

Ohio's Blue Alert program to launch in early June

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Earlier this year, the state of Ohio signed into law [Senate Bill 258](#) to establish a Blue Alert warning system within the state. On June 8, the legislation will go into effect. Ohio joins 13 other states with Blue Alert programs in place, but with many states without programs, support for a national system has been generated to further ensure the safety and security of officers.

The [National Blue Alert Act](#) was recently passed by the House of Representatives and endorsed by several law enforcement organizations including Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S), the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), the National Sheriffs' Association, and the Sergeants Benevolent Association.

According to C.O.P.S., most statewide Blue Alert systems require four criteria for an alert to be issued:

- A law enforcement officer must have been killed or seriously injured by an offender.
- The investigating law enforcement agency must determine that the offender poses a serious risk or threat to the public and other law enforcement personnel.
- A detailed description of the offender's vehicle, vehicle tag, or partial tag must be available to broadcast to the public.
- The investigating law enforcement agency must recommend activation of the Blue Alert to the state operations center.

Most Blue Alert systems are integrated with existing technology that is used by police departments and state highway patrol; therefore, it is not common for departments to procure any additional technology or equipment. For example, the state of Ohio will link its new Blue Alert program with existing capabilities in the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS), the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway (OHLEG), and other systems used for Amber Alerts and warnings.

Analyst's Take

Since most Blue Alert systems are not publicly procured, agencies looking to get into the market should look for opportunities for upgrades to current warning systems and systems integration assistance that may be needed for the alerts to function. As Blue Alert programs gain popularity across the country, more states may look into pilot programs to test the systems as well as partnerships and additional ways for alerts to stream across neighboring states. Blue Alerts can be implemented at a very low cost for departments since most alerting is done via voice communication, and costs are further reduced when the alerts are integrated with existing Amber or Silver alerts.

For more information on Blue Alert warning systems, go [here](#).