

South Dakota Emergency Alert System

AMBER Alert Child Abduction Plan

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA **AMBER** ALERT PROGRAM

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I. INTRODUCTION

The State of South Dakota AMBER Alert Plan is a voluntary, cooperative program between law enforcement and public safety agencies and radio, television and cable broadcasters, to use the Emergency Alert System, or EAS, and other resources, to provide timely information to the public when a child has been abducted and authorities believe the child is in grave danger. The goal of the program is the safe return of an abducted child.

A. OVERVIEW

The State of South Dakota AMBER Alert Plan is based on guidelines developed by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. Abduction cases must meet specific standards to qualify for an AMBER Alert activation. This plan sets down those standards.

The South Dakota Emergency Communications Plan provides procedures for activation of the Emergency Alert System when there is a threat to public safety. That guideline provides the basis for the use of the EAS in the AMBER Plan.

While the EAS is the primary source of information about the AMBER Alert, other resources from state and local government and private enterprise are incorporated into the State of South Dakota AMBER Alert Plan.

Not every abduction case will qualify for an AMBER Alert activation. The South Dakota AMBER Alert plan will not be 100% successful. But the possibility of the safe return of just one child makes the plan worthwhile.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of the South Dakota AMBER Alert Plan is to set up a formal means of exchanging information between allied law enforcement and public safety agencies, radio, television and cable broadcasters and state and private entities to facilitate the safe return of abducted children.

C. DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

The goal of the South Dakota AMBER Alert Program is the safe return of abducted children. The program depends on volunteers for administration and supervision, and voluntary cooperation between law enforcement and public safety agencies, and broadcasters and other members of the private sector for activation. The activation of an AMBER Alert rests solely in the discretion of the agency having jurisdiction for the

child abduction. Nothing herein contained shall be construed as requiring activation of the AMBER Alert by a law enforcement agency nor infringing upon the discretion of a Broadcaster regarding the broadcast of an alert as provided by FCC Rules and Regulations.

II. South Dakota AMBER Alert Standards

A. BROADCASTER PARTICIPATION

- 1.** AMBER Alert activation requests must be made to the EAS State Relay and/or Local Primary stations. Local Primary stations are responsible for training their staff in AMBER Alert activation procedures.
- 2.** No Local Primary station shall activate an AMBER Alert request received directly from a law enforcement agency located outside the State of South Dakota. Any out-of-state agency attempting to activate an AMBER Alert in the State of South Dakota must be directed to the proper South Dakota agency.
- 3.** Local Primary stations that receive AMBER Alert activation requests must broadcast them in a timely manner.
- 4.** EAS Participating Stations will rebroadcast AMBER Alert activations in accordance with EAS procedures.
- 5.** Program Control
 - a. Broadcasters and cable television operators' acceptance of, or participation in the South Dakota AMBER Alert Plan does not affect program control and does not prohibit a licensee from exercising independent discretion and responsibility in any given situation.
 - b. Broadcast stations and cable systems originating EAS emergency messages shall be deemed to have conferred rebroadcast authority.
 - c. The FCC Rules and Regulations provide the concept of management of each broadcast station and cable system to exercise discretion regarding the broadcast of emergency information and instructions to the general public.
- 6.** Participating stations that receive a request for an AMBER Alert activation from an authorized law enforcement agency should refer that request to the operational area Local Primary station.

III. BROADCAST PROCEDURES

A. STATE RELAY AND LOCAL PRIMARY STATIONS

1. The agency requesting the AMBER Alert activation will contact the State Relay and/or the Local Primary (LP) station and request the activation.
2. The activating agency will have the appropriate AMBER Alert information ready to record and send via fax or e-mail.
3. The activating agency will provide a callback number for the LP station staff to verify the AMBER Alert.
4. The State Relay and/or the LP station will follow standard EAS activation procedures:
 - a. AMBER Alerts will use the "CAE" or "Child Abduction Emergency Message" Code.
 - b. AMBER Alerts will be directed to all counties in the appropriate EAS Operational Area.
5. The activating agency will contact the LP stations and participating stations with the resolution/conclusion of the AMBER Alert.

B. PARTICIPATING STATIONS

1. As with other EAS activations, participating stations can assume that the information received is authentic and qualified for rebroadcast, according to EAS procedures.
2. Participating broadcast stations with appropriate staff will repeat the information from the AMBER Alert at their discretion, at least once every half-hour for the first two hours and once an hour for the next three hours, unless the Alert is updated or canceled by the initiating agency. The EAS alert tones will NOT be used to repeat the information.
3. Television stations and cable providers must follow the FCC's Visual Display Rule and use a "crawl" or other means to visually present the AMBER Alert information. That information may be repeated at the station's discretion, at least once every half-hour for

the first two hours, and once an hour for the next three hours, unless the Alert is updated or canceled by the initiating agency.

4. Broadcasters and cable providers are encouraged to add the AMBER Alert information to their web sites, including any pictures made available by the initiating agency.
5. The Local Primary Station used to activate the AMBER Alert shall transmit an ADR (administrative message) upon notification that the alert has been cancelled.
6. Stations will immediately broadcast the cancellation or resolution of the AMBER Alert as soon as it is received. The EAS alert tones will NOT be used for cancellation messages.

NOTE:

An EAS activation takes priority over any other broadcast and station activity in progress at the time of the activation.

B. CONTINUING COVERAGE

Obviously each AMBER Alert case will be unique – some cases may be resolved within hours of the activation and other cases may remain open for a period of time. In extended situations involving days or weeks, individual stations have the authority to determine their level of participation and coverage of the AMBER Alert information. Stations may decide to discontinue their coverage until new information is received.