**For Immediate Release**

**Improvements to TOWN NAME's Smart911 Program Helps First Responders Address the Growing Mental Health Epidemic**

*Registrants at* **TOWN NAME** *can now share more mental and behavioral health information through their Smart911 Safety Profiles.*

**TOWN NAME, DATE,** – Public safety officials in TOWN NAME announced important upgrades to Smart911 Safety Profiles to better serve homeless, and transient populations and individuals with mental health and cognitive conditions. The updates allow for 9-1-1 call takers and first responders to gain the needed knowledge of an individual's mental health behaviors and history prior to engaging with them – as these behaviors are misunderstood at times, leading to tragic fatalities for the individual, responders, or both. Moving forward, when 9-1-1 is called during an emergency, those responding can view the new information included in the Smart911 Safety Profile and apply the appropriate techniques onsite and ensure better outcomes.

"Nearly 44 million Americans suffer from mental health issues, and 9-1-1 call takers and first responders are on the forefront of this crisis. These updates to Smart911 improve situational awareness and outcomes,” said NAME, TITLE.

**TOWN NAME** community members can upload a mental health crisis plan to their Safety Profiles, which call takers can view during the 9-1-1 call. These plans can contain descriptions of an individual’s cognitive behaviors, how to interact with them in different mental states, and their emergency contacts. Additionally, profiles now include subsections where registrants can report erratic behaviors, such as hearing voices or hurting themselves, as well areas to describe suicide attempts and prescription lists related to mental health conditions.

Other important new enhancements to Smart911 include:

* **Additional resources for transient populations.** Allowing homeless registrants to describe their housing situation and town, state and zip codes to help first responders locate them in an emergency and to receive geo-targeted alerts.
* **Improved addictions field.** Those battling substance abuse can include more detailed information around the specific addictions they face.
* **Addressing Autism Spectrum Disorder.** To help communicate an individual with autism's specific needs, the Autism Spectrum Disorder option now allows additional detail on the approach emergency personnel should take when responding to these situations and the specific behavior an individual exhibits.

Smart911 is a free service available in **TOWN NAME** that allows individuals and families to sign up at [www.smart911.com](http://www.smart911.com/) or on the Smart911 App that includes any information they want 9-1-1 and response teams to have in the event of an emergency. When an individual makes an emergency call, their Safety Profile is automatically displayed to the 9-1-1 call taker, allowing them to send the right response teams to the right location with the correct information.

“We encourage TOWN NAME residents’ continued participation inSmart911 because it saves critical time in an emergency and has proven to save lives nationwide," said NAME,TITLE, “Every resident should download the Smart911 app to have greater access to these lifesaving benefits and to receive targeted location based alerts."

Smart911 is currently available in 40 states and more than 1,500 municipalities across the country, and has been credited with positively impacting emergency outcomes including a missing child in which the girl’s photo and physical description were immediately available to 9-1-1 and responders, as well as a heart attack victim where an address and medical notes allowed responders to be dispatched to his location quickly.

Individuals are encouraged to create their Safety Profile with Smart911 today to have their information immediately available to 9-1-1 and to receive emergency notifications. Smart911 is private and secure, is only used for emergency responses, and only made available to the 9-1-1 system in the event of an emergency call.