

“Voluntary registry systems provide peace of mind for caregivers and those with Alzheimer’s disease in the community.”

“ ...initial response to a missing person with Alzheimer’s disease could be the most crucial component of the investigation”



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VOLUNTARY REGISTRATION PROGRAM



*KEARNEY POLICE DEPARTMENT /
BUFFALO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE*



Identifying the Need

In 2013, approximately 5.1 million Americans were living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. In the coming decades, it is projected that the baby boom generation will add about 10 million to the total number of people in the United States with Alzheimer's disease. By 2050, the total estimated prevalence of Alzheimer's disease is expected to be 13.8 million. This is one new case every 33 seconds, or nearly a million new cases a year.

Of the more than 5 million people living with Alzheimer's disease, approximately 60 percent will wander at least once during the progression of their disease (many will wander more frequently). That means approximately 3 million people will wander due to the effects of Alzheimer's disease in the coming months and years.

In many instances, cases of missing persons diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease (or other special needs individuals) shine the spotlight on the department's response and challenge police department leadership to identify a better way to respond to vulnerable populations.

What is a Voluntary Registration Program?

Voluntary registry systems enable law enforcement agencies to obtain critical information (prior to an actual emergency) that assists in response to calls for service involving an individual with Alzheimer's disease. This information proves especially valuable when police are called to locate a wandering individual with Alzheimer's disease. Voluntary registry information provided to law enforcement could, for example, include a location that holds special interest to a missing Alzheimer's disease individual; in which direction they tend to wander; a history of past interests or residences that may shine light on their behavior; whether or not they are verbal (and able to respond to questions); and often includes a picture of the individual. This type of information can expedite the search for a wandering individual by reducing the amount of information collection necessary after a call for service, enhancing immediate efforts, and providing a basis from which additional information can be gathered to further tailor the search. In addition, the information assists officers by preparing them to respectfully and appropriately interact with the individual once they have been located.

The voluntary registry program is equally helpful in responding to individuals in other special needs populations. Departments utilize the system for Alzheimer's disease community members, as well as for those with ASD, developmental disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), epilepsy, brain injury, mental illness, and other disabilities that may affect the way individuals interact and respond to law enforcement officers and other first responders.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS OF THE VOLUNTARY REGISTRY PROGRAM OF THE VOLUNTARY REGISTRY PROGRAM?

Law Enforcement Agencies have found that such registries can:

- Promote community safety;
- Improve officer safety;
- Increase the speed and efficiency in which officers are able to respond,
- Reduce strain on department resources (human and financial) during emergencies;
- Give community members peace of mind; and promote community partnerships in responding to special needs community members.
- Improve safety for the individuals and return them "home" quickly and safely.

HOW TO ENROLL IN THE VOLUNTARY REGISTRY PROGRAM

- 1) Pick up an enrollment form from the Kearney / Buffalo County Law Enforcement Center (front desk, 2025 A Avenue, Kearney, NE 68847
- 2) Send an Email to Captain Mike Young @ mbyoung@kearneygov.org or Lieutenant Dennis Byrne @ dgbyrne@kearneygov.org requesting a form.
- 3) Pick Up a Registration Form from:
 - ⇒ Alzheimer's Association
 - ⇒ CountryHouse Residence
 - ⇒ Prairie View Gardens
 - ⇒ Mt. Carmel
 - ⇒ Area Agency on Aging

