

CHAPTER 78

AN ACT directing the Attorney General to develop a plan to disseminate Amber and Silver Alert information through social media and amending P.L.2002, c.129 and P.L.2009, c.167.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 3 of P.L.2002, c.129 (C.52:17B-194.3) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:17B-194.3 Establishment of "Amber's Plan."

3. a. The Attorney General shall establish "Amber's Plan," a program authorizing the broadcast media, upon notice from the State Police, to transmit an emergency alert to inform the public of a child abduction. The program shall be a voluntary, cooperative effort between State and local law enforcement agencies and the broadcast media.

b. The Attorney General shall notify the broadcast media serving the State of New Jersey of the establishment of "Amber's Plan" and invite their voluntary participation.

c. The following criteria shall be met before the State Police activate the Amber Alert:

- (1) The child is believed to be abducted;
- (2) The child is 17 years of age or younger;
- (3) The child may be in danger of death or serious bodily injury; and
- (4) There is sufficient information available to indicate that an "Amber Alert" would assist in locating the child.

d. The participating media shall voluntarily agree, upon notice from the State Police, to transmit emergency alerts to inform the public of a child abduction that has occurred within their broadcast service regions. The notice shall be provided through the State Police operational dispatch unit.

The alerts shall be read after a distinctive sound tone and the statement: "This is an Amber Abducted Child Alert." The alerts shall be broadcast as often as possible, pursuant to the guidelines established by the New Jersey Broadcasters' Association, for the first three hours. After the initial three hours, the alert shall be rebroadcast at such intervals as the investigating authority, the State Police, and the participating media deem appropriate.

The alerts shall include a description of the child, such details of the abduction and abductor as may be known, and such other information as the State Police may deem pertinent and appropriate. The State Police shall in a timely manner update the broadcast media with new information when appropriate concerning the abduction.

The alerts also shall provide information concerning how those members of the public who have information relating to the abduction may contact the State Police or other appropriate law enforcement agency.

Concurrent with the notice provided to the broadcast media, the State Police operational dispatch unit shall also notify the Department of Transportation, the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, and the South Jersey Transportation Authority of the "Amber Alert." Through the use of their variable message signs, the department and the affected authorities shall inform the motoring public that an "Amber Alert" is in progress and provide information relating to the abduction and how motorists may report any information they have to the State Police or other appropriate law enforcement agency.

e. The alerts shall terminate upon notice from the State Police.

f. (1) The Attorney General, with the assistance of the participating broadcast media, shall develop and undertake a public education campaign to inform the public about "Amber's

Plan" and the emergency alert program established under P.L.2002, c.129 (C.52:17B-194.1 et seq.).

(2) The Attorney General, in consultation with the State Police, shall develop and establish a plan to disseminate "Amber Alert" information through social media accounts maintained by the State Police. The emergency alert information required to be disseminated shall include, but not be limited to, a description of the missing child, any known details of the abduction and abductor, and a recognizable photograph of the missing child. The Office of the Governor, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services shall, and any other appropriate State, county, or municipal entity may, disseminate "Amber Alert" information made available by the State Police on their respective social media accounts.

g. The Attorney General may adopt guidelines to effectuate the purposes of P.L.2002, c.129 (C.52:17B-194.1 et seq.).

2. Section 1 of P.L.2009, c.167 (C.52:17B-194.4) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:17B-194.4 "Silver Alert System" established.

1. a. The Attorney General shall establish a "Silver Alert System" which shall provide a Statewide system for the rapid dissemination of information regarding a missing person who is believed to be suffering from dementia or other cognitive impairment. The program shall be a voluntary, cooperative effort between State and local law enforcement agencies and the media, including but not limited to print, radio, and television media outlets.

b. (1) The Attorney General shall notify the media serving the State of New Jersey of the establishment of the Silver Alert System, and invite their voluntary participation.

(2) The Attorney General, in consultation with the Division of State Police, shall develop and establish a plan to disseminate Silver Alert information through social media accounts maintained by the Division of State Police. The Silver Alert information required to be disseminated shall include, but not be limited to, a description of the missing person, any known details of the disappearance, and a recognizable photograph of the missing person. The Office of the Governor, the Department of Children and Families, the Department of Health, and the Department of Human Services shall, and any other appropriate State, county, or municipal entity may, disseminate Silver Alert information made available by the Division of State Police on their respective social media accounts.

c. The Missing Persons Investigative Best Practices Protocol Unidentified Deceased Persons Investigative Guidelines, promulgated by the Missing Persons and Child Exploitation Unit in the Division of State Police, shall be revised to incorporate procedures for issuing an alert regarding missing persons believed to be suffering from dementia or other cognitive impairment. The guidelines and procedures shall ensure that specific health information about the missing person is not made public through the alert or otherwise.

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved December 5, 2016.