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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jackson County Sheriff's Office and LifeWays Launch the SAFE Program to Enhance Emergency Response for Residents with Special Needs

Jackson, MI – The Jackson County Sheriff's Office, in partnership with LifeWays, is proud to announce the launch of the SAFE (Special Assistance for Emergencies) Program, a new initiative designed to improve communication and safety between first responders and Jackson County residents who have disabilities or special needs during emergencies.

The SAFE Program allows families to voluntarily provide critical information about household members living with conditions such as autism, ADHD, down syndrome, traumatic brain injury, PTSD, diabetes, Alzheimer's disease, autoimmune disorders, deafness or blindness, communication disorders, mental health disabilities, or other chronic health conditions. This information is securely entered into the county's emergency dispatch system in advance, enabling first responders to arrive better prepared.

"Every emergency is unique, and advance knowledge that a resident may need a specialized approach can significantly improve outcomes," said Jackson County Sheriff, Gary Schuette. "The SAFE Program equips our deputies, EMS, police, and fire personnel to respond with greater awareness, patience, and care."

Once enrolled, participating families receive distinctive SAFE decals to place on the front door of their home and on the driver's-side rear window of their vehicle(s). When first responders see the decal, they are immediately alerted to access the secure database for family-provided guidance—such as preferred communication methods, calming techniques, medical alerts, or other essential details that help ensure a safe and positive interaction.

How to Enroll

Enrollment is free, voluntary, and takes only minutes. Residents can sign up by:

- Visiting bit.ly/4oMOVSc
- Completing the secure online form

SAFE decals will be mailed to the household upon enrollment. Additional decals are available at no cost at the Jackson County Sheriff's Office or the LifeWays Jackson Crisis entrance.

"This collaboration between the Jackson County Sheriff's Office and LifeWays demonstrates our shared commitment to protecting and supporting every member of our community," said David Lowe, Executive Director, Access & Crisis Services at LifeWays. "By bridging the gap between first responders and individuals who experience emergencies differently, we are fostering trust, reducing risk, and promoting dignity for all."

The SAFE Program is open to all Jackson County residents with disabilities or special needs and their families. Enrolling today helps ensure first responders have the information they need when it matters most.

For more information or to enroll, visit bit.ly/4oMOVSc.

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LifeWays

LifeWays is a Community Mental Health Services Program (CMHSP) and a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC). As such, we primarily serve people in Jackson and Hillsdale counties as well as any individual with serious mental health needs regardless of their residence or insurance coverage. We treat adults and children with emotional/behavioral challenges, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and substance use issues.

Jackson Location

1200 N West Ave
Jackson, MI 49202

Hillsdale Location

25 Care Dr
Hillsdale, MI 49242