

Ft. Pierce Police Department

News Release

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R. Sean Baldwin

Chief of Police

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Ft. Pierce, FL 34950

Police chief launches new program to provide increased safety for residents with disabilities

FORT PIERCE – Fort Pierce Police Chief R. Sean Baldwin announced the launching of new a program designed to provide increased safety for residents in our community who suffer from Alzheimer's or other mental disabilities, who may have a tendency to wander from home or a care facility.

The Take Me Home project is a database maintained by the Fort Pierce Police Department and will allow officers to assist residents they encounter who may be unable to identify themselves or where they live. Information on the individuals who are registered in the database will include a photo, demographic information, medication, referral agency, and at least three caregiver contacts.

The database was developed by the Pensacola Police Department for people who may need special assistance if they are alone or in times of emergency. This kind of assistance may be required if the person is unable to speak or properly identify themselves, or if they become disoriented or act in a manner that could be misinterpreted by first responders. The program is being utilized by other law enforcement agencies in the state of Florida and has received endorsement from the Governor's Commission on Disabilities.

Alzheimer's Community Care, the Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc, Academy Assisted Living, Inc. and the Fort Pierce Housing Authority have made the commitment to identify and register clients that would benefit by being a part of the database. Families or individuals can contact the police department to submit a recent digital photo, description of height, weight, and other demographic information as well as emergency contact information.

This information is placed in a secure database that can be accessed in patrol cars or back at the station. If officers find someone who can't communicate where he or she lives, they can search the database by description and return the person to their loved ones. The system also works in reverse - if a loved one goes missing, their picture and description is immediately available.

There is **no charge** to police departments for use of the program and there is no enrollment fee for residents or public service agencies.

Take Me Home is voluntary for participants, and all information is kept confidential. There is no cost involved. Contact Audria V. Moore about Take Me Home today at fppio@fppd.org or visit our website at www.fppd.org.

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