



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Velmanette Montgomery

Governor Cuomo Announces Launch of Statewide Alert System for Missing Vulnerable Adults

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Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced the launch of a statewide alert system that will help find vulnerable adults who become lost. The "Missing Adult Alerts" system, similar to the nationwide Amber Alert program, will assist local law enforcement officials in notifying communities when a cognitively impaired New Yorker goes missing.

"The Missing Adults Alert system will help law enforcement find elderly and impaired New Yorkers who become lost and get them home safely," Governor Cuomo said. "This system has saved lives regarding missing children, and now it will provide the same assistance when it comes to finding vulnerable adults."

Adults with cognitive disorders, mental disabilities, or brain injuries can experience disorientation and confusion, which often leads to wandering. Lost adults are rarely aware of the danger they may be exposed to and are often unable to ask for help. According to the Alzheimer's Association, more than 60 percent of Alzheimer sufferers will wander and 50 percent are at risk of serious harm, or even death, if not located within 24 hours.

Governor Cuomo signed a new law in July that created the notification system to provide rapid public dissemination of information regarding adults with dementia, Alzheimer's, or other cognitive impairments who go missing. The same tools the state's Missing Persons Clearinghouse and State Police use to issue an AMBER Alert to find missing children will now be activated for missing vulnerable adults. Those tools include distribution of posters, a toll-free twenty-four hour hotline, and partnerships with local broadcasters for quick dissemination of information. Anyone interested in receiving these alerts may also sign up to receive them through the NY-ALERT system at www.nyalert.gov.

Ninety-five percent of people who go missing because they suffer from a cognitive impairment are found within a quarter mile from their home or the place where they were last seen. New Yorkers who encounter a missing person, or believe they have identified a vehicle mentioned in a Missing Person Alert, should immediately call 911.

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