



# SUMTER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

The Sumter County Sheriff's Office is pleased to announce the launch of a new program to help safely locate citizen's with Alzheimer's/dementia that may wander from a safe location. The Sheriff's Office has been awarded federal grant money through the Bureau of Justice Administration to pilot a new program called the DREAM program, or Dementia Recovery, Education, and Management. This program will provide people in Sumter County with Alzheimer's and dementia with a GPS enabled device free of charge.

Participants in the program will have the option of choosing between two different GPS devices depending on the preference and unique needs of the individual that will be wearing it. Participants will have the option between a GPS watch that is being offered through Clairvoyant/Theroacare and a small attachable GPS device being offered by Jiobit. Both devices connect to a cell phone application to help caregivers and family members monitor the location of their loved one. This application allows caregivers to see their loved one's location in real time and also provides alerts to their phone if their loved one leaves a safe location. If the participant does wander from a safe location, family members or caretakers will have the ability to locate them and return them safely home without the involvement of law enforcement. In the event law enforcement is needed to locate the individual or bring them home, dispatch will have access to the participant's location to assist in their safe return.

The goal of this program is to decrease the number of people who wander from a safe location and require law enforcement to find them and bring them home. This program gives the person with Alzheimer's/dementia increased independence and helps their family keep their loved one safe. The hope is that through this program, caregivers will be quickly notified when a person wanders and can assist them with returning home which will result in a lower number of missing person calls involving citizens with Alzheimer's or dementia in our community. This program is not limited to those with Alzheimer's or dementia but it is also being extended to children diagnosed with autism who also may be prone to wandering from a safe environment.

The grant funding will allow the Sheriff's Office to provide the devices free of charge to participants, as well as cover monthly service fees associated with the products for the grant period.

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