

# ALERTS SAVE LIVES



## A UNIFIED MESSAGE REGARDING THE NEED TO SUPPORT NATIONWIDE ALERTS

Law enforcement nationwide, to varying degrees, issue alerts to the public, media, and law enforcement and public safety partners via federal emergency alert systems, broadcasters, highway changeable message signs, and other notification systems when a person's life is in danger and time is of the essence. This includes situations like a child abduction emergency, a violent criminal posing an imminent threat to law enforcement and the community, or a missing and endangered person.

*Law enforcement professionals are responsible for ensuring the public, media, and other law enforcement partners and stakeholders receive alerts that are timely, accurate, and geographically relevant. Alerting the public can play an essential role in the safe recovery of a missing and endangered person or informing law enforcement and community members in the area about a dangerous individual.*

### AMBER ALERT

When a child is abducted and endangered and the necessary activation criteria are met.

### BLUE ALERT

Issued to aid in the apprehension of violent criminals who kill, seriously injure, or pose an imminent threat to law enforcement and the community.

### ENDANGERED MISSING PERSONS ALERT

Issued when an individual with intellectual disabilities, dementia, or other cognitive impairment is deemed missing and endangered. Sometimes referred to as Silver Alerts.

## WHAT ARE NATIONWIDE ALERTS

- AMBER Alerts and Blue Alerts are nationally recognized.
- The AMBER Alert system is being used in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Indian country, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and 22 other countries.
- There are currently 29 states with Blue Alert plans. The COPS Office provides resources and technical assistance—including voluntary activation guidelines, examples of legislation, policies, and forms gathered from around the nation in a central Blue Alert data repository—to states, territories, law enforcement agencies, and tribes seeking to establish or enhance Blue Alert plans.
- A variety of additional alerts, such as Endangered Missing Persons Alerts, are utilized by states nationwide.
- Individual state law enforcement agencies are responsible for overseeing their state's alert programs, so names and processes for issuing alerts may vary.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Quickly issuing accurate and geographically focused alerts to the public is critical in order to save lives by providing timely and relevant information to inform stakeholders and keep the community engaged.
- Regional partnerships are important for a successful alerts program—including state alerts coordinators, law enforcement agencies, emergency management agencies, state agency partners (i.e. state department of transportation), fusion centers, and broadcasters.
- Training for law enforcement personnel is key to a successful alerts program—including understanding the alerts issued by their state and neighboring states, how to access the state alert system, and criteria to activate alerts.

## TRAINING, NATIONAL STANDARDS, AND RESOURCES

- National Blue Alert Network, Effective Blue Alert Plans—Guidance and Recommendations: [https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/blue-alert/Blue\\_Alert\\_Guidance.pdf](https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/blue-alert/Blue_Alert_Guidance.pdf)
- National Criminal Justice Training Center: Amber Alert Training and Technical Assistance: <https://ncjtc.fvtc.edu/programs/PR00000010/amber-alert>
- Office of Justice Programs, Amber Alert Website: <https://www.amberalert.gov/>
- Community Oriented Policing Services, National Blue Alert Network: <https://cops.usdoj.gov/bluealert>
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC): <http://www.missingkids.com/home>
- NCMEC Amber Alert Success Stories: <http://www.missingkids.com/gethelpnow/amber/success>
- International Association of Chiefs of Police Alzheimer's Initiative: <http://www.theiacp.org/Missing-Alzheimers-Disease-Patient>

Issued: July 2018