

BUREAU OF JUSTICE ASSISTANCE FACT SHEET

NATIONAL ASHANTI ALERT NETWORK

Background

The Ashanti Alert Act of 2018 (Pub L. 115-401) was signed into law on December 31, 2018. It authorizes the U.S. Attorney General to establish a national communications network to enable and help facilitate regional and local search efforts for missing individuals who fall outside the scope of other missing person alerts.

The legislation aims to encourage, enhance, and integrate the development of Ashanti Alert Plans and enhance communications among participating states, territories, and tribes in locating missing adults.

Participation in this effort is voluntary. The act aims to ensure that states, territories, and tribes that are voluntarily implementing an Ashanti Alert Plan have access to guidance and resources.

What is the National Ashanti Alert Network?

The Network aims to help connect local missing adult alert programs and enable the sharing of alerts across state lines. The focus of the Network is to help:

- Establish missing adult alerting capabilities in all states, territories, and tribal areas.
- Enhance existing missing adult program capabilities.
- Implement capabilities that help missing adult programs facilitate the sharing of information when missing adults cross state, territory, or tribal boundaries.



Who Was Ashanti Billie?

Ashanti Billie was a 19-year-old woman who disappeared on September 18, 2017, in Hampton Roads, Virginia. Two weeks later, authorities discovered her body in Charlotte, North Carolina – 350 miles away.

The amount of time and distance traveled between Ashanti's abduction and the discovery of her body, as well as falling outside the scope of other alert programs, raised questions regarding the lack of a state, regional, or nationwide missing persons alert system that focused on individuals over the age of 17. Named in her honor, the Ashanti Alert Act aims to solve this problem.

Ashanti Alert Activation Criteria

The Ashanti Alert Act criteria focus on three key areas:

- Individuals over the age of 17.
- Missing adults with special needs or circumstances.
- Missing adults who are endangered or have been involuntarily abducted or kidnapped.



Resources

The Bureau of Justice Assistance provides resources and technical assistance to states, Indian tribes, local governments, law enforcement agencies, and other stakeholders seeking to establish or enhance an existing Ashanti Alert Plan. Examples of available resources include the following:

- Guidance for Developing an Ashanti Alert Plan
- Ashanti Alert Programs Summary
- Ashanti Alert Network State and Territory Points of Contact and Reference Links
- Becoming a Pilot State, Territory, or Tribe
- Program Overview Flyer

For More Information

- Visit <https://ashanti.bja.ojp.gov/> to learn more about the National Ashanti Alert Network and the Ashanti Alert program.
- For technical assistance, contact: <https://ashanti.bja.ojp.gov/contact-us>.

ABOUT BJA

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