


# The Tarrant County College District Police Department

## GENERAL ORDER

	SUBJECT	GENERAL ORDER NUMBER
	<b>Silver Alert Network</b>	<b>430.00</b>
	CALEA STANDARDS	EFFECTIVE DATE <b>May 1. 2015</b>
		REVISION DATE
	APPROVAL	PAGES
	<b>Shaun Williams, Chief of Police</b>	<b>4</b>

**Purpose** - The Silver Alert Network was developed as a statewide emergency response system for certain missing senior citizens. The network is designed to be activated when a missing senior citizen with a diagnosed impaired mental condition poses a credible threat to his/her health and safety (37 Texas Administrative Code § 9.31(a)).

### 430.01 - DEFINITIONS

**Diagnosed Impaired Mental Condition** – A mental condition or disorder as defined by the current version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual as a clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern that occurs in an individual and that is associated with present distress or disability or with a significantly increased risk of suffering death, pain, disability or an important loss of freedom. In addition, this individual's current condition presents a level of impairment significant enough to pose a credible threat to the individual's health and safety. The condition, e.g., Alzheimer's disease or dementia, shall be documented by a medical or mental health professional (37 Texas Administrative Code § 9.31(b)).

**Senior Citizen** – A person who is 65 years of age or older (Texas Government Code § 411.381(3)).

### 430.02 – SILVER ALERT CRITERIA

A. **ALERT Criteria** - Activation of the network outside the established criteria will ultimately cause the public to disregard the notifications and the system will lose effectiveness. In order to maintain a high level of effectiveness, the Department must ensure that the circumstances justifying activation are accurately evaluated in order to implement the network in a responsible manner (37 Texas Administrative Code § 9.31(c)). The department may issue a Silver Alert if (Texas Government Code § 411.386):

1. The person reported missing is 65 years of age or older.
2. The senior citizen's location is unknown.
3. The senior citizen's domicile is in Texas.
4. The senior citizen has an impaired mental condition.

5. It is determined that the senior citizen's disappearance poses a credible threat to the senior citizen's health and safety.
6. The Silver Alert request is made within 72 hours of the senior citizen's disappearance.
7. There is sufficient information available to disseminate to the public that could assist in locating the senior citizen.

#### **430.03 – ALERT RESPONSIBILITY**

- A. The employee receiving the missing senior citizen report shall notify the Shift Commander or appropriate Detective Supervisor as soon as practicable. The Shift Commander or Detective Supervisor, with approval from the Chief of Police, will then determine whether to activate a Silver Alert or inform the media and other allied resources.
- B. The supervisor in charge must submit a request for activation of the Silver Alert Network on DPS Form MP25. The supervisor may submit the form after it has been verified that all statutory criteria for activation are clearly established by the specific facts of the case.
- C. The supervisor in charge shall also provide documentation of a diagnosed impaired mental condition with the request for activation (*37 Texas Administrative Code § 9.32 and Texas Government Code § 411.386*).
- D. The form must be faxed to the State Operations Center, Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM). This form may be found at <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us>. Fax numbers are **(512) 424-2281** or **(512) 451-2291**. Additionally an email photograph of the missing senior citizen if available should be sent to the GDEM at [soc@txdps.state.tx.us](mailto:soc@txdps.state.tx.us). The sender should confirm the fax and email were received by contacting the GDEM at **(512) 424-2208** or **(512) 424-2277**.

#### **430.04 - PROCEDURE**

- A. In the event of a confirmed missing senior citizen under the criteria, regardless of whether a Silver Alert is activated, the following procedures designed to alert the media should be followed. Failing to follow the procedure may result in a delay or non-activation of the Silver Alert Network.
  1. The Chief of Police or designee, Shift Commander or Detective Supervisor will prepare an initial press release that includes all available information which might aid in locating the missing senior citizen, such as
    - a. The person's identity, age and description.
    - b. Photograph if available.
    - c. Pertinent vehicle description.
    - d. Detail regarding location of incident, direction of travel, potential destinations, if known.
    - e. Name and phone number of the Public Information Officer or other authorized individual to handle media liaison.
    - f. A telephone number for the public to call in with leads and information.
  2. Fax the press release to the local television and radio stations.

3. The information in the press release should also be forwarded to other local law enforcement agencies.
4. The Officer investigating the abduction or other individual responsible for making notifications shall prepare and fax to the previously described location(s), and will follow-up press release(s) with updates regarding the search and investigation or immediately upon locating the senior citizen.

#### **430.05 – GOVERNOR’S DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACTIONS**

- A. When a Silver Alert is issued it can be anticipated that the GDEM will immediately notify the following for dissemination of information within the advisory area:
  1. Local, State, and Federal Law Enforcement Agencies.
  2. Primary Media Outlets.
  3. Texas Department of Transportation.
  4. Texas Lottery Commission.
  5. Independent Bankers Association of Texas.
  6. National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (800) 843-5678
- B. The Department should be prepared to manage any calls from organizations aligned with any of these groups that may request additional information.

#### **430.06 – EXTENSION OF ALERT**

- A. If it is determined that an extension beyond the initial 24 hours is needed, the extension must be accomplished on or before the last 23 hour reminder from the State Operations Center.

#### **430.07 – TERMINATION OF ALERT**

- A. The supervisor in charge should request that the Silver Alert system activation be terminated with respect to a particular missing senior citizen if:
  1. The missing senior citizen is located or the situation is otherwise resolved.
  2. The notification period ends.
- B. If a missing senior citizen who is the subject of a Silver Alert is located, the supervisor shall request that DPS be notified as soon as possible (*Texas Government Code § 411.389(b)*).

#### **430.08 – MUTUAL AID**

- A. The experiences of other law enforcement jurisdictions that have implemented similar plans indicate a Silver Alert will generate a high volume of telephone calls to the handling agency.
- B. Mutual aid staff can be made available to act as call takers in the event of high call volume.
- C. If the Community Services or Detective Supervisor elects to use the services of an allied agency, the following will apply:

1. Notify the allied agency's Community Services of the incident and request for assistance. The appropriate agency representative will provide a telephone number for the public to call.
  2. In the press release, direct the public to the telephone number provided by the allied agency.
  3. The Public Relations & Marketing Director will continue to handle all press releases and media inquiries. Any press inquiries received by the allied agency will be referred back to this department.
- D. The Tarrant County College Police Department shall assign a minimum of two detectives/officers to respond to the allied agency's communications center to screen and relay information and clues received from incoming calls. As circumstances dictate, more staff resources from the handling law enforcement agency may be necessary to assist the staff at the allied agency communications center.