



Media Contact:

Rochelle Cohen, 202-418-1162
rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

FCC ADDS BLUE ALERTS TO THE NATION'S EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEMS

Blue Alerts Can Protect Law Enforcement Officers and Communities

WASHINGTON, December 14, 2017—The Federal Communications Commission today added a new alert option—called a “Blue Alert”—to the nation’s emergency alerting systems. Blue Alerts can be used by state and local authorities to notify the public of threats to law enforcement and to help apprehend dangerous suspects.

Blue Alerts warn the public when there is actionable information related to a law enforcement officer who is missing, seriously injured or killed in the line of duty, or when there is an imminent credible threat to an officer. A Blue Alert could quickly warn you if a violent suspect may be in your community, along with providing instructions on what to do if you spot the suspect and how to stay safe.

In an Order adopted today, the FCC created a dedicated Blue Alert event code in the Emergency Alert System so that state and local agencies have the option to send these warnings to the public through broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline video providers. Officials may also send Blue Alerts through the Wireless Emergency Alert system to consumers’ wireless phones.

Today’s action supports the development of compatible and integrated Blue Alert plans throughout the United States, a goal consistent with the Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act of 2015. The Act, which is implemented by the Department of Justice’s Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), directs cooperation with the FCC.

Today’s Order provides a 12-month implementation period for Blue Alerts to be delivered over the Emergency Alert System and 18 months for delivery over the Wireless Emergency Alert system.

Action by the Commission December 14, 2017 by Report and Order (FCC 17-170). Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly, and Carr approving. Commissioner Rosenworcel approving in part and dissenting in part. Chairman Pai, Commissioners Clyburn, O’Rielly, Carr and Rosenworcel issuing separate statements.

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

