



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

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FCSO Implements Pre-Trial GPS Monitoring Program for Domestic Violence Offenders

In June of 2017, Sheriff Rick Staly formed a multi-disciplined, community-driven Task Force to work together to reduce domestic violence in Flagler County. Through that initiative, the Task Force recommended an ankle-monitoring program to be implemented for domestic violence offenders. On November 1, 2018, the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) GPS Monitoring Program was implemented.

As part of the program, the FCSO has partnered with the Bunnell Police Department (BPD), the Flagler Beach Police Department (FBPD), the State Attorney's Office and the 7th Judicial Circuit to equip domestic violence offenders with GPS tracking devices. The purpose of this program is to improve the safety of domestic violence victims by providing victims with designated exclusion zones where the offender may not lawfully enter. If an offender violates the exclusion zones the victim, and the Sheriff's Office is immediately notified. This notification will allow victim's to know that there may be a threat to their safety nearby and a Sheriff's Deputy will respond and arrest the offender.

"This idea was envisioned by the Domestic Violence Task Force for domestic violence offenders, but the uses go much farther than that," Sheriff Staly said. "Being able to track offenders while they are out of jail awaiting trial not only gives victims peace of mind, but it also gives the offender an incentive to not reoffend and not violate a no-contact order because they will be arrested. I'm very glad that this program is now available in Flagler County – and it is already being used! And, the best part of this program is there is no cost to the taxpayers, as the offender pays the costs; and, it actually saves the taxpayer money by not having to house and feed them in the Green Roof Inn."

At first appearance on Thursday morning, a BPD arrest of Matthew Harrison, 28, resulted in the judge ordering GPS monitoring for Harrison during his pre-trial release. Harrison was charged with child abuse and domestic battery by strangulation. An exclusion zone has been set up for the victims' residence in order to ensure that Harrison adheres to the judge's no-contact order.

An in-depth vendor selection process was done to select a company that met the needs outlined by the Task Force. Securus Technologies was selected for their comprehensive GPS and RF-based monitoring

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systems. Securus also provides various support programs and reporting services for the supervision, location, and movement of offenders in the community in order to help keep the public safe.

The GPS Monitoring Program gives judges the option to require any offender to have a GPS monitor installed on their ankle prior to being released from the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility. The Detention Staff will enter the types of violations that can be monitored. These range from Exclusion Zone Violations to Proximity Violations. Any violations that occur send an immediate response to the FCSO Communications Center (Dispatch) where a deputy will be dispatched to investigate. Communications personnel will also call the victim to inform them of the violation.

The offender will face re-arrest or additional charges if they violate the conditions of the program. The offender is also responsible for maintaining the battery charge on the device, not tampering with or removing the device, and paying all costs associated with the monitoring. There is no cost to tax payers. At the completion of the offender's pre-trial release, the ankle monitor will be removed by FCSO personnel.

Judges also have the option to order GPS monitoring for offenses other than Domestic Violence.

The Domestic Violence Task Force will meet again on November 21 at 10:00 a.m. at the Flagler County Courthouse located at 1769 E. Moody Blvd. Bunnell, Fl. 32110 inside the Jury Assembly Room located on the first floor.

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