

Silver Search Report 2024

alzheimer's association®

AARP

IEMA

Illinois Tollway

Illinois Department of Transportation

Illinois Department on Aging

Illinois LOTTERY



2024 Annual Report

I. INTRODUCTION

The Silver Search program was created by the passage of the Public Act 099-0322 (20 ILCS 2605/2605-485(e)(1)). The program is designed to provide increased public awareness and a toolkit for law enforcement when someone 21-years-of-age or older is believed to have Alzheimer's disease, other related dementia, or other dementia-like cognitive impairment is reported missing. These types of missing person cases are referred to as Silver Search.

On January 1, 2016, the Silver Search program began by creating a Silver Search Task Force. The Task Force's mission is to create criteria for a toolkit and public awareness program, as well as establish the use of technology to locate persons with Alzheimer's or dementia who go missing. The Task Force shall monitor law enforcement training on how to react appropriately and effectively with individuals who suffer from Alzheimer's Disease, other dementia, or other dementia-like cognitive impairment. The Silver Search Task Force is chaired by the Illinois State Police Silver Search Program Coordinator. Members of the Silver Search Task Force includes: the Illinois State Police, Illinois Alzheimer's Association, Illinois Department on Aging, American Association of Retired Persons, Illinois Broadcasters Association, Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois Lottery, Illinois Tollway Authority, Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, and Illinois Secretary of State.



The Illinois State Police Law Enforcement Agencies Data System (LEADS) is the information system linking Illinois police agencies, other state agencies, and the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). The Intergovernmental Missing Child Recovery Act of 1984 and the National Child Search Assistance Act of 1990 mandate immediate entry of all reports of missing persons into LEADS, which are automatically entered into the nationwide NCIC database.

The Endangered Missing Person Advisory is the mechanism for local law enforcement to request that notices be sent out to the public when a person who is high-risk goes missing. A high-risk missing person is any person who is believed to be in danger because of age, health, mental or physical disability; environment, weather conditions; in the company of a potentially dangerous person; or other factors may expose the person to possible harm or injury.

II. ILLINOIS CLEARINGHOUSE FOR MISSING PERSONS

An effective resource in solving missing person cases, the Clearinghouse is a focal point for the coordination of efforts by law enforcement, social services, education, and prevention programs, as well as legislative advocacy and dissemination of missing person's photographs. It's responsibilities include:

- collecting and maintaining computerized data and investigating information on missing persons and unidentified bodies in the state;
- coordinating with and aiding state and local public and private nonprofit agencies, including those of other states and the federal government, in location and recovery of missing persons and the identification of unidentified persons and bodies;
- establishing and operating a statewide, toll-free telephone line for reports of missing persons and reports of sightings of missing persons;
- providing a uniform missing person reporting and investigation protocol for law enforcement agencies within the state;
- publishing a directory of missing persons for dissemination to state and local, public and private nonprofit agencies and the public;
- compiling statistics on the missing children cases handled and resolved by the Clearinghouse each year, as well as summaries of the circumstances of each case;
- assisting in the training of law enforcement and other professionals about missing and unidentified persons and bodies;
- operating a clearinghouse of information about methods of locating and recovering missing persons;
- operating a resource center of information about the prevention of those with Alzheimer's and dementia from wandering;
- developing and implementing a coordinated program for a statewide advisory system when a high-risk person goes missing; and
- work with local and statewide TRIAD's to increase awareness of senior safety issues. TRIAD's are nonprofit organizations that partner with law enforcement, local senior resources, and senior citizens to reduce victimization of older adults.

III. FISCAL

There is no fiscal liability to the state of Illinois. All activities are performed under the structure of the Illinois State Police.

IV. SILVER SEARCH TASK FORCE

The Silver Search Task Force continues to provide awareness to the public, loved ones, and caregivers regarding the Silver Search process. Radio and television public service announcements that were broadcast in 2019 and 2020 have expired, but the Task Force continues to utilize social media to disseminate information, and digital displays of missing persons appeared on lottery terminals and interstate message boards. The Task Force trained hundreds of law enforcement personnel, caregivers, first responders, and guardians across Illinois. These training sessions highlighted the endangered missing person advisory and its usefulness in missing person cases. Because of these trainings, law enforcement across Illinois is utilizing this advisory system in their missing person policies and procedures. The training sessions were held both in person and virtually throughout 2024.

- The Silver Search Task Force met in 2024. The focus of the group was to increase the understanding of what a Silver Search is and how it can be utilized to save a person's life. The Task Force discussed its statutory obligations, system upgrades, and future training needs. The group continues to branch out to incorporate new members and initiatives with the common goal of providing the best program for those who go missing with Alzheimer's or dementia.
- The Silver Search Task Force met in Springfield, Illinois, on February 7, 2024. The focus of the meeting continues to be about future ways to enhance the collection of after-action reports and how to increase the referrals for service for those involved in a Silver Search. This data is critical to getting the family, caregivers, and guardians the information and resources they need to assist them. Future data will be used to further guide the mission of our Task Force. The discussion of new technology was also discussed. With enhancements in technology, the group discussed ways to potentially target more alerts in smaller areas while still providing full public awareness.
- The Task Force was unable to meet at the Illinois Broadcasters Association annual conference in October 2024 due to conflicts. The group agreed to push the agenda to the next meeting in the Spring of 2025.

V. SPECIAL ACTIVITY

In 2024, the Illinois Silver Search Task Force continued utilizing the Illinois Lottery to help provide public awareness of missing endangered persons. As a partner, the Illinois Lottery utilized its digital lottery terminals inside of retail establishments to display all endangered missing person advisories. These displays depict the missing person information, photos of the missing person, and vehicle information. This partnership has been tremendously successful in distributing the time sensitive information to the public.



The partnerships do not stop at lottery terminals. The Endangered Missing Person Advisory System began utilizing digital message boards over Illinois interstates and tollways. This partnership has led to increased awareness for drivers of Illinois roadways to identify vehicle descriptions and license plates involved in high-risk missing person cases. These digital dynamic message boards are displayed across Illinois roadways.



In 2024, the Illinois Silver Search Task Force updated its website, www.silversearchillinois.org, with new features to provide the most up-to-date information about all Endangered Missing Person Advisories. This website is maintained through a partnership with the Illinois Alzheimer's Association. The website posts the photos and names of all active advisories in real time. The website also provides law enforcement with a toolkit and procedures for the use of the Silver Search program.



The Silver Search Coordinator continues to provide training to law enforcement officers, dispatch staff, and various public safety officials. The Silver Search curriculum is taught at various police training academies across Illinois. The Task Force partners with the Illinois Attorney General's Office to provide training during all elderly service office training sessions. These trainings help officials dealing with this population know what tools they have at their disposal to help. Law enforcement officers now have a place to go if they are faced with a situation of a missing person with Alzheimer's or dementia.

Illinois Silver Search

Endangered Missing Person Advisory

Advisory Overview

The Endangered Missing Person Advisory was enacted in 2010 as a way for law enforcement to notify the public when a high risk person goes missing. This advisory process is designed to use the media to pass along the vital information about the missing person to the public. The public's eyes becomes a law enforcement tool to quickly locate and return a missing person safely.

There are 4 criteria for an Endangered Missing Person Advisory:

- The person is missing under unexplained or suspicious circumstances
- The person is in danger because of age, health, mental or physical disability, environment, weather, or in the company of a dangerous person.
- Public information is available to help assist in the safe recovery of the person
- It does not fit the criteria for an AMBER Alert

High Risk Missing Person(s):

- Persons with Alzheimer's or dementia law enforcement
- Persons with mental impairment
- Escaping from a nursing home
- Missing because of suspicious circumstances
- Missing under known dangerous circumstances
- No pattern of running away or disappearing
- Law Enforcement judgement

Law Enforcement Procedures:

- 1) Enter into LEADS and HCIC
- 2) Complete Endangered Advisory Form
- 3) Obtain Photos and Information for the advisory. Fax or email to State Police
- 4) Send an SPERN and LEADS/ILETS broadcast message

In collaboration with the Department on Aging, the Silver Search Coordinator provided training to caregivers, guardians, adult protective service personnel, and welfare workers who work regularly with the elderly. These training sessions outline what to do if someone in your care goes missing, and

More than **60%** of people with Alzheimer's go missing.

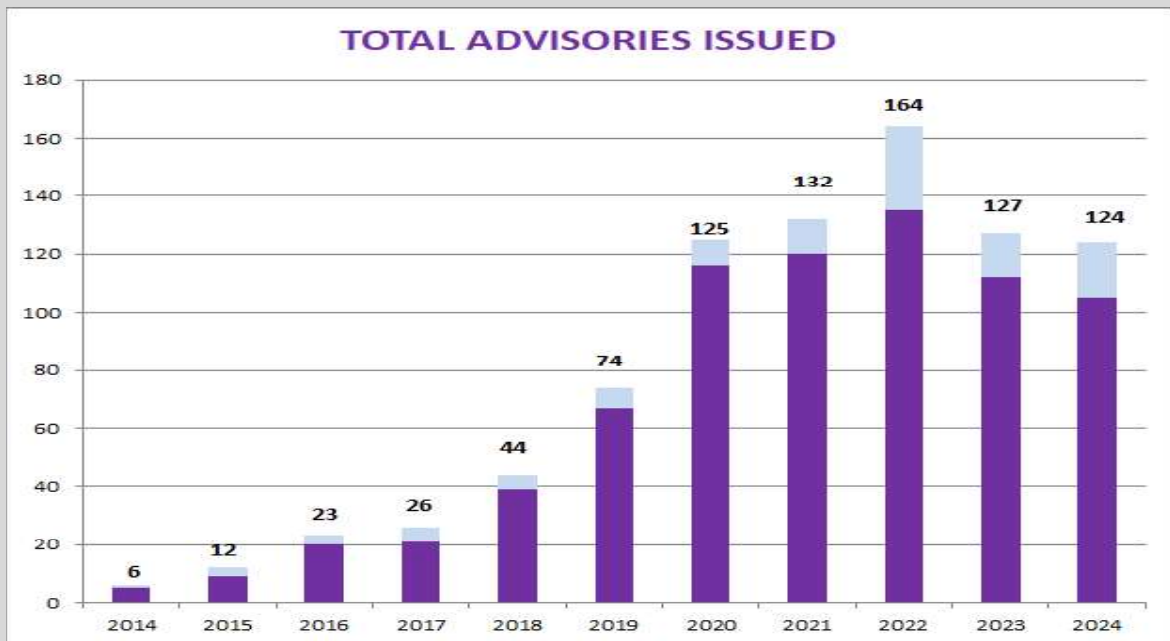
Silver Search is a new tool to help law enforcement find them.

how to be prepared in case it should happen. This training continues to be vital when dealing with this growing population of citizens.

In May 2024, Illinois marked its nine-year anniversary of its partnership with Alert GPS. This technology provides a more efficient and effective warning system to law enforcement, media, and the public. The Law Enforcement Alerting Portal (L.E.A.P) delivers major efficiencies to the Illinois Endangered Missing Person Advisory system. It provides a quicker, more robust alerting technology that enables the issuance of Missing Endangered Advisories through a variety of sources including texts, emails, faxes, and website feeds, and notifications to our partners at the Illinois Lottery and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

In 2024, the Silver Search Task Force, in conjunction with the Illinois Alzheimer's Association conducted several statewide training sessions for law enforcement personnel, elderly service officers, and first responders. This training was designed to give law enforcement a better understanding of the challenges faced when interacting with a person with Alzheimer's and dementia and what resources are available to help. The trainings were attended by over 250 representatives of law enforcement and first responders. These attendees represented 56 different counties in Illinois.

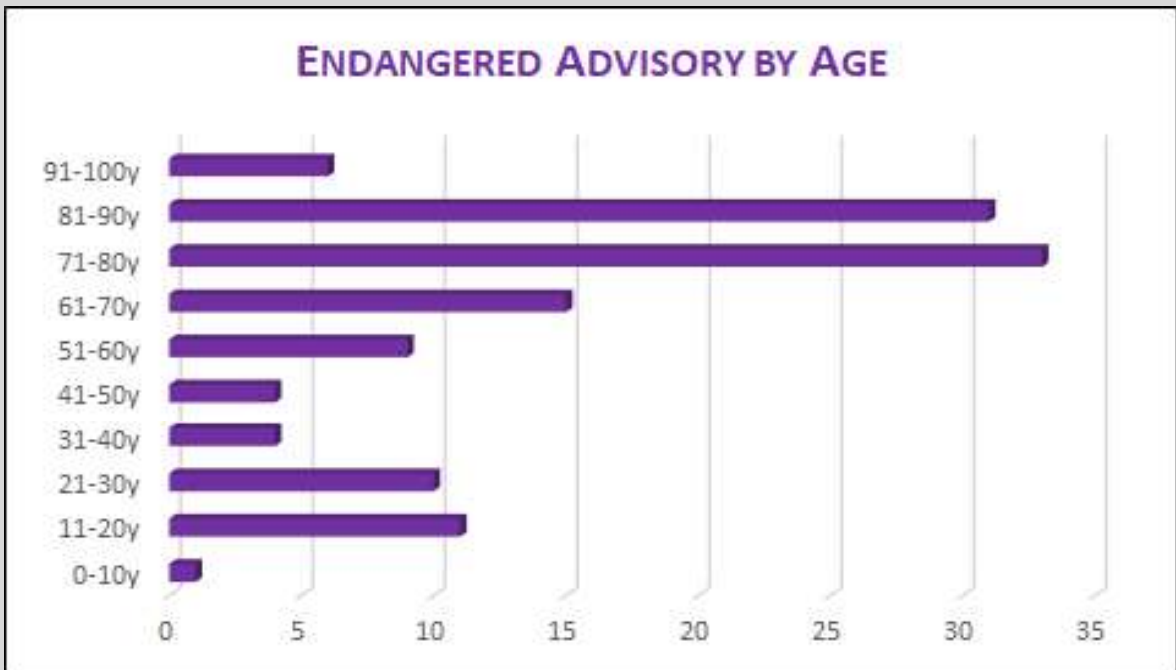
VI. STATISTICS



The Silver Search Task Force has brought a heightened awareness of the Endangered Missing Person Advisory, which has resulted in the increased usage over the last 10 years. 2024 showed a very slight decrease to the alerting levels seen in 2023. After the record year in 2022, when there were 164 total advisories disseminated, 2023 and 2024 saw a decrease to an average of just over 10 advisories per month. Of the 124 advisories in 2024, 105 involved people who qualify for Silver Search. As of January 1, 2025, 123 of the 124 advisories had been canceled. One remained active into 2025.



Each month in 2024 had an Endangered Missing Person Advisory issued. The month with the most advisories was July with 17 advisories. October was second with 14 and August had 13 advisories. The month with the least number of advisories was March with six.



Of the 124 Endangered Missing Person Advisories issued in 2024, 43 were female and 81 were male. The average age of all advisories issued was nearly 63 years old, which is 2 years younger than the averages in 2020, 2021, and 2022. For the sixth year in a row, the range with the most advisories were people between 71 and 80 years of age, with 81-90 years of age coming in second. People over age 60 make up nearly 69 percent of all advisories issued.

**ILLINOIS STATE POLICE
ILLINOIS CLEARINGHOUSE
FOR MISSING PERSONS**

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