

## **What A Law Enforcement Officer Should Do to Initiate a Blue Alert**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The Blue Alert is a voluntary partnership between law enforcement and local broadcasters to rapidly disseminate information to law enforcement agencies, broadcasters and the public about violent suspects who have killed or seriously injured a law enforcement officer and pose a threat to public safety.

### **II. CRITERIA**

The Blue Alert is initiated solely by Utah law enforcement agencies using the following criteria. All four criteria must be met to initiate a Blue Alert:

Has a law enforcement officer been killed, seriously injured or assaulted with a deadly weapon by the suspect?

Is the suspect an imminent threat to the public and other law enforcement personnel?

Is information available for the public about the suspect, the suspect's vehicle and vehicle tag?

Will public dissemination of available information help avert further harm or accelerate apprehension of the suspect?

### **III. PROCEDURE FOR AGENCIES TO INITIATE A BLUE ALERT**

If all criteria exist, prepare the "Blue Alert" by using the **Broadcast (BC)** code on the Utah Criminal Justice Information System (UCJIS). Write "Blue Alert" in the title of the entry. A Blue Alert is available to help you gather information.

Contact the Bureau of Criminal Identification (BCI) at (801) 965-4446 to verify it received the advisory via UCJIS.

Enter the suspect's information with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC).

Make sure dispatchers are prepared to handle phone calls. Consider allocating additional resources from other law enforcement agencies.

Obtain a photograph of the suspect(s) as soon as possible and e-mail it to [bluealert@utah.gov](mailto:bluealert@utah.gov).

A Public Information Officer (PIO) should be appointed to handle the press. Once the alert has been activated, media coverage may be overwhelming, especially for a small department. The PIO should be constantly updated to utilize the media as much as possible and receive the maximum exposure for the case.

The Blue Alert does not preclude any in-house procedures, policies or practices used by each law enforcement agency.

### **IV. THE FOLLOWING WILL HAPPEN AFTER THE ALERT IS ACTIVATED**

All Utah law enforcement agencies are notified through the Utah Criminal Justice

Information System (UCJIS).

Broadcasters and media are notified by e-mail. (Members of the media can sign up to receive alerts here)

Traffic Operations Center (TOC) will activate all Utah Variable Message Signs (VMS) with the following information:

BLUE ALERT

Suspect vehicle and license or other information

TUNE TO RADIO NEWS

Ports of Entry inform all of their officers.

Note: At this time the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has not approved and designated an Emergency Alert System (EAS\_ code to be used for Blue Alerts and so the EAS can not be used at this time.

## **V. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

BCI can contact other states if the alert needs to be sent outside of Utah. Call BCI at (801)965-4446. BCI is also available to provide training or training materials.

The Utah Public Information Officer Association can provide a PIO or set up a Joint Information Center to help your agency. The association can be reached by contacting::

President: Tammy Kikuchi, tkikuchi@utah.gov, 801-918-1290

Vice President: Joe Dougherty, jdougherty@utah.gov, 801-664-1530

Secretary: Susan Thomas, (801) 889-6964, susanmthomas@utah.gov

A Child Is Missing will contact residents and businesses in the area where the suspect was last seen by using an automated telephone system. The service is free. Call the toll-free number (888) 875-ACIM (888-875-2246).

## **VI. CANCELING THE BLUE ALERT**

The initiating agency must cancel the Blue Alert using the UCJIS (**ATL**) message. The agency must also call BCI at (801)965-4446 to verify that the Blue Alert cancellation notice has been received via UCJIS.