

California AMBER Alert Plan

The State's AMBER Alert is modeled after the nationwide AMBER Plan, which was developed in 1996 after nine-year old **Amber Hagerman** was abducted and brutally murdered near her home in Arlington, Texas. Amber's death had such an impact on her community that it prompted law enforcement agencies and the Texas Association of Radio Managers to develop an emergency alert plan to help recover abducted children. Communities throughout the country have since adopted similar plans, with the common goal of returning abducted children to safety by employing the media to enlist the public in immediate search efforts. Texas organized a system that encouraged law enforcement agencies to alert the media following a confirmed child abduction.

California introduced the AMBER Alert concept in 1999 as a regional program. In 2002, Assembly Bill 415 (Government Code section 8594) mandated that AMBER Alert plans be implemented statewide and include specific notification protocols for all communities.

Source: <https://www.chp.ca.gov/news-alerts/amber-alert>

- **AMBER Alert has functioned since 2002 and to date has been activated 297 times, resulting in the rescue or safe finding of 350 children.*** **Last Updated: Following August 8, 2019, deactivation of the (Paso Robles PD) AMBER Alert for Benz Magana-Davis.*

- What Parents Can Do to Educate Their Children

Talk to your children about the following:

- Never get into anyone's car without your parents' permission.
 - Move away from a car that pulls up beside you if you don't know the driver.
 - Say, "No, thank you," if a stranger or someone else offers you candy or gifts.
 - Never answer the door if you are home alone.
 - Don't play in deserted buildings.
- **Criteria for an AMBER Alert:** In order for the California AMBER Alert Plan to be activated, law enforcement must be satisfied the following criteria have been met:
 1. It has been confirmed that an abduction has occurred, or the child has been taken by anybody including, but not limited to, parents and/or guardians.
 2. The victim is 17 years of age or younger, or of proven mental or physical disability.
 3. There is reason to believe the victim is in imminent danger of serious bodily injury or death.
 4. There is information available that, if disseminated to the general public, could assist in the safe recovery of the victim.

The AMBER Alert cannot be used for custodial disputes or runaway cases that don't meet the criteria. Law enforcement agencies are encouraged to issue an Endangered Missing Advisories for cases that don't meet the criteria.