



BERKELEY TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

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KARIN T. DIMICHELE

Chief of Police

Press Release

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Mayor Carmen Amato and Chief Karin DiMichele are proud to announce a new program for residents with special needs. The purpose of the Berkeley Township Special Needs Registry is to provide first responders with vital information about residents who have special needs.

This program is modeled after Monmouth County's Special Needs Registry, and Berkeley Township is one of a few agencies in Ocean County to implement it. The Special Needs Registry is voluntary and free of charge. It is available to any resident with a special need that emergency responders should be aware of, including but not limited to, wheelchair-bound elderly residents; a young child with autism; a military veteran suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or an insulin dependent diabetic or a person allergic to bee stings.

The program is simple and easy to use. Once a resident completes the special needs questionnaire, the Police Department will flag the registrant's name and address in their Computer Aided Dispatch system. When a 911 call is received from the address police dispatchers will receive notification that a special needs person may be present at the home. The dispatchers will then inform the officer of special needs that may be present. Special Needs registrants are also provide decals to affix to their vehicles or homes if they so desire. The presence of a decal on a vehicle will alert the police officer to the presence of a special needs registrant.

The program is completely confidential, and residents can opt out at any time. The information provided to the Special Needs Registry is restricted to first responders with a need to be aware of the information.

Families who join the registry will be given decals for their cars and homes so that officers can observe the decals upon arriving at a scene.

Residents interested in joining the Registry are asked to fill out a questionnaire providing information about the special needs person and their condition(s). Registrants are asked to provide a photo and the specific details pertaining to the person's special need. Certain

information such as the registrant's name, address, general condition and photos are mandatory to provide but the program also encourages registrants to include any information that they believe would assist emergency responders. The discretion lies with the registrant and/or their caregiver.

Residents can register by visiting <http://twp.berkeley.nj.us/> under the police section. Contact 732-341-1132 X2123 or specialneedsregistry@btpdnj.org with questions.