

Loudon County

C.A.R.T.

(Child Abduction Response Team)



Standard Operating Procedures

Last updated 12/09/11

Let's spend time searching for the child, not the resources

Intent and Purpose

The purpose is to establish an inter-agency child abduction team that will respond to abducted as well as missing and endangered child cases, as set forth by certain criteria.

When a child is abducted, time becomes a critical factor in effecting a safe rescue. Rapid response requires pre-identified, multi-agency resources, and operational plan and protocols, and a well-equipped, trained, and prepared team.

In an effort to enhance each agency's ability to respond quickly and effectively to a missing or abducted child, agencies in Loudon County have joined together to establish an inter-agency Child Abduction Response Team (CART).

The principal mission of the Child Abduction Response Team is the rescue of abducted children and the location of otherwise missing children whose safety may be endangered. An equally important goal is the successful prosecution of an abductor. The latter requires close coordination with prosecuting authorities, both in state and federal courts. Member agencies of the Child Abduction Response Team are obligated to coordinate their efforts in such a way as to support the efficient prosecution of cases. Civil and/or administrative actions derived from Child Abduction Response Team operations are likewise to receive coordinated support efforts from team members.

Principal goals of the CART:

1. Establish and maintain standards to respond to child abductions.
2. Increase effectiveness during CART activations.
3. Establish standards for teamwork, inter-agency cooperation and unified response
4. The rescue and safe return of abducted children through dedicated and intensive investigative, preventative, and general law enforcement efforts.
5. The arrest and successful prosecution of criminal abductors.

Statement of Cooperation

The Loudon County CART is comprised of members from Loudon County E-911, Loudon County Sheriff's Department, Loudon Police Department, Rural Metro EMS, 9th Judicial District Attorney's Office, New Providence Baptist Church, and various other local stakeholders, who have committed resources to a child abduction or endangered missing child event.

This inter-agency approach will significantly enhance the ability of individual agencies to respond to a missing or abducted child by:

- ✚ Maximizing benefit from shared financial and personnel resources
- ✚ Providing access to specialized equipment and devices
- ✚ Integrated unique investigative, prosecutorial, child victim, and community expertise
- ✚ Assuring family and community that all appropriate resources are integrated and focused on successful rescue of the child

Team Composition

The Loudon County CART is an eight (8) member multi-jurisdictional team. The Loudon County CART members are selected by their agencies and approved by the Loudon County CART Commander based on experience, exemplary service, and expertise. The Loudon County CART member will be assigned a CART position based on their experience, expertise, and desire.

Each CART member agency agrees to dedicate at least one investigator for training, organizational and preparedness meetings, and response to a call for assistance for an incident of child abduction.

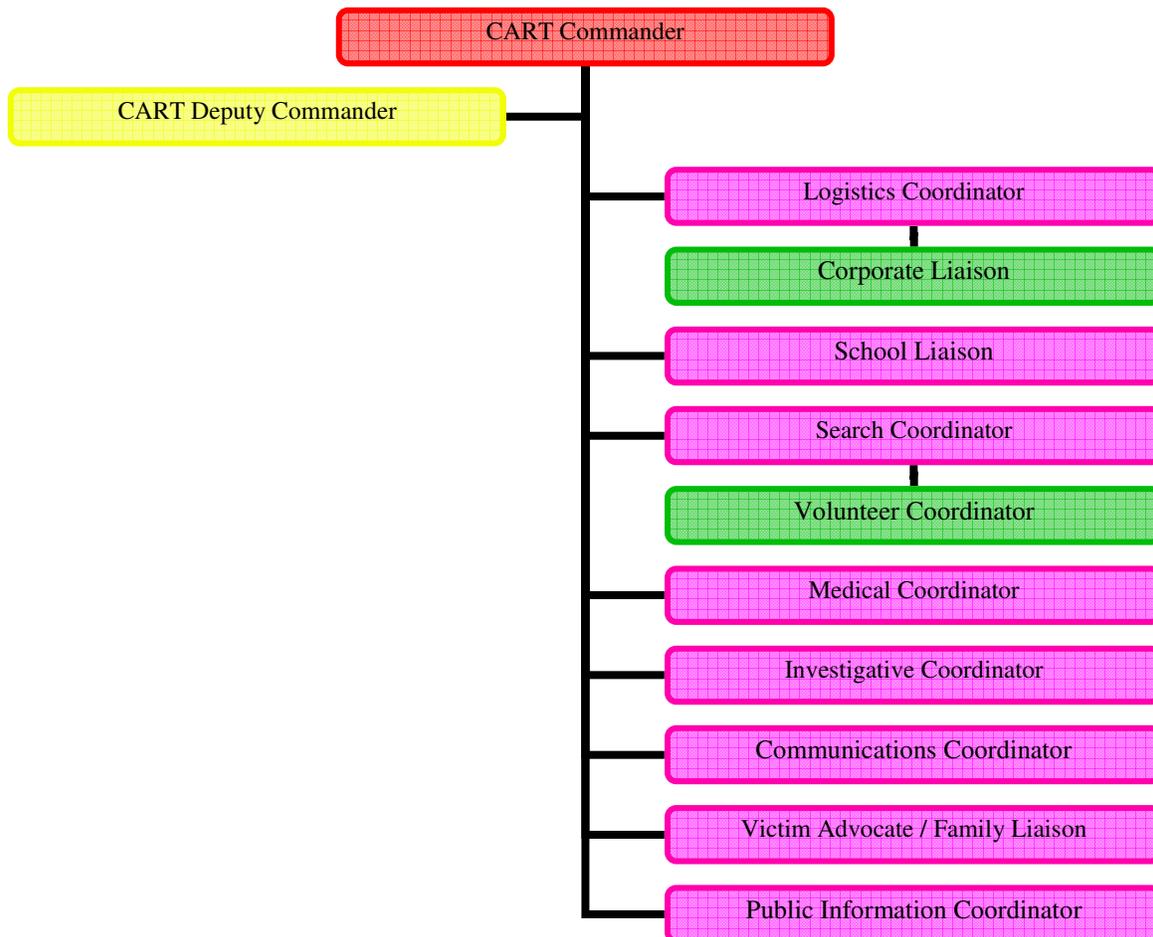
The participating agencies stipulated that they will allow their CART representative(s) to respond to the requesting agency for a minimum of three (3) working days, or at successful conclusion of the case – whichever is less. Should the investigation require a commitment for longer than the three (3) working days, the CART Commander, or his/her designee, shall

make a request to the CART member's agency for an additional three (3) day commitment. The Director of the responding agencies may recall their personnel at any time regardless of the original commitment, but generally only for extreme emergencies within their own community.

The Loudon County CART Commander, or his/her designee, will be responsible for:

- Loudon County CART operations during an activation
- Ensuring Loudon County CART positions are sufficiently staffed during a CART activation
- Oversight of CART development
- Loudon County CART equipment
- Ensuring Loudon County CART members receive proper training
- Updating the Loudon County CART member contact information

The Loudon County CART command structure is as follows:



A complete Loudon County CART organizational chart, showing Loudon County CART members, their assignments, and contact information will be posted at the Command Center on all CART activations.

Meeting and Training Requirements

In order to enhance the cohesiveness of the CART members to work together as a team, in the event of an activation, CART will meet at least once a quarter and should hold at least one tabletop exercise annually. The tabletop or field exercise can count as a quarterly meeting. The CART Commander will be responsible for coordinating the quarterly meetings and ensuring that CART members receive appropriate training.

Communication

The Loudon County E-911 Center will be contacted by the Loudon County CART Logistics Coordinator to arrange an operations channel for Loudon County CART members to use to communicate with each other. Clear speech and plain language will be used by all Loudon County CART members.

The Loudon County CART Commander, Deputy Commander, Logistics Coordinator, Search Coordinator, Investigative Coordinator, and Intelligence Coordinator will meet hourly with the venue agency Incident Commander and Lead Investigators to discuss updates on the progress of the missing child investigation, problem solve, and discuss future investigative tactics.

Media relations regarding the missing child are the responsibility of the venue law enforcement agency. In the event additional Public Information Officers (PIOs) are needed, the venue agency PIO can utilize Loudon County CART PIOs.

Incident Command

The Loudon County CART is a resource to all Loudon County law enforcement agencies. The requesting law enforcement venue agency maintains command over the missing child investigation.

When the Loudon County CART Commander, or his/her designee, arrives at the scene of a missing child event, he/she will contact the venue agency's Incident Commander to confirm he/she still desires the Loudon County CART's assistance, and confirm the venue law enforcement agency remains in command of the investigation.

Logistics

The Loudon County CART has a complete, updated inventory of all CART equipment. The Loudon County CART Commander will keep the inventory updated and ensure it is maintained and accessible in the event of Loudon County CART activation.

The Loudon County CART Logistics Coordinator is responsible to maintain a complete list of resources that may be needed on CART activation. This includes, but is not limited to: K-9 tracking dogs, search and rescue services, air support, dive teams, cell phones, GPS tracking, polygraphists, and miscellaneous equipment.

The Loudon County CART Logistics Coordinator is responsible for:

- Transporting the Loudon County CART equipment to the appropriate venues
- Ensuring the venue agency has arranged locations for the CART
- Securing an operational channel through Loudon County E-911
- Ensuring Loudon County CART forms are available to the search and investigation venues
- Arrange resources as needed

Search Operations

The Loudon County CART Search Coordinator will ensure:

- Timely briefings are held to update searchers on the progress of the investigation
- The search venue has sufficient personnel and resources
- The civilian volunteer venue has sufficient personnel and resources
- The Loudon County CART search members are supplied with all search and canvass forms
- Searches are conducted and documented properly
- The Logistics Coordinator is contacted if additional resources (ex: K-9, search and rescue, dive team) are needed

The Loudon County CART Volunteer Search coordinator will ensure:

- The Logistics Coordinator is contacted to confirm a location for the volunteer venue has been selected
- The civilian volunteer venue has sufficient personnel, resources and CART equipment
- All civilian volunteers have cleared a background check
- All civilian volunteers have proper attire and identifiers
- Searches are conducted and documented properly

Loudon County CART searchers are required to document, in a written report, all pertinent information they have discovered as a result of their search efforts.

Investigations

In compliance with the Loudon County CART organizational structure, the Loudon County CART Investigative Coordinator will work side-by-side with the venue law enforcement agency's lead investigator.

The Loudon County CART Investigative Coordinator will ensure:

- Updated investigation information is distributed to Loudon County CART investigators
- All leads and tips are properly and thoroughly investigated

- All Loudon County CART Investigators complete reports in a timely manner
- Registered sex offenders are contacted and interviewed
- A complete interview and investigation of family members in conducted
- Digital evidence is lawfully collected and preserved

Loudon County CART Investigators are required to document, in a written report, all information they have discovered as a result of their investigation.

Victim/Family Advocate and Liaison

Reports of endangered, missing or abducted children are highly charged and very emotional incidents, both for the family and responders attempting to safely recover and return the child. Loudon County CART Victim/Family Advocate and Liaison will play a crucial role in any team activation and will be involved in many facets of the associated investigative process. Some of the duties of designated Victim/Family Advocate and Liaison personnel include:

- Providing support for child/victim’s family throughout the investigative process
- Allow law enforcement to take lead on all information regarding the investigative facts and progress of the case communicated to the family
- Assist law enforcement in building and establishing rapport with the child/victim’s family during investigative process
- Assist law enforcement in maintaining productive relationship with child/victim’s family
- Assist in reunification process of child/victim and their family
- Assist in notifications to child/victim’s family
- Assist in providing services and referrals to witnesses and close family associations impacted by the incident

- Assist law enforcement in obtaining victim information for victimology and investigative leads, including but not limited to:
 - Cell phone information
 - Internet usage
 - Friends
 - Siblings
 - Habits
 - Medical information
 - Areas of interest

Public Information Coordinator

The release and management of information is crucial during instances of endangered, missing, or abducted children. The media is a crucial partner in the dissemination of information related to the missing child, soliciting information, informing the public and keeping the victim in the minds of the community. As such, it is critical that a positive, but professional relationship be developed with members of the local media, as well as regional or national media representatives that may become involved.

The Public Information Officer (PIO) will ultimately be decided on, and the responsibility of the requesting agency. The Loudon County CART can assist this mission by:

- Consulting with national organizations such as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children for guidance on media issues
- Assist requesting agency with preparation of media releases
- Assist requesting agency in coordination of media events
- Relay pertinent Loudon County CART information (such as volunteer reporting location) to requesting agency for media release
- Attend briefings and be prepared to discuss media issues

Volunteers

Volunteers used during CART activation must meet one of the following:

1. Be a recognized law enforcement volunteer, already working with a law enforcement agency, and having already been vetted, or
2. Must provide a valid driver's license or picture ID issued by a governmental agency, be age 18 or older, complete a registration form, and pass a background check.

Once meeting the standards under item 1 or 2 listed above, all volunteers must wear a CART identification card, badge or colored wrist band; all provided by CART during the event. CART coordinators are responsible for maintaining a log of all volunteers during the activation.

Reunification

This should be accomplished through discussions involving the stakeholders, to find the best resolution of the incident and the welfare of the child.

Once the child has been located, Loudon County CART will offer assistance to the venue agency investigators to facilitate the reunification, forensic interview, forensic medical examination, psychological resources, and Child Protective Services (if the child should not be returned to his/her legal guardians).

Acknowledging the wishes of any media in the recovery and reunification of a lost or abducted child, those shall be weighed against the wishes of the family and the family's desires. Should the family desire to address the media, this should be coordinated between the family, CART, and local law enforcement agency.

Team Deactivation

When a child has been located or recovered, CART shall be notified through the same system used for activations. When each member receives notification, he/she should report to the command post and locate the CART Commander so each team member can be accounted for.

At the conclusion of a Loudon County CART activation, The Loudon County CART Commander will contact the venue law enforcement agency to arrange a date/time for a debriefing. Participants will include the involved venue agency personnel and Loudon County CART members. Information discussed in the debriefing will be compiled in an after-action report retained by Loudon County CART. The report will be supplied to the venue agency upon request.

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) is a private, (501)(c)(3) nonprofit organization which was created in 1984. The mission of the organization is to serve as the nation's resource on the issues of missing and sexually exploited children. The organization provides information and resources to law enforcement, parents, victims as well as other professionals.

The NCMEC works with law enforcement agencies at local, state, federal, and international levels to help bring missing children home by providing technical assistance, training, and by helping maximize use of all available investigative and technological resources. They are able to provide, free of charge:

- Case analysis
- Forensic assistance
- Family advocacy services
- Family reunification assistance
- Photo and poster distribution
- Nationwide Hotline 1-800-THE-LOST

- Age progression and facial reconstruction services
- Team ADAM

Team ADAM

Team ADAM is a program of the NCMEC that provides rapid, on-site assistance to law enforcement agencies in cases of missing, abducted, and exploited children. Its members are retired law enforcement professionals with years of investigative experience at the federal, state, and local level. Team ADAM consultants rapidly deploy to sites where cases are unfolding, providing on-the-ground technical assistance and connecting local law enforcement with a national network of resources.

Team ADAM's unique access to the NCMEC resources, coupled with their years of command post and multi-jurisdictional law enforcement experience, very often provides small or medium sized departments with the tools they need to handle complex, media-intensive cases. Because of this experience, it is recommended that Team ADAM be consulted in all Loudon County CART activations.

Team ADAM can provide assistance with:

- Search and Rescue
- Computer Forensics
- Technical Support
- Investigation and Analysis
- Equipment and Resources

