



**Arizona's Early Warning System to Prevent
Child Abductions & Injury to Missing Children
Under EXIGENT Circumstances**

The **Arizona AMBER Alert** is established in memory of all the children who have been abducted or kidnapped and have or have not been returned home. One child to suffer this type of tragedy is too many. Nationwide we have children suffering such an ill fate each day. This plan is to aid in the protection of our children from such events.

This is the only authorized AMBER plan for the State of Arizona and can be located at www.azamberalert.org, www.azdps.gov or www.azbroadcasters.org.

In response to community concern, the Arizona Broadcasters Association and Arizona law enforcement agencies have created the **Arizona AMBER Alert** to give Arizonans timely information about child abductions or children missing under dangerous circumstances. Born out of a desire to use maximum public participation to recover children in only the most serious missing child situations, the **Arizona AMBER Alert** is an innovative way to protect our children. It is a cooperative agreement between the Arizona Broadcasters Association, Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS), law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Arizona, AZ Department of Transportation (ADOT), the Arizona Lottery, AlertSense and the public at large. The plan is an early warning system available for use by law enforcement to alert the public when a child has been reported as abducted or missing under emergency circumstances and the law enforcement agency believes the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death.

By broadcasting frequent public alerts, descriptions and other vital information in the crucial first hours after a child abduction, the **Arizona AMBER Alert** can enlist large numbers of citizens in an effort to recover the child as soon as possible. AMBER Alert notifications are supported by the AlertSense AMBER Alert Web Based System and the Emergency Alert System (EAS).

It is hoped that this early warning distributed by the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and the Web System will coerce an abductor into releasing a child, for fear of being caught.

OVERVIEW:

1. After local law enforcement officials determine a child abduction has occurred and the incident meets the criteria for activating AMBER Alert, the **Arizona AMBER Alert** will be activated through www.azamberalert.org
2. All participating Law Enforcement Agencies have been assigned a Username and Password to access the Amber Alert System. DPS will be the primary contact point and confirm the requesting agency's identification through established security procedures before giving a representative of an agency access to the Amber Alert system. The activating agency must begin by calling the AMBER Alert Hotline at DPS Duty Office at 602-223-2444.
3. Information surrounding the incident will be entered into the AMBER Alert System through www.azamberalert.org.
4. The Activating Agency inputs the information relative to the Amber Alert and submits it to the system. DPS then reviews the information for completeness and can make recommendations regarding adding or deleting details based on established protocols. The information can be updated by DPS, The Activating Agency, or with assistance from the AlertSense Emergency Help Desk. Once the details are deemed complete, DPS will push the Amber Alert to the Public using the web-based system, or authorize the AlertSense personnel to push the Alert.
5. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) & Traffic Operations Center will be activated through the designated primary radio stations.
6. The missing child and crucial information surrounding the AMBER Alert shall immediately be entered into the FBI's National Crime Information Center, NCIC, with an AMBER Alert flag and a message containing the same information shall immediately be sent to every law enforcement agency within the state of Arizona through the Arizona Law Enforcement Telecommunications System, ALETS.
7. Activation of the AMBER Alert sends the abduction information to every radio and TV station statewide along with ADOT Highway sign boards and AZ Lottery terminals for re-broadcasting of the alert. Law enforcement agencies and the general public receive the alert information through several means in addition to it being posted on the **Arizona AMBER Alert** Website at www.azamberalert.org.
8. Broadcasters are asked to broadcast the AMBER Alert within 15 minutes of receipt of the alert. Getting the information on the air as soon as possible is a key factor. The most crucial time in a child abduction is the first one to two hours.

9. Stations are asked that for the *first two hours* after the initial activation of the Alert to broadcast the information every *15 minutes*, and then broadcast it *once each half-hour for the next 3 hours*. This provides for a minimum of five hours of broadcast of the crucial information AMBER Alert information.
10. Verification of the AMBER Alert information and activation can be done through the **Arizona AMBER Alert Web Site** at www.azamberalert.org.
11. Prompt dissemination of information about an abduction is a vital part of the **Arizona AMBER Alert**. Once the situation is resolved, the AMBER Alert is cancelled through the Web System by the activating agency as required by the AMBER Alert plan.
12. If the incident does not meet the criteria for activation of the **Arizona AMBER Alert**, nothing precludes the Activating Agency from issuing a media alert or seeking assistance from the local media to gain assistance notifying the public of the missing child.

**If the Arizona AMBER Alert only saves the life of one child,
it is well worth the participation of everyone.
That one child could be from your community.**

AMBER ALERT ACTIVATION AND RESPONSIBILITY:

The decision to request an activation of the AMBER Alert lies with the investigating local law enforcement agency. That agency has the responsibility of evaluating the facts of the incident to determine if it meets the criteria for activation of the AMBER Alert. The investigating agency becomes the Activating Agency upon making the decision to activate the AMBER Alert. The Activating Agency is responsible for providing all information for input into the Web System, along with updates and ultimate cancellation of the AMBER Alert in coordination with DPS.

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) provides access to the Web System for the Activating Agency. Upon receipt of a call from an Activating Agency for activation of an Alert, DPS will provide the Activating Agency with the necessary key code information to gain access into the Web System for posting and dissemination of the information via the AMBER Alert. If the Activating Agency needs assistance with inputting of the data into the Web System DPS may provide assistance. If there is a previously agreed upon Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with another law enforcement agency, that agency may assist the Activating Agency with inputting the data into the Web System for activating the AMBER Alert.

The Department of Public Safety will provide the necessary contact information to the EAS Local Primary activation stations to activate EAS. The LP station will be provided with the information surrounding the AMBER Alert and create an EAS broadcast to send out to all Arizona broadcast stations and Arizona AMBER Alerting Partners with EAS receivers to re-broadcast the AMBER Alert information.

The Activating Agency or the Department of Public Safety working to assist the Activating Agency shall immediately create and make an entry into NCIC with all the pertinent information of the AMBER Alert and send an ALETS message to every law enforcement agency within the State of Arizona outlining the details of the AMBER Alert.

The Activating Agency must supply three phone numbers for input into the Web System for contact when activating the **Arizona AMBER Alert**.

1. The first number is the primary phone number for the public to provide tips and information on the missing child. If a 1-800 number is available, it will be provided to the public also.

2. The second phone number is a confidential number for media / PIO contact. This number is provided to media outlets to make follow-up contact with the Activating Agency for information and updates without tying up the 911 phone lines or overtaxing the 911 systems. This phone number will be restricted to media outlets and other law enforcement agencies.
3. The third number is a confidential number to be shared with other law enforcement agencies to contact the Activating Agency quickly and without restriction with information that could be crucial the investigation or the safety of the victim. This phone number will be restricted to other law enforcement agencies.

All AMBER Alerts must be cancelled through DPS to ensure that all participants are apprised of the cancellation of the alert as soon as possible. This is a requirement of the **Arizona AMBER Alert Plan** and the Emergency Alert System. It also is a matter of common courtesy to all those lending assistance with looking for the missing child.

AMBER Alerts in Arizona are statewide in scope on all alerts and will remain such until there are any revisions to this plan.

ARIZONA AMBER ALERT ACTIVATION CRITERIA:

1. The **Arizona AMBER Alert** requires specific criteria to be met before an activation of the **Arizona AMBER Alert Plan** can be made for a child abduction. Law Enforcement Agencies **must** meet **ALL** criteria listed below before an activation can occur. The criteria are:
 - I. **An abduction of a child (under 18) has occurred.**
 - II. **The abduction poses a credible threat of immediate danger of serious bodily injury or death to the child.**
 - III. **A law enforcement agency has determined that the child is not a runaway and has not been abducted as a result of a child custody dispute, unless the dispute poses a credible and/or specific threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the child.**
 - IV. **There is sufficient descriptive information about the child, the abductor and the circumstances surrounding the abduction to indicate that activation of the alert will help locate the child and/or apprehend the suspect.**
2. The **Arizona AMBER Alert** is activated **only** when the specific requirements listed above are met.
3. The **Arizona AMBER Alert** is **not activated** for every missing/abducted child.
4. The **Arizona AMBER Alert** is **not activated** for Access or Custodial Interference Cases where there is **no danger** of serious bodily injury or death to the child.
5. If the incident does not meet the criteria of this plan for activation, nothing precludes the investigating agency from contacting the media for assistance in disseminating the information surrounding the incident. **However, the incident should not be referred to as an AMBER Alert since it does not meet the activation criteria.**

STEPS TO ACTIVATION:

1. After receiving a report of a missing / abducted child, the activating law enforcement agency will determine if the incident meets the criteria of the **Arizona AMBER Alert Plan**. If it does, the Activating Agency will contact the *Department of Public Safety (DPS)* to request an activation of the **Arizona AMBER Alert**.
2. The *Department of Public Safety* is the key holder to the AlertSense AMBER Alert Web System and will provide the Activating Agency access to the Web System.
3. DPS will provide the activating agency with the contact information of the **Local Primary AMBER ALERT STATION** for later entry of information into the Emergency Alert System (EAS). These stations will be: KTAR, KJZZ or KFYI. The **AMBER ALERT STATION** will record the necessary information and activate the EAS.
4. The Activating Agency will access the Web System, www.azamberalert.org, with the use of the security key code and enter the necessary information for the AMBER Alert. Upon completion of the entry of all the necessary data the AMBER Alert is now ready for review by DPS, before the AMBER Alert is activated. This will include the capability of uploading photos of the participants and/or vehicle.
5. The Activating Agency will be connected to the Local Primary EAS station through DPS to provide the information for the activation of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). The Alert will immediately be delivered to all Arizona broadcast stations and Arizona AMBER Alerting Partners with EAS receivers, including ADOT and AZ Lottery. Although the **Arizona AMBER Alert** goes out only once via the EAS system, participating stations are asked to then broadcast the information **every fifteen minutes** for the next **two hours**, then **one time per half-hour** for the next **three hours**.
6. The Activating Agency, or the Department of Public Safety working to assist the Activating Agency, will immediately create and make an entry into NCIC with all the pertinent information of the AMBER Alert and send an ALETS message state wide outlining the details of the AMBER Alert.
7. Updates should be entered into the AMBER Alert Web System, www.azamberalert.org, as soon as they come available for dissemination to all broadcasters, alerting partners and the general public. Discretion should be used in updating the Web System and should only be used if there is information that comes available that is significant to the case and is of potential use by the public to provide assistance with locating the child.
8. If the child is recovered or the alert needs to be cancelled, the activating law enforcement agency must contact DPS to send a cancellation of the AMBER Alert via the Web System to the **AMBER ALERT STATIONS**, all broadcasters, Alerting Partners, participating agencies, groups and the general public as soon as possible.

It is the responsibility of the individual radio and television stations to follow-up with the Activating Agency's Public Information Officer or contact for any additional information about the incident.

Requirements for a Participating Law Enforcement Agency:

1. Must have at least one (1) designated point of contact within that agency and file the designated contact's information with the Arizona AMBER Alert Oversight Committee.
2. Must be prepared to have multiple phone lines or accessibility to phones with at least two rollover lines and personnel to receive incoming calls during the activation of the AMBER Alert or until the AMBER Alert is cancelled. (The activation may require personnel for receiving calls for an extended period of time with termination to be determined by the originating agency).
3. Must enter the child and all pertinent information into NCIC as soon as possible.
4. Must send a statewide ALETS message to all agencies with complete details of the incident and notification of the Arizona AMBER Alert's activation.
5. **Must submit a brief summary report of the activation of the Arizona AMBER Alert to the Arizona AMBER Alert Oversight Committee within 30 days of activation using the After Action Review Information Form, supplied by DPS.**
6. Must have adopted a written procedural policy, which establishes and outlines the operation of the Arizona AMBER Alert for that respective Agency which will include an Arizona AMBER Alert checklist.
7. Must agree to provide reporting contacts with proper training on a yearly basis as well as the designated password.

Requirements for Arizona AMBER Alert Reporting Officer:

1. Reporting AGENCY MUST BE A MEMBER of The Arizona AMBER Alert with password clearance on file with the Department of Public Safety.
2. Reporting agency must send out a statewide NLETS message with details of the incident for other agencies to be aware of potential information that may be given to their agency in response to the ALERT.
3. Reporting agencies ALERT PLAN representatives or designees MUST COMPLETE TRAINING provided by DPS or suggested by the Arizona AMBER Alert Oversight Committee.
4. A Representative of the REPORTING AGENCY MUST PRESENT A BRIEFING TO THE ARIZONA AMBER ALERT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE at the next scheduled meeting following the activation of the Arizona AMBER Alert.



LAW ENFORCEMENT CHECKLIST

1. IS THE ABDUCTED CHILD INCIDENT ONE IN WHICH THE CHILD VICTIM IS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE?

IF YES, ANSWER QUESTION 2.
IF NO, **DO NOT ACTIVATE** THE ARIZONA AMBER ALERT

2. DOES THE ABDUCTION POSE A CREDIBLE THREAT OF IMMEDIATE DANGER OF SERIOUS BODILLY INJURY OR DEATH TO THE CHILD?

IF YES, ANSWER QUESTION 3.
IF NO, **DO NOT ACTIVATE** THE ARIZONA AMBER ALERT

3. HAS THE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY DETERMINED THAT THE CHILD IS NOT A RUNAWAY AND HAS NOT BEEN ABDUCTED AS A RESULT OF A CHILD CUSTODY DISPUTE? (Unless the dispute poses a credible and/or specific threat of immediate danger of serious bodily harm or death to the child.)

IF YES, ANSWER QUESTION 4.
IF NO, **DO NOT ACTIVATE** THE ARIZONA AMBER ALERT

4. IS THERE SUFFICIENT DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHILD, THE ABDUCTOR AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE ABDUCTION TO INDICATE THAT ACTIVATION OF THE ALERT WILL HELP LOCATE THE CHILD AND/OR APPREHEND THE SUSPECT?

IF YES, **ACTIVATE** THE ARIZONA AMBER ALERT.
IF NO, **DO NOT ACTIVATE** THE ARIZONA AMBER ALERT

THE ALERT MUST CONTAIN A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE CHILD AND THE RELEVANT DETAILS OF THE INCIDENT FOR RELEASE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.



SAMPLE ON-AIR ALERT SCRIPT

Alert System Tones

Announcer:

We interrupt our programming to activate the ARIZONA AMBER ALERT. Important information will follow.

Announcer:

This activation of the ARIZONA AMBER ALERT comes at the request of the (name of reporting law enforcement agency).

This is an ARIZONA AMBER ALERT From the (name of reporting law enforcement agency. (Enter police report information)).

If you have any information regarding this abduction call the (name and phone number of reporting law enforcement agency).

Please be listening for additional timely alert messages and updates on this station.

This has been an abducted child alert from the ARIZONA AMBER ALERT. We now return to regular programming.

Since the activating law enforcement agency will receive a very high volume of calls almost immediately after activation, each originating agency is required to have accessibility to a phone line capable of “rolling over” into two additional lines, along with the necessary personnel or volunteers to receive the calls. All incoming calls from citizens to participating stations with information regarding the missing child should be directed to the responsible originating law enforcement agency.