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Missouri Activates Blue Alert System

AUGUST 28TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Colonel Sandra K. Karsten, superintendent of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, announces Missouri's Blue Alert System is now operational. Senate Bill 34, signed by Gov. Eric Greitens on July 6, becomes effective on Monday, August 28, and called for the creation of the Blue Alert System in Missouri.

“Blue Alert is an important program that lets every law enforcement officer in the state of Missouri know that the community supports them and has their back,” said Governor Eric Greitens. “Our police officers do dangerous work to protect all of us, and this program will help us ensure that anyone who assaults a law enforcement officer is quickly found and brought to justice.”

According to Section 650.520 RSMo., a Blue Alert can be issued in Missouri if the following criteria are met:

1. A law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured in the line of duty; or
2. An officer is missing in connection with official duties; or
3. There is an imminent and credible threat to kill or seriously injure a law enforcement officer; and
4. There is actionable information known about a suspect for a public notification to be helpful to law enforcement; and
5. The law enforcement agency involved requests or approves the alert being issued.

Missouri's Blue Alert System is a cooperative effort that includes the Department of Public Safety, Missouri Department of Transportation, State Emergency Management

Agency, Missouri State Highway Patrol, broadcasters and state law enforcement agencies to quickly get word out to the general public of an attack on a police officer or an imminent threat.

A Blue Alert will work similar to an AMBER Alert and use the same technology. Using television and radio broadcasts through the Emergency Alert System, text messaging, and MoDOT message boards, each Blue Alert will provide the public with a description of the offender, the offender's vehicle, and license plate number, as available. Cell phone customers should contact their cellular service provider for information on whether Blue Alert text messages will be made available.

Quickly and widely disseminating this information enlists the public's assistance in identifying and capturing the suspect, and reducing the threat to the general public and law enforcement officers.

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