

IPAWS Missing and Endangered Persons (MEP) Event Code

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FEMA

MEP Purpose and Background

- The new **MEP code** will help facilitate uniform processing of alerts involving missing and endangered persons, helping nationwide law enforcement to more effectively locate missing and endangered persons and restore them to their homes, families, and communities.
- The **Ashanti Alert Act of 2018** was the primary influence behind the standardization of missing persons alerts, leading to the creation of this rule.
- The MEP event code for EAS and its applicability for WEA should be used for missing and endangered person cases **that fall outside of AMBER Alert notification criteria**.
- Currently without the specific **MEP code** a variety of codes are used: Civil Emergency Message, Local Area Emergency, Law Enforcement Warning, and even Child Abduction Emergency. This causes confusion and unnecessary distraction from the actual problem. **The MEP code will eliminate the current confusion** of which event code to choose for a missing and endangered person.



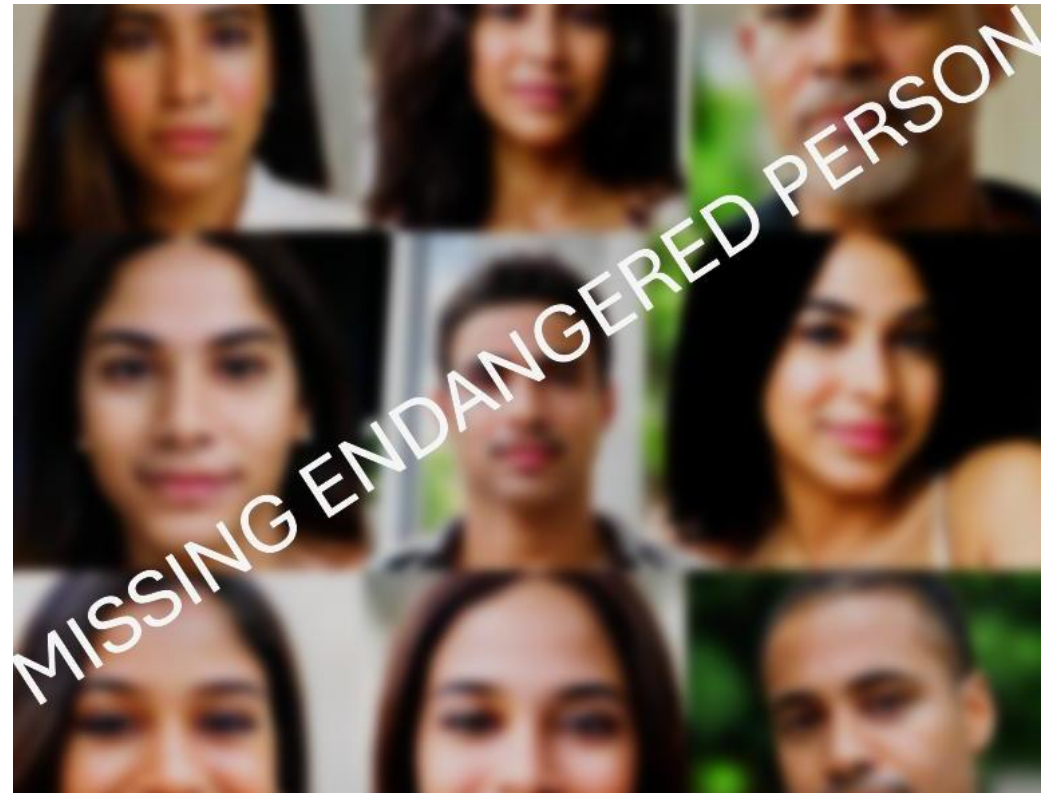
New Event Code – Missing Endangered Person

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has amended its regulations governing the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) to add a new event code, MEP, to allow alert originators to issue an alert to the public about missing and endangered persons (MEP) whose circumstances do not meet the criteria of “America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response” (AMBER) alerts. This event code will be effective September 8th, 2025
- IPAWS-OPEN release 4.02.06.01 was deployed this past November and supports the MEP function. For a WEA message, AAs will use “Public Safety” and “Imminent Threat” as the WEA handling code.
 - Since Alerting Original Software Provider (AOSP) developers and EAS vendors are not ready, MEP permissions will be disabled for all Collaborative Operating Groups (COGs) when MEP initially becomes available in IPAWS-OPEN.
 - Individual COGs may then request MEP permission by submitting an updated Public Alerting Authority (PAA) application. COGs will be reminded that they should coordinate with local broadcast and cable operators before originating MEP messaging intended for distribution via EAS.



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- IPAWS Technical Support Services (TSS) is currently tracking MEP availability for AOSP vendors in Staging and Demo. In the next 3 months, TSS will check AOSP vendors' readiness to support MEP.
- EAS vendors will have until the effective date to develop their product to comply with the FCC mandate.
- A soft rollout for WEA to support MEP could be scheduled in Spring 2025.
- Individual COG wants to send an MEP message via EAS, it will require extra coordination between their AOSP Provider, IPAWS, and local broadcast.



The Future of MEP

- The new MEP alert will help address the **over 180,000 people who go missing annually** and become endangered that do not qualify for an Amber Alert.
- IPAWS will continue to work with stakeholders to identify ways to educate and increase the effectiveness of the new MEP code.
- **All missing and endangered individuals deserve the best opportunity to be successfully rescued from the danger they face.**

Impact on Tribal Nations

- Tribal and Indigenous communities face a profound crisis of missing, endangered, abducted, and murdered persons.
- Native Americans constitute 2.5% of all missing person cases despite comprising only 1.2% of the U.S. population, underscoring the urgent need for targeted measures.
- National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Resolution called for the creation of an MEP event code to enable a more rapid and coordinated response to incidents involving missing indigenous persons.

