

News Release

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DPS Launches iWatchTexas Mobile App

AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) today announced the launch of the new *iWatchTexas* mobile application (app), which the public can use to report suspicious activities or behaviors that may indicate ongoing or future criminal or terrorist activity. The *iWatch Texas* program was created as a partnership between communities and law enforcement, and utilizes citizen-sourced tips related to criminal activity. DPS developed the new *iWatchTexas* mobile app at the direction of Governor Greg Abbott to make it easier for the public to report suspicious activity in Texas, including criminal, terroristic or school safety-related threats.

“The new *iWatchTexas* mobile app is one of several solutions that Texas is implementing immediately to identify and report those who may pose a threat to our schools and to our communities,” said Governor Abbott. “Our law enforcement officers often rely on vigilant Texans to help keep communities safe, and this new tool will give everyone the ability to quickly and easily communicate with authorities and help prevent future tragedies.”

The app is now available for iPhone users on the Apple App Store (*iWatchTexas*) and for Android users on Google Play (*iWatchTexas*).

“Amid the growing threats to public safety by malicious actors, we want to remind the public that they can be law enforcement’s greatest resource to combat those intent on harming others, including innocent schoolchildren and administrators,” said DPS Director Steven McCraw. “By launching this new mobile app at the direction of Gov. Abbott, we are providing an additional and easy way for the public to report any illegal or suspicious behavior, which may ultimately help save lives.”

The public can report suspicious behaviors through the *iWatch Texas* program via the new mobile app, online at www.iwatchtx.org or by calling 1-844-643-2251. A report usually takes fewer than five minutes to complete, and once submitted, each report is reviewed by law enforcement analysts. **All reports are confidential** (*providing contact information, which is optional, will allow for follow-up questions*).

Preparations for crime, terrorist attacks and threats to school safety may often be seen but not reported. When in doubt, speak up. Here are some examples of behaviors and activities to report:

- Comments made regarding killing or harming someone.
- Strangers asking questions about building security features and procedures.
- Briefcase, suitcase, backpack or package is left behind.
- Cars or trucks are left in no-parking zones at important buildings.
- Chemical smells or fumes that are unusual for the location.
- People requesting sensitive information, such as blueprints, security plans or VIP travel schedules, without a need to know.

- Purchasing supplies that could be used to make bombs or weapons, or purchasing uniforms without having the proper credentials.
- Taking photographs or videos of security features, such as cameras or checkpoints.

Note: The *iWatch Texas* program is **not** designed to report emergencies. If a situation requires an emergency response, call **911**. As a reminder, false reporting to a law enforcement agency is a violation of state law.