

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the Safe Return Program?**

The Safe Return is registry database designed to promote communication between law enforcement and the registered participant. Law enforcement will have quick access to critical information about a registered person with disabilities in a police emergency. This information will include things such as a full description, routine/favorite attractions, communication, emergency contact information, as well as other special needs the registered person may require.

### **Who is eligible?**

The Safe Return registry has been developed with the intent to serve all members of our community who may find their communication abilities challenged or ineffective when interacting with police.

### **How do I register someone?**

You register online at the Safe Return page which is accessed through the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department website. You will also be *required* to submit a photo of the participant. There will also be directions on the type of photo to submit. Passport style photos taken from the shoulders up work best.

### **As soon as I send the registration, will the information be immediately available in case police response is required?**

Not immediately. The registration will need to be reviewed by program staff prior to being made available to law enforcement. The delay should be minimal.

### **Who has access to my loved one/participant's profile?**

Only law enforcement employees who require this information in the performance of their duties will have access to the information. There are strict regulations with respect to accessing and disseminating information.

### **Can I update my profile more than every year if there are changes? How do I do that?**

Yes, you can, however, only information that has a significant impact on law enforcement response will be necessary. Some examples would include a change in address, school, or emergency contact. Other changes would include physical descriptions, for example, if there has been a significant change in weight or hair color, you would want to update that information along with a current photo reflecting those changes. If you have registered online, you can access your account via your username and password to make the changes and re-submit.

### **Will I be notified when the annual renewal is required?**

If you have registered someone with a valid email address, you will be notified annually via email on the date of birth of the registered participant, asking you to update any new information to make sure law enforcement has the most accurate profile possible.

### **After my child/dependent adult is registered, and there is an incident, do I need to do something to notify the police?**

Yes, if you need to call law enforcement, please let the dispatcher know that the individual is registered in the Safe Return program. In doing so, the information will be immediately disseminated to responding law enforcement personnel.

### **How will this registry help if my child/dependent adult goes missing?**

If the participant goes missing and is reported by the parent/guardian/caretaker, information about his/her physical appearance, the most likely places where he/she would go to, as well as triggers, stimulants, and de-escalation techniques will be sent to all law enforcement personnel in the area who will be looking for the missing person.

### **What guarantees do we have that the interaction between our child/dependent adult and the police will be positive once he/she is registered?**

What the program allows is the ability for patrol deputies and other law enforcement personnel to have necessary & additional information faster to begin searching for the missing participant. Also, if a deputy comes across a lost person (who is registered) who is unable to communicate, the deputy is able to query the database by a number of search parameters to locate the participant's profile and see their emergency contact information.

What is important to remember is that simply having a person in the registry is not necessarily going to change law enforcement response in every instance involving an individual with special needs. Law enforcement will act according to policy, procedure, and best practice depending on the circumstances presented. Additionally, an individual with special needs can still be arrested, should he or she break the law. In that case, being registered will assist law enforcement in contacting family.