

## OFFICE OF OPERATIONS

### NOTICE

1.11

July 25, 2018

**TO:** All Office of Operations Personnel

**FROM:** Director, Office of Operations

**SUBJECT:** TEMPORARY CUSTODY AND DISPOSITION OF RUNAWAY JUVENILES

When officers encounter runaway juveniles, there are often complex social problems, such as family dysfunction or child abuse, that precede the juvenile's decision to leave home. Although the Department works with a variety of its partners to address the underlying causes of the problem of juvenile runaways, officers encountering runaway juveniles in the field shall be primarily concerned with reducing the potential for harm to the runaway juvenile. Running away is a status offense; however, runaway juveniles are often also involved with other criminal activity. Accordingly, when officers encounter a runaway juvenile, they should place the juvenile in temporary custody and process them pursuant to one of the following Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Sections:

- Dependent juveniles taken into protective custody under 300 WIC.
  - When officers encounter a runaway juvenile that also has a protective custody warrant pursuant to 300 WIC *et. al.*, they shall detain the juvenile and call the Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) hotline: 1-800-540-4000.
  - The DCFS personnel shall coordinate with the detaining officers to provide suitable shelter or foster care to the juvenile.
  - **Note.** If officers are unable to obtain suitable shelter from the personnel at the DCFS hotline, officers shall request to talk to a DCFS supervisor. The DCFS supervisors have special training in resolving the complex issues involved with detained runaway juveniles.
- Pre-delinquent juveniles taken into custody under 601 WIC (runaways).
  - When officers encounter a runaway juvenile that does not have warrants and is not suspected of any criminal offenses, they shall detain the juvenile and call the DCFS hotline for placement options.
  - **Note.** Section 625 WIC allows a peace officer to take a juvenile into temporary custody without a warrant when the officer has reasonable cause for believing that such person is a runaway under Section 601 WIC.
- Delinquent juveniles taken into custody under 602 WIC.
  - When officers encounter a runaway juvenile that: (1) also has a warrant for a criminal offense under 602 WIC; (2) is subject to an open charge for a criminal offense; or (3) is wanted for a violation of probation pursuant to 777 WIC (Violation of Probation), officers shall contact the Probation Department for booking information.
  - Officers shall formally arrest, book, and Live Scan the juvenile prior to transporting to the Probation Department juvenile hall facility.

All Office of Operations Personnel

Page 2

1.11

Although the investigative responsibilities are different for in-state or out-of-state juvenile runaways, the initial custody decisions made by officers in the field remain the same. Thus, officers encountering a runaway juvenile shall be guided by the above direction, regardless of whether the juvenile is a California or out-of-state runaway juvenile. In addition, if the runaway juvenile appears to be danger to himself or others pursuant to Section 5150 of the Health and Safety Code, officers shall contact the Mental Evaluation Unit for advice.

Should you have questions regarding this matter, please contact the Evaluation and Administration Section, Office of Operations, at (213) 486-6050.



ROBERT N. ARCOS, Assistant Chief  
Director, Office of Operations

DISTRIBUTION "A"