There is enough descriptive information about the child, and/or alleged abductor(s), and/or alleged abductor's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help.

If the criteria are met, alert information must be organized for public distribution. This information can include a description and pictures of the missing child, the alleged abductor(s), alleged abductor's vehicle and any other information available and valuable to identifying the child and alleged abductor(s).

CECOMS Activation Procedures

- Law enforcement agency will call CECOMS at 216.771.1363. They will advise CECOMS that they are requesting an AMBER ALERT.
- Requesting law enforcement agency will fax to CECOMS the three page **AMBER ALERT URGENT FAX** including the exact AMBER ALERT message that they request to be broadcast via the Emergency Alert System. This fax should be on agency letterhead. Fax to 216.443.5705 and 216.443.4923.
- Once the fax message is received at CECOMS, the CECOMS Operator will contact the requesting agency on their emergency phone number to confirm the legitimacy of the AMBER ALERT and read back the exact message.
- Once Confirmed, CECOMS will transmit the **AMBER ALERT** message via the Emergency Alert System (EAS).
- CECOMS will also contact the National Weather Service and convey the AMBER ALERT message. The National Weather Service will then broadcast the message via NOAA Weather Radio System.
- CECOMS Operator will then fax the three page **AMBER ALERT URGENT FAX** including the exact AMBER ALERT message to the area media outlets and agencies including the Ohio Lottery Commission.
- CECOMS will activate the County Ready Notify System.
- CECOMS will activate the Automatic License Plate Reader System (ALPR).
- CECOMS will contact LAMAR Advertising to post the information on the digital billboards.
- CECOMS maintains a list of media outlets that have requested to receive the **AMBER ALERT URGENT FAX**.
- CECOMS Operator will call back the requesting law enforcement agency and advise them that the AMBER ALERT message has been sent via the Emergency Alert System, the National Weather Service NOAA Weather Radio, and all media outlets and agencies that have requested to receive the AMBER Alert message.

VI. CANCELLATION OF THE AMBER ALERT

Upon the confirmed recovery of the child by any law enforcement agency and once confirmed by the initiating agency, the initiating agency will immediately call CECOMS at 216.771.1363 and advise them of the cancellation. The initiating agency will then send a **CANCELLATION FAX** to CECOMS at 216.443.5705. CECOMS will fax the cancellation notice to all participating media outlets and agencies and the National Weather Service. Upon receipt of this notice agencies will contact CECOMS via phone and confirm the cancellation. The AMBER ALERT should then be cancelled immediately.

VII. CRITERIA NOT QUALIFIED FOR **THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT** ACTIVATION

- Based on the above criteria, the following situations do **NOT** qualify for the AMBER ALERT activation:
- Missing child believed to have run away from home.
- Missing child taken by a non-custodial relative in a child custody case.
- Missing adult (eighteen (18) years of age or older).
- Police search for other criminals (murder suspect, bank robber, etc).
- A child missing more than twenty-four (24) hours.

VIII. Endangered Missing Child Recovery Plan:

If the criteria for the AMBER ALERT activation are **NOT** met or in addition to an AMBER Alert: Law enforcement should consider utilizing the following agencies and/or services to help locate the missing child.

1. Enter the missing juvenile through LEADS and NCIC.
2. Send a LEADS administration broadcast to all Ohio law enforcement terminals.
3. Send a NLETS (National Law Enforcement Tele Communication System) broadcast message to adjacent states.
4. Contact the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to report the missing child case at 1.800.843.5678; this is a 24-hour hot line.
5. Have both liability and authorization form signed (optional, not required.)
6. Contact County Child Services for possible assistance or information.
7. Contact, a Child is Missing Inc. (ACIM) at 954.763.1288 fax 954.763.4569.
8. Use a Locator Program.
9. Reverse 911, if available.
10. Ohio State Patrol for their special AMBER ALERT leads assistance.
11. News Release to the media including photograph.
12. Contact broadcasting agencies for their assistance.
13. Contact beyond Missing Flyer Program 415.461.3463.
14. Fire Departments or volunteer groups to help search for the missing child.
15. Contact other law enforcement agencies for assistance.
16. State of Ohio Children's clearing House Hot Line at 1.800.325.5604.
17. Child Alert Foundation Posters (check with your county Sheriff).
18. Federal Bureau of Investigation. (FBI)
19. Canine Units / Mounted Units
20. Alzheimer's Association / Greater Cleveland Chapter 216.721.8457



The above list of services/agencies is provided to assist Law Enforcement but is not intended to be limited to other means law enforcement may find useful.

THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT REVIEW BOARD

The Review/General Board will consist of the following members:

John T. Majoy, Chief, Newburgh Heights Police Department, 216.641.5545, Committee Chairperson

Christopher Minek, Operations Supervisor, Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System, 216.501.7041

Toni Garbo, Community Relations Director, WJW TV-8, 216.432.4240

Rick Thomas, Captian, Lorain County Sheriff's Office, Lorain County

Russell Scarbrough, 911 Communications Supervisor, Lorain County, 216.329.5445

Terry Grice, Chief, Montville Township Police Department, Medina County 330.725.2204

Dennis O'Neil, ODOT, District 12 Representative, 216.581.2100

Dan Dudik, Chief, Geneva Police Department, Lake County, 440-466-1111

James Currie, Sergeant, Akron Police Department, Summit County, 330-375-2530

PURPOSE

1. This committee will meet periodically to review and implement any procedural changes to better serve [THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#).
2. Within fourteen (14) days, the law enforcement agency that activates the alert will submit a follow-up report to the Review Board's Chairperson.
3. This follow-up report will consist of:
 - a) copies of all the forms used to activate the alert,
 - b) a general report with any positive or negative comments regarding the
 - c) activation procedures, and
 - d) a synopsis of the conclusion of the investigation.
4. Within 14 days of receipt of the law enforcement agency's report the Chairperson will convene a meeting of the Review Board and the law enforcement agency designee that activated the alert for review of the activation to help ensure accuracy, and clarify any procedural issues.
5. Member's of the Review Board will disseminate activation findings to committee members within 14 days.



MEMBERSHIP FORM

If you are located within CECOMS EAS activation region and wish to participate in [THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#), you may do so by faxing information requested on this form. Your application indicates that you agree and will fully comply with the contents as indicated in the plan.

EMAIL: cminek@cuyahogacounty.us
Christopher Minek, Operations Supervisor,
Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System (CECOMS)

FAX NUMBER: **216.443.5705**

AGENCY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NON-EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER: _____

CITY: _____ COUNTY: _____ EMAIL: _____

AGENCY FAX NUMBER: _____

24-HOUR EMERGENCY DISPATCH (RECORDED LINE) TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR VERIFICATION _____

TYPE EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S TITLE AND NAME: _____

EXECUTIVE'S CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: _____

EXECUTIVE'S SIGNATURE: _____

TYPE THE COMMANDING OFFICER'S NAME RESPONSIBLE WITHIN YOUR AGENCY

FOR THE AMBER ALERT PLAN: _____

CONTACT NUMBER: _____

If you have any questions concerning this **MEMBERSHIP FORM** or CECOMS EAS activation region, please contact Christopher Minek at 216.501.7041

[THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT](http://ja.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/Cuyahoga-Emergency-Communications-System.aspx) plan and forms are located at:
<http://ja.cuyahogacounty.us/en-US/Cuyahoga-Emergency-Communications-System.aspx>
(Please use Law Enforcement letterhead)

LIABILITY AGREEMENT

I hereby agree the information I have provided to the (law enforcement agency) to be truthful, factual and correct.

As the parent/legal guardian, I am aware that in order for the (law enforcement agency) to enter a child as being abducted and endangered the following criteria must be met:

- A. The child is under eighteen (18) years of age.**
- B. There is credible information that suggests that the child was forcibly or intentionally removed or lured away from their location and remains missing.**
- C. The law enforcement agency believes the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.**
- D. There is enough descriptive information about the child, and/or alleged abductor(s), and/or alleged abductor's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help.**

If the criteria are met, alert information must be organized for public distribution. This information can include a description and pictures of the missing child, the alleged abductor(s), alleged abductor's vehicle and any other information available and valuable to identifying the child and alleged abductor(s).

I am also aware I may be charged criminally for committing the crime of "Obstructing Official Business" (Ohio Revised Code 2921.31) if I knowingly provide false information to law enforcement authorities.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

Last Name	Middle Initial	First Name
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Current Address:

Street Number	Street Name	City	State	Zip Code
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I have read and fully understand the contents of this document. A photocopy of this release document will be valid as an original thereof, even though the said photocopy does not contain an original writing of my signature.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____
(Including mother's maiden name)

Witness: _____ Date: _____
(Please use Law enforcement letterhead)

AUTHORIZATION FOR RELEASE OF JUVENILE INFORMATION

For a period of one year from the execution of this document, the undersigned authorizes full disclosure of all records concerning the below listed juvenile to any agent of any municipal or county law enforcement agency, any agent of the state of Ohio, the Ohio State Patrol or any individual or entity assigned by the (law enforcement agency), whether the records are of a public, private, internal or confidential nature. I direct the release of such information regardless of any agreement I may have made to the contrary with any entity or individual to whom the juvenile's information is released or presented.

The intent of this authorization is to give my consent for full and complete disclosure of confidential juvenile information. Additionally, I understand the duty of the (law enforcement agency) to release any information to the proper authorities and make other reports as may be mandated by law. I also certify that any person(s) who may furnish such information concerning the below listed juvenile shall not be held accountable for giving this information: and I do hereby release such person(s) from any and all liability which may be incurred as a result of furnishing such information. I further release the (law enforcement agency), the Ohio Emergency Management Agency, the Ohio Broadcasters Association and its agents, and designees under this release, from any and all liability which may be incurred as a result of furnishing such information? I further release Cuyahoga County and CECOMS and their agents, officers, employees, administrators, representatives and servants from any and all liability that may be incurred as a result of furnishing juvenile information, and waive any restrictions imposed by law in disseminating such information.

A photocopy of this release document will be valid as an original thereof, even though the said photocopy does not contain an original writing of my signature.

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

JUVENILE FOR WHICH INFORMATION RELEASE IS AUTHORIZED:

NAME: _____

DOB: _____

SSN: _____

PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN AUTHORIZING RELEASE OF INFORMATION:

Last Name / First Name / Middle Initial / Maiden name, former married name(s) or other names used

Current Address: _____
Street Number Street Name City State Zip Code

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian Date
(Including mother's maiden name)

Witness Date
(Please use Law enforcement letterhead)

REQUEST FOR AGENCY TRAINING

If you are located within CECOMS EAS activation region and participate in [THE NORTHEAST OHIO AMBER ALERT PLAN](#), you may request agency training by faxing/emailing information requested on this form.

Topics: AMBER Alert Activation/Cancelation Procedures, LEADS Entries, AMBER Packet Completion, What to expect during an AMBER Alert Activation, AMBER Alert Review Committee Responsibilities, Endangered Missing Child Procedures, Endangered Missing Adult Procedures, CECOMS Media Alerts, Conducting "TEST" AMBER Alert Activation Procedures for Dispatchers and Issuing Officials.

COST: FREE (All materials are provided)

Training Time: 1-2 hours

EMAIL: cminek@cuyahogacounty.us
Christopher Minek, Operations Supervisor,
Cuyahoga Emergency Communications System (CECOMS)

FAX NUMBER: 216.443.5705

NAME: _____

AGENCY: _____

ADDRESS: _____

HOST CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

CITY: _____ COUNTY: _____

AGENCY FAX NUMBER: _____

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: _____

DATE(S) OF TRAINING REQUESTED: _____

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Signature: _____

Date: _____