



## Narratives

### Executive Summary

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: 2013

Lauderdale Co. RSVP is under the sponsorship of the Lauderdale Co. Commission. The Lauderdale commission is five-member body, four commissioners from the two districts and the Probate Judge serving as the Chairman. This body represents the citizens of Lauderdale County, Alabama. The chairman votes in the event of a tie vote. The county is divided into two districts, with two commissioners elected to represent each district.

The commission establishes policies and procedures and appoints a County Administrator to implement the policies and manage the operation of the County.

Lauderdale Co. Commission oversees the RSVP program.

The number of unduplicated RSVP serving or will be serving is 745.

The volunteers will be serving; the elderly, homebound, the poor and the veterans.

The primary focus is Healthy Futures.

Activity: Aging in Place, Obesity and Food, and Access to Care.

Lauderdale Co. has a large rural area. Lauderdale Co. has Community Centers throughout the entire county, therefore using these centers to reach out to individuals that are homebound, elderly or disabled that needs assistance to remain living at home.

The expected outcome is that those in need will be provided with the services, food and information that will help them live independently. RSVP volunteers will provide transportation, prepare meals, do friendly visiting, provide access to care, health education, deliver meals, help in food pantries, provide benefits assistance.

The number of stations is 45.

Federal funding level is \$41,817.

Non-Federal funding level is: \$32,000.23

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### Strengthening Communities

#### Strengthening Communities 2013

Lauderdale County is a county of the U.S. State of Alabama. Its name is in honor of Colonel James Lauderdale of Tennessee. It is part of the Florence Muscle Shoals Metropolitan statistical area known as "The Shoals". As of the 2010 census the population was 92,709. Its county seat is Florence.

According to the 2000 census the county has a total of 718.78 square miles of which 669.46 square miles or 93.14% is land and 49.32% is water.

Other towns include: Waterloo, Rogersville, Killen, Center Star, Elgin, Anderson, Lexington, Greenhill, St. Florian, Underwood/Petersville, Zip City/Wilson, Cloverdale, Central and Oakland. All towns have Volunteer Fire Departments and most have Community Outreach Centers.

Adjacent counties are Lawrence Co., TN-north, Wayne Co., TN, north, Giles Co., TN-northeast, Limestone Co., AL-across the Elk River, Lawrence Co. AL-southeast across the Tennessee River, Colbert Co.AL-south across the river, Tishomingo Co., MS-west across the Tenn. River and Hardin Co., TN northwest.

Geographic: According to the 2010 census

Male 48% and Female 52%

86%.4% are White, 10% are Black, 0.4% are Native American, 0.7% Asian, 0.0% are Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, 1.4% tow or more races and 2.2% Hispanic or Latino (of any race)

Household Data: Units: 37,713, Households with children under age 18: 10,167 or 27%. Households living alone 10,872 or 28.8%; those living alone AGE 65+ 4,345. Marital status (age 15+) 23.2%

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Never married. Married 53.8%, Separated 1.5%, widowed 8.6%-5,301 females vs 1,299 males.

Divorced 11.3%

### Economics:

#### Household income:

10,000-11.5%

10,000-14,999-9.6%

15,000-24,999-11.8%

25,000-34,999-12%

35,000-49,999-14.8%

50,000-74,999-17.5%

75,000-99,999-10.5%

100,000-149,999-8.2%

150,000-199,999-1.8%

200,000+1.7%

According to the 2010 census 25.1% are below the poverty level in Lauderdale Co., Alabama.

Florence, Alabama has a population of 39,354 citizens and 17.3% are 65 and above. In rural Lauderdale Co. the population is 53,390 and 15.10% are 65 and older.

In our community the community need is lack of enough resources to help frail seniors, many of whom live on fixed incomes, particularly to help alleviate loneliness and to find affordable transportation to medical and other necessary appointments. RSVP volunteers can provide such assistance.

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These needs come under Healthy Futures Focus Area: The needs to address: to see that everyone has nutritious food to maintain their health and to help the elderly remain in their homes with quality of life.

RSVP will try to help meet health needs within communities including access to care, aging in place, and addressing hunger.

Activities will

Increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible:

Increased physical activity and improve nutrition in youth with the purpose of reducing childhood obesity and increasing access to nutritious food, and improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs (access to health care.)

Health Futures is our Focus area. We will try to meet the needs within our communities including access to health care, aging in place, and improve access to primary and preventive health care for communities served by CNCS-supported programs (access to health care). We hope to increase senior's ability to remain in their homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible. RSVP volunteers will help deliver Meals-On-Wheels, help in food pantries, soup kitchens, and prepare meals for homebound. Agencies such as Mended Hearts and the American Cancer Society will offer Health Education and help to develop Health related materials and provide health related training and coaching. Life Wise offers Benefits Assistance to seniors, helping them through the maze of the Health care system. St. Vincent DePaul Conference/Thrift Store helps those in need of assistance with rent, medical bills, food and clothing. The Help Center maintains a food pantry and helps those in need of food, has a clothes closet and help those in need; with rent, utilities and medical help. St. Michael's Loaves and Fishes prepare and deliver a hot meal each week to around 50+

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homebound. These volunteers check on the homebound to see how they are doing. Most of the vegetables come from their gardens. Many community members donate fresh meat, vegetables and grocery items for their meals that are prepared.

Lauderdale has 14 rural volunteer fire departments and 5 Congregate/Community Outreach Centers and 5 Community Outreach Centers covering the rural parts of the county. The City of Florence has two Congregate/Community Outreach Centers, two Methodist Churches and two Senior Apartments that do community outreach.

Lauderdale Co. RSVP will help to strengthen our communities with the help of the Community Centers and the Volunteer Fire Departments located throughout all of Lauderdale County.

Community centers do fundraisers; offer a safe place for seniors to gather for fun, entertainment, educational programs, health fairs, crafts and socializing. This helps the elderly remain active members of society and prevent loneliness and isolation. Community center volunteers will do community outreach within their community. Volunteers will prepare and deliver meals to the sick and shut-ins, do friendly visiting, sit with them, transport them to medical appointments, run errands, do telephone reassurance and provide them with assistance when needed to remain living at home. Volunteers will transport the elderly, if able to the community centers so they can participate in activities.

Providing people with ways to come together as friends, neighbors and citizens creates a fun foundation that enables a neighborhood to solve problems and seize opportunities. The community centers provide a safe place where communities can come together as friends, neighbors and citizens. We try to provide a safe place to hang out, give them something to do and help them build a better community. Community centers stress people working together for the benefit of everyone in the

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community makes for a better neighborhood. Each Community Center has guidelines, Policies and Procedures to follow. Centers elect a Board of Directors and a Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Fire Dept. has a Board of Directors and a Volunteer Coordinator. The Community Centers and Fire Departments give each community an opportunity to serve their community. This brings together people of diverse backgrounds, the young and the old; there is something for everyone. In the Fire Departments; you can man the phone, sound the alarm, prepare the trucks, do educational programs, and help with the fundraisers, besides being volunteer firemen and first responders. Members will help hang smoke detectors, check fire extinguishers and demonstrate how to use one. They also do safety presentations at community centers and to the students in schools. They also do fire safety programs at places like Lowes and Home Depot for the public. All firemen must attend training provided by Association of Fire Fighters.

Communities are about people-the greatest asset in every city, village, neighborhood, rural town or reservation. It takes a collective effort, energy, resources and commitment to improve the quality of life for everyone.

We will collaborate with government, non-profit organizations, and the private sector to support development of thriving communities. When the opportunity arises, seniors will be asked to participate in other service programs of their community or the whole community by media announcements. Non-profit Agencies needing mass number of volunteers calls on the Chamber of Commerce to relay messages by internet to get the word out to all agencies including RSVP to help serve. When disaster strike a community, the community comes together to help. When disasters strike other communities or counties, the communities come together to help; with food drives, clothing drives, whatever the needs are community volunteers are there to help.

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Killen Founders Day-the whole community comes together for a parade, exhibitors, entertainment, food, special programs, fun for the kids, ball games, tractor show, beauty pageant and fun for two days. There were educational exhibits such as the "Yellow Dot" program to enroll people, and Air Vac-Emergency Helicopter responders-to sign people up.

Rogersville has the Fiddler's Convention plus the Blue Grass Festival. Waterloo welcomes the Trail of Tears Motorcycle riders to town. These events take planning and volunteers from all communities to serve.

RSVP is part of the VOAD team of Lauderdale, Colbert, Marian, and Winston counties in Alabama. VOAD involves volunteers of all backgrounds, faiths, businesses, organizations and the Salvation Army, Red Cross, the Health Dept., First Responders, EMA and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service.

RSVP sponsors community food drives involving all RSVP volunteers and communities. With the downturn in the economy, unemployment and low income families there is a real need for food. There are children going to bed hungry and elderly who must choose between medicine and groceries.

To enhance the capacity of organizations is to strengthen the communities by helping each group to grow by offering them educational programs-a resource that helps them remain involved and active in their community. Programs will include: Healthy cooking, classes in diabetes, canning, gardening, and independent living. Program updates on Medicare, Social Security, Medicaid and Legal Aide will be offered. The Sheriff Dept. will do programs on scams, gun safety and senior safety. They will also teach them about Neighborhood Watch and how they can be aware of their surroundings. Emergency Management will do programs on disasters and how to prepare for them.

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The Sheriff's Dept. and RSVP volunteers are doing the "Yellow Dot" program-enrolling everyone in this life saving program. RSVP is involving students to help with enrollments, giving them community service hours. Yellow Dot furnishes first responders with needed medical and contact information in time of an accident, for the "GOLDEN HOUR" that could save your life.

RSVP will meet with community leaders and social workers in each community to develop a tracking system of homebound or older adults with disabilities that need assistance with food, transportation or other services that will allow them to live independently. RSVP staff will meet with volunteers in their communities to see how we can help those in need. Community Centers can help track those needing help. RSVP has close ties with NACOLG (North Alabama Council of Local Government) AAA (Area-Aging Agency), DHR (Department of Human Resources) and the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service. Together we can see and help those in need. The anticipated outcomes-Homebound older adults and individuals with disabilities will report an increase in social ties/perceived social support. Individuals will have access to quality food resources and receive access to health care and information in a timely manner.

RSVP will work with Health care Agencies and try to increase educational programs at community centers, especially programs related to health, nutrition, exercise and preventive health care for the elderly.

Many RSVP volunteers are veterans and members of the American Legion and the Ladies Auxiliary. Legion volunteers do fundraisers, officiate at funerals, present the colors at special events such as the RSVP Recognition, put out flags on holidays, prepare baskets for the homebound, veterans and their families, and transport other veterans to the VA Hospital or office. The American Legion members support a baseball team and send Young men to Boys State. The members present program at the schools and maintain the Veterans Memorial

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### **Recruitment and Development**

#### **Recruitment and Development**

Experienced and skilled volunteers are Lauderdale County's best resources especially during tough economic times. Assessing our programs needs and determining what skills are needed in volunteers is our next step. Programs in and around Lauderdale County that will benefit from such volunteers include, but are not limited to the following:

American Legion Post #11

ECM & ECM East Hospitals

Mitchell Hollingsworth Nursing Home Facility

Lauderdale County Sheriff's Dept.

Florence Library

DA's Office

Circuit Clerk's Office

St. Vincent DePaul Thrift Store/Food Pantry/Benefits Assistance

Help Center/Food Pantry/Benefits Assistance

Safe Place

Red Cross

Life Wise/Benefits Assistance for Seniors

American Cancer Society

Community Outreach Centers

Transports to Medical Facilities

First Presbyterian (Soup Kitchen)

Mended Hearts-Chapter 305

Meals-On-Wheels

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Congregate Meals

Loaves & Fishes

Independent Living for Seniors

Disaster Preparedness (Yellow Dot Program, Special Needs, Emergency Kits, etc.)

In order to place volunteers where their skills and experience can be of the most benefit to the community, we are researching likely sources of volunteer skills and developing methods to assist them. We are organizing management principles through the development of various position descriptions and policy/procedure statements relevant to our program's objectives.

We will produce program materials and make public presentations using brochures and Power Point presentations in order to recruit volunteers.

We will recruit recognized community leaders as volunteers and place them in leadership roles within our program.

Volunteers will be recruited through media outlets (local TV and radio stations), local newspapers and existing volunteers. Individuals from all races, ethnicities, and degrees of English proficiency will be recruited and placed according to their skills, experience and their interest.

Volunteer stations are required to be handicapped accessible, so handicapped individuals can volunteer or participate in activities at volunteers stations and community centers.

Orientation and training of new volunteers to ensure they have a working knowledge, it's activities, their specific roles, and our expectations of our volunteers, will be conducted on a quarterly basis.

We will develop Job Descriptions for volunteers.

We will develop a Handbook for volunteers containing Volunteer stations, Job descriptions, Volunteer guidelines, rules for RSVP staff, volunteers, stations, station managers, information on volunteer insurance and time sheets.

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We will monitor, coordinate, and assess volunteer performance in an effort to ensure the volunteer is having a meaningful experience and their skills are being utilized to the fullest. Keeping volunteers enthusiastic about the program is of key importance to the success of the program. Volunteers need constant positive feedback and constructive criticism. Volunteers that enjoy their roles are our biggest recruiters. Such volunteers want to use their skill and experience to make their communities a better place to live.

We will identify new volunteer assignments, and through the use of our assessment process place the right volunteer in the right place.

We will provide peer counseling and coaching to volunteers to help them develop new skills and obtain higher levels of responsibility.

A video diary of volunteer services will be kept and presented at a recognition event for all volunteers to see and appreciate.

Volunteers are offered computer training if wanted.

Volunteers are also encouraged to attend educational training offered by the Extension Service and NACOLG on a regular basis. The American Red Cross offers trainings for volunteers such as CPR and first aid classes. The Library offers free computer classes for anyone and volunteers are encouraged to attend. Announcements are given to the volunteers about computers classes with times and classes available.

Volunteers are also trained in Disaster Preparedness, Medicare benefits, Health and Nutrition, Diet and Exercise, Fire Prevention, CPR, First Aid, Diabetic Cooking, Foot Care, Social Security benefits, Veterans Benefits and Advanced Directives. RSVP recognizes our veterans who serve. The American Legion has many veteran volunteers and their families involved in service.

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Project staff members attend training provided by CNS and have full use of the Resource Center and its materials as needed. Volunteer supervisors are provided copies of the program's Policies and Procedures regarding volunteering.

A recognition event is held each year to honor the RSVP volunteers and their contributions to service. The Advisory Council seeks monetary donations to offset the cost of the meal and donations for door prizes for volunteers. Columbia Cottage presents Volunteer of the year award after receiving nominations from stations and volunteers. A video made throughout the year of volunteers in action is shown at the recognition event. Volunteers are recognized at events held by stations they serve.

### Program Management

Volunteers are necessary and extremely helpful for a healthy community. People from all walks of life donate their time and effort to various causes, day and night, everyday of the year. The more connected to a community people feel, the more likely they are to take responsibility for the community and feel pride and a sense of commitment. Mobilizing community resources and expanding capacity through volunteers also enhance an organization's general profile, which can attract more volunteers, program participants, and funds.

Potential benefits of using volunteers include the following:

An increased ability to serve clients and respond to the needs of the community, increased services, expanded hours of operation, shorter wait times.

Greater staff diversity (e.g., age, race, social background, income, education)

Increased skill set

Expanded community support.

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### Roles of volunteers

Many people think of volunteers as helpers stopping by in their spare time to answer phones, organize files, or visit people who are sick or homebound. However, many organizations rely heavily on volunteers to do the work that is performed later by paid staff. Volunteers fill a key role in running organizations, handling day-to-day tasks, and raising funds. Without them some organizations might not exist. In fact, the boards and committees of local agencies and associations consist of entirely of volunteers. Larger organizations, such as the Salvation Army and the American Red Cross, have survived for more than 100 years due in large part to a strong volunteer commitment. Our Red Cross --now relies on volunteers due to budget cuts--there is one paid person.

The tasks performed by volunteers vary widely, from stuffing envelopes, translating materials for non-English speakers, and preparing meals, to providing medical care, mentor, tutor, and train clients and other volunteers; and help with organizational operations. In short, volunteers help build and strengthen our communities by responding to the needs that make each community unique.

### Planning:

Our Mission: RSVP is a National, non-profit organization providing local human service programs and opportunities for individual and community involvement. RSVP provides meaningful opportunities of service for volunteers to serve their communities. Volunteers share their time, talent and experience with others to help meet community needs and make the community a better place for everyone.

We are trying to develop a program where volunteers feel productive, do work that challenges them and have an opportunity to grow. Volunteers also need to know they are valued for what they do.

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To have highly effective volunteers, we will try to do the following:

Appoint a designated volunteer coordinator, set guidelines to follow when overseeing volunteers.

Have a defined volunteer program, with the role of volunteers in our organizations and position descriptions.

Have volunteer training programs and supporting materials, such as a handbook.

A clear set of rules for volunteers and for staff working with volunteers.

A recruitment and management plan.

Have a recognition program, such as an annual ceremony to honor our volunteers.

A key component of our volunteer program is our board of directors (Advisory Council). Board members will be involved in all aspects of our volunteer program, beginning with the planning. They are volunteers themselves. Board members represent their community and can identify the needs in their communities that need addressing by community volunteers.

The Board can help by distributing recruitment materials at their work places of other public places; mentioning volunteer opportunities at public speaking engagements; speaking at specific recruitment events, taking part in the volunteer orientation and training, and attending and helping with recognition events.

To have highly effective volunteers our organization will provide orientation and training for new recruits. Initial orientation and training will prepare volunteers to perform their duties efficiently and effectively. Our policies and procedures will form the basis of the orientation, and position descriptions to form the basis of the training. All managed volunteers will receive training, direction, and supervision by the volunteer coordinator in tasks, duties and services for the intended purpose of supporting or enhancing the program.

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Orientation will be individual when the volunteer enrolls or later time at their convenience, when the volunteer enrolls at the station of choice. We then send them a "welcome letter" to explain RSVP to them and invite them to our office.

Volunteer stations must sign a Memorandum of Understanding with RSVP. The MOU will have guidelines for RSVP staff, Volunteer station and volunteer coordinator to follow. There will be a liaison from the RSVP Office and the station coordinator. The coordinator will be responsible for sending in volunteer time sheets with proper signatures. The coordinator can recruit and enroll new volunteers for their station to help build capacity of the volunteer program.

RSVP staff will use surveys developed by CNS and adjusted to fit our programs to be used to collect data of community needs and data to measure outputs and outcomes needed for CNS reporting.

All stations will be given surveys to collect data used to measure outcomes and/or outputs for national performance measures. Each station will have surveys to give to clients-to what the need is- at the beginning and then later to see if their need was met. Stations will be given timesheets to document volunteer's time, number of people served, the service, and for transportation (the mileage).

Surveys will be given to the volunteers to inquire how being a volunteer is helping them, if they are satisfied with they are doing.

RSVP stations not reporting service hours will be listed as inactive stations. Volunteers will be moved to other stations of interest to them.

Our plan to develop capacity and manage volunteer stations that address specified unmet community needs outside the Primary Focus area is to;

We need to see that the elderly and disabled are prepared for disasters. One we can educate them on being prepared, what to have on hand, where to go and who to contact when emergency strike their

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community. Enrolling the elderly and disabled in the "Special needs" data base, volunteers will update this information. We will enroll everyone in the "Yellow Dot" Program to have emergency medical information on hand if and when there is a wreck or other emergency where medical attention is needed.

Economic Opportunity: Housing infrastructure-Habitat plans on building 3+ homes for those in need each year. Habitat of the Shoals recruits volunteers from the community to help build homes.

Habitat can use volunteers of all ages, races, the disabled and non-English speaking.

NARA-(North Alabama Reading Aides) Adult education answers the need for those adults needing to learn to read. Advertisements and training of volunteers is furnished by NARA.

AARP volunteers offer tax counseling low income and the elderly tha

### **Organizational Capability**

#### **Organizational Capacity**

Our plans to operate the RSVP project to follow the Policies and Procedures provided by the Lauderdale County Commission and to follow the guidelines of the CNS grant. We will prepare guidelines for day to day operation of the Volunteer stations.

Lauderdale County RSVP has a Project Director to oversee the Project. Plans are to hire a part-time volunteer coordinator to help coordinate the volunteers we have and prepare them for future changes in the program. Under the new grant we will need to restructure the program, recruit volunteers that will help us address the community needs in the Primary Focus Area-Health Futures, other Focus areas and Capacity building. Lauderdale County is a large area and working together with other Agencies we can try to meet needs of the elderly, disabled and those in need of food, clothing and shelter. There are agencies (RSVP stations) that will provide health education and benefits assistance.

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Each RSVP station must sign Memorandum of Understanding with RSVP. The MOU contains the Policies and Procedure guidelines for RSVP staff, stations, volunteer coordinator and volunteers. Volunteers will be given job descriptions and a handbook prepared by RSVP, the Board and some volunteers.

Our organization works closely with agencies involved in our Primary Focus Are-Healthy Futures. Agencies like NACOLG (North Alabama Council of Local Governments) oversee AAA-(Area Aging Agency) that sponsors the Congregate Meals at the Community Centers and RSVP provides the volunteers to help serve. Community Action sponsors the Meals-On-Wheels' program and volunteers deliver the meals and check on the clients. Community Centers help track the community needs in their communities.

Other agencies will provide health information; have health fairs and fundraisers for the community. RSVP will provide time sheets for the stations in the Primary Focus Area that will document the Volunteers, time, service and the number of those served. Surveys will be prepared by RSVP and given out before and after services rendered to track performance measures.

RSVP is sponsored by the Lauderdale County Commission and overseen by the County Administrator. Signed time sheets are turned into the County Payroll Clerk. Purchase orders for supplies are presented to the Commission Office. The County Bookkeeper documents all expenditures.

RSVP has adequate space for the day to day operation, has supplies, and equipment to complete task and track volunteers. All purchasing is done through the Commission office with purchase orders. Travel is approved by the Commission. The Commission is audited every year.

RSVP has an Advisory Board made up of Community leaders, Station Coordinators, volunteers and

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representatives from each Community. Community Center members bring before the Board the needs of each community. One community need we are addressing is; supply food for those in need. We are sponsoring a Community-wide food drive. There are elderly who must choose between their medicine and food for the table. This food will be given to the Salvation Army to restock their warehouse.

All Grant funds including Non-federal are used according to the grant guidelines and over seen by the Commission.

When preparing the CNS grant, RSVP staff presents copies to the County Commission and the City of Florence for match to carry on the program. State funds come through the State Association - AARSVP if the State appropriates funding for AARSP, INC.

RSVP is given a monthly Non-Federal expenditure report; cash account analysis by fund, a deposit journal and a Federal expenditure report by the Commission.

### Other

A disaster program we are doing in partnering with the Lauderdale Co. Sheriff's Department is the "Yellow Dot" Program. The "Yellow Dot" Program is a traffic safety program-photograph the driver or passengers-attach photo to a signed medical form-place in the glove box of vehicle-place the yellow dot on rear window to alert first responders to look in your glove box for your emergency information. This information could help save your life when in an emergency situation. This program is for all ages, especially the elderly. All first responders have been educated on this program, so when an emergency happens, they will have some presious information to help them. Lauderdale County is the 40th county in Alabama to start this program.

Supports groups such as Autism, diabetics, heart patients, auto immune disorders, pulmonary patients

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will be some that will benefit from this program.

RSVP volunteers receive training in enrolling drivers and others in this program.

### **PNS Amendment (if applicable)**

Not applicable