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SUMMIT COUNTY PROSECUTOR & SHERIFF EXPAND THE *TAKE ME HOME* PROGRAM TO INCLUDE MENTAL, BEHAVIORAL, AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE DISORDERS

AKRON, OH – Summit County Prosecutor Elliot Kolkovich and Summit County Sheriff Kandy Fatheree are pleased to announce the expansion of the *Take Me Home* program to include individuals with mental, behavioral, substance abuse, and other disorders.

The *Take Me Home* program is a joint effort between the Prosecutor's Office and Sheriff's Office. It was brought to Summit County in 2007 following a local incident in which an autistic child with communications difficulties went missing and was unable to communicate his name or address to law enforcement.

The program created a database accessible only to law enforcement, into which information submitted by parents and caretakers of individuals with communications difficulties was uploaded. Should one of these individuals go missing or become separated from their family or caretaker, law enforcement can access the *Take Me Home* database on their in-car computers to obtain helpful information in assisting the individual, such as addresses, diagnoses, medications, calming techniques, safe words, and names of trusted contacts.

Today, there are over 2,000 individuals registered in the *Take Me Home* program.

“At first it was mostly children,” said program administrator Leslie Knoblauch, **“but now we have people of all ages, including around 250 seniors with Alzheimer’s and dementia.”**

As of February 2026, the *Take Me Home* program is being expanded beyond those with cognitive disabilities and communications difficulties to also include individuals with mental, behavioral, or substance abuse disorders such as PTSD, traumatic brain injuries, schizophrenia, bipolar, depression, borderline personality disorder, and addictions.

“Public safety isn’t just about responding to crime and prosecuting criminals. It’s also about ensuring resources and systems are in place that can help anyone who is vulnerable in our community get the help they need. While it started with Autism and Alzheimer’s, expanding the *Take Me Home* database to include anyone who may have a hard time communicating their identity, address, or needs is a logical and important step in our mission to promote public safety in Summit County,” said Prosecutor Kolkovich.

Every law enforcement agency in Summit County signed on to the *Take Me Home* program when it was first established, and in recent years police departments in communities adjacent to Summit County have also joined, such as Wadsworth and Seville. The Akron chapter of the Autism Society of Ohio and the East Ohio chapter of the Alzheimer's Association are also valuable community partners in promoting the program throughout the region.

“For those of us in law enforcement, having this critical information about an individual who’s in crisis or who may have gotten lost or disoriented can make a huge difference,” said Sheriff Kandy Fatheree. **“It allows for a more beneficial, comfortable, and safe interaction for both the officers and the individual they’re assisting, and it gives family members and caretakers greater peace of mind.”**

Those interested in learning more about *Take Me Home* or enrolling someone in the *Take Me Home* program can visit prosecutor.summitoh.net/programs/Take-Me-Home or call (330) 643-8741.

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