



MEDIA RELEASE

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Sheriff-Coroner

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Chris Clark

Sheriff-Coroner

Media Release: January 23, 2025 CARE Alert Registration

The Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office has introduced the CARE Alert Program, a new initiative designed to enhance the safety and well-being of individuals with special needs. This program provides law enforcement with vital information to improve emergency responses and is designed to address the special needs of any person with cognitive or behavioral conditions that may affect communication, conduct, or safety challenges.

"Over the past decade, we have made significant progress in developing proactive strategies to support individuals with special needs or those in crisis. Initiatives such as integrating mental health liaisons in patrol, ICAT training in our patrol and corrections bureaus, and our Focused Intervention Team have all been key to this effort. Now, we are introducing another valuable resource to enhance our ability to best serve our community," said Sheriff Chris Clark.

By registering loved ones with special needs, community members can share important details with law enforcement, such as specific limitations, communication preferences, and potential triggers. This proactive approach helps prevent misunderstandings and ensures individuals receive appropriate care and support during interactions when the information is available.

Supervisor Manu Koenig brought this program to our attention and has been fully supportive since day one, "this idea was brought to me by a mother in our community whose son had experienced the justice system. She shared how a program she discovered, similar to CARE Alert, could have made a difference for him. I took this to the Sheriff's Office, and now here we are today. It's a powerful example of the community, elected officials, and law enforcement coming together to create meaningful change," said Supervisor Koenig.

The program is now being utilized by the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, Watsonville Police Department, Santa Cruz Police Department, Scotts Valley Police Department, and Capitola Police Department, with support from the Santa Cruz Regional 911 dispatch center.

Special thanks to the Colonie Police Department, the creators of this initiative, for their guidance and support throughout the process.

Anyone with questions about this program may submit inquiries to the following email address: carealert@santacruzcountyca.gov or to register, visit carealert.santacruzcountyca.gov.

Contact:
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