



WHITE PAPER

Meeting the Moment: A Renewed Community Policing Framework for Frederick County's Senior Population

Restoring and Modernizing TRIAD, SALT, and Adopt-a-Senior for a Growing Aging Population

Prepared for the Frederick County Sheriff's Office and County Leadership

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Executive Summary

Frederick County is the fastest-growing county in Maryland, and its senior population is growing faster than any other age cohort in the county. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of residents age 65 and older rose by roughly 52 percent, and the county's overall population has grown by approximately 11 percent since 2020 alone, the largest increase of any Maryland jurisdiction. This growth is durable, not temporary, and it is reshaping the service demands placed on the Frederick County Sheriff's Office (FCSO).

The FCSO previously operated a mature, three-part framework to serve this population: a TRIAD partnership linking law enforcement and senior organizations, a SALT Council (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together) giving seniors a formal advisory voice, and an Adopt-a-Senior program pairing deputies with elderly residents for regular personal contact. These programs lapsed over time as leadership priorities shifted. The population that justified them, however, has more than doubled in relative size since they were last fully staffed.

This white paper recommends: that Frederick County formally reestablish and modernize this framework under a single initiative, the Frederick County Senior Safety Partnership (FCSSP), built on four pillars: (1) restored governance through TRIAD/SALT, (2) modernized personal-contact and wellness-check services, (3) a dedicated elder fraud and exploitation prevention capability, and (4) specialized deputy training. The plan is designed to be implemented over an 18-month period in four phases, using largely existing staff and infrastructure augmented by grant funding, with clear metrics to demonstrate impact to county leadership.

This is not a proposal for a new bureaucracy. It is a proposal to reassemble a proven model, validated by comparable programs currently operating in jurisdictions such as Aurora, Illinois; San Diego County, California; and Franklin County, Maine, and to right-size it for the county Frederick has become.

1. The Case for Action: A Changing County

1.1 Population Growth

Frederick County has led Maryland in population growth in recent years, with county officials and demographic data pointing to growth of roughly 11 percent since the 2020 Census, outpacing every other Maryland jurisdiction. This growth is occurring alongside, and is partly driven by, an aging resident base choosing to remain in or relocate to the county.

1.2 Senior Population Growth Outpaces the County as a Whole

Census data show the county's 65-and-older population grew approximately 52 percent between 2010 and 2020, and that the rate of growth substantially outpaced the general population during the same period. County planning officials have described the senior population as growing at close to three times the statewide average rate. The 85-and-older cohort, the residents most likely to need direct support, has grown even faster.

1.3 What This Means for Public Safety

- More residents aging in place, living alone in single-family homes rather than assisted living, with fewer routine eyes on their well-being.
- Rising exposure to financial exploitation, as fraud targeting older adults has grown into a multi-billion-dollar national problem driven by increasingly sophisticated phone, email, and AI-enabled scams.
- Increasing call volume and complexity for welfare checks, elder abuse investigations, and fraud reporting, categories of calls that require specialized handling, not standard patrol response.
- A widening gap between the county's current senior-focused capacity and the population it must now serve, since the FCSO's TRIAD, SALT, and Adopt-a-Senior programs are no longer active.

Taken together, these trends describe a county whose senior-safety infrastructure has not kept pace with its senior population. Closing that gap should be treated as a proactive public safety priority, not a reactive one.

2. Learning From FCSO's Own History

Frederick County does not need to design a senior-safety framework from scratch, it already built and operated one. Understanding why each program worked, and why it lapsed, should directly inform how it is rebuilt.

2.1 TRIAD

TRIAD is a national model formally joining local law enforcement, the sheriff's office, and a senior citizen membership organization around shared quality-of-life and safety goals. FCSO's TRIAD partnership gave the office a structured, ongoing channel to senior organizations across the county rather than ad hoc outreach.

2.2 SALT Council (Seniors and Law Enforcement Together)

The SALT Council operationalized TRIAD by creating a standing citizen advisory body that met regularly with agency leadership. It gave seniors direct input into policy and priorities, and gave the Sheriff's Office an early-warning channel for emerging scams, safety concerns, and service gaps, information that rarely surfaces through 911 calls alone.

2.3 Adopt-a-Senior

This program paired deputies with elderly residents within their own patrol areas for regular, personal, non-emergency visits. It built the kind of relationship and familiarity that allows a deputy to notice, often before anyone else does, a missed routine, an unfamiliar visitor, or a story that doesn't add up. It was inexpensive relative to its results, since it primarily required time and continuity rather than new equipment or software.

2.4 Why the Programs Lapsed

Programs like these typically fade for predictable reasons: a change in leadership's priorities, competing calls for service, staffing turnover without a formal handoff process, no dedicated budget line insulating them from cuts, and no standing metric that made their value visible to county leadership during budget cycles. Any relaunch should correct for each of these failure points directly rather than simply restoring the prior program as it existed.

3. What Other Jurisdictions Are Doing Now

Programs of this kind are actively expanding nationally, not contracting, which suggests Frederick County would be rejoining a growing practice area rather than pioneering an untested one.

Jurisdiction	Program	Core mechanism
Aurora, IL Police Dept.	Senior Safety & Resources Unit	Dedicated officers proactively check on at-risk seniors, follow up on welfare checks, connect residents to services, and coordinate with detectives trained in elder-crime investigation; trains retail staff to spot gift-card and financial scams.
San Diego County Sheriff	You Are Not Alone (YANA)	Daily phone calls and weekly in-person visits for elderly, disabled, and homebound residents with no one else checking on them.
Franklin County, ME Sheriff	Elder Check	Deputies conduct intermittent welfare checks on seniors living alone in rural areas, screening for scams, medication issues, unsafe conditions, and family-perpetrated abuse.
Petersburg, VA Sheriff	ConfirmOK	Free automated daily telephone check-in; a missed response automatically triggers an alert to family or a deputy welfare check.
Pickens County, SC Sheriff	Silver Shield	Communications staff place personal check-in calls to elderly or medically fragile residents living alone.
High Point, NC Police Dept.	Deputy Cook Project	Officers are paired with seniors in their beat for regular visits logged in the CAD dispatch system with emergency contacts and medical information, giving any responding officer immediate context.

The common thread across these programs is that none requires large new bureaucracies. Each layers a modest amount of dedicated staff time and, increasingly, low-cost automated check-in technology onto an existing patrol or community-policing structure.

4. Proposed Program: The Frederick County Senior Safety Partnership

It is recommended that Frederick County consolidate its restored senior-safety efforts under a single, clearly named initiative, the Frederick County Senior Safety Partnership (FCSSP), built on four pillars.

Pillar 1: Governance — Restored TRIAD / SALT Council

Re-establish the TRIAD partnership between FCSO, municipal police departments in the county, and senior-serving organizations, including the Frederick County Division of Aging and Independence and Advocates for the Aging of Frederick County. Reconstitute the SALT Council as a standing advisory body meeting quarterly, with defined membership terms, a charter, and a direct reporting line to the Sheriff, so the council does not depend on any single champion to remain active.

Pillar 2: Personal Contact — Modernized Adopt-a-Senior

Revive Adopt-a-Senior with two tiers of contact matched to need: (a) recurring in-person deputy visits for higher-need or higher-risk residents identified through referrals, prior welfare checks, or SALT Council input; and (b) an opt-in automated daily check-in call system for residents who live alone and want a lighter-touch safety net, with an automatic escalation to a deputy welfare check when a call goes unanswered. Visit and check-in records should be logged in the CAD/records system, so any responding deputy has immediate context, mirroring the High Point model.

Pillar 3: Prevention — Elder Fraud & Exploitation Response

Designate at least one deputy or detective as a trained elder-fraud liaison, coordinated with the Maryland Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division and the FBI's Elder Fraud hotline. Conduct recurring public seminars at senior centers, faith communities, and housing complexes, modeled on Abington, Massachusetts's "Fraud Talks" program, and train retail cashiers at high-risk locations (pharmacies, big-box retailers, gas stations) to recognize signs of gift-card and wire-transfer fraud in progress.

Pillar 4: Training — Specialized Deputy Preparation

Provide all patrol deputies with baseline training in recognizing elder abuse, financial exploitation, and cognitive-impairment communication, and provide advanced training to designated senior-liaison deputies covering investigative techniques specific to elder financial crimes and coordination with adult protective services.

5. Implementation Plan

The plan is organized into four phases over 18 months, sequenced so that governance and needs assessment precede program rollout, and so that the highest-need residents are served first.

Phase 1 (Months 1–3): Governance & Needs Assessment

- Reconvene TRIAD partners and formally reconstitute the SALT Council with a written charter and defined terms.
- Conduct a countywide needs assessment: survey senior centers, faith communities, and the Division of Aging; review prior welfare-check and elder-fraud call data to identify hot spots by patrol area.
- Identify and designate initial senior-liaison deputies (recommended: one per patrol area).

- Select and procure an automated wellness-check platform (RFP or piggyback on an existing state/county contract where available).

Phase 2 (Months 4–6): Pilot Launch

- Launch Adopt-a-Senior visits and the automated check-in option in one or two patrol areas identified as highest-need in Phase 1.
- Hold the first round of "Fraud Talks"-style public seminars in the pilot patrol areas.
- Begin baseline elder-abuse and fraud-recognition training for all patrol deputies; begin advanced training for senior-liaison deputies.
- Establish CAD/records logging fields for senior check-ins and visit history.

Phase 3 (Months 7–12): Countywide Rollout

- Expand Adopt-a-Senior and automated check-ins to all patrol areas.
- Formalize the retail cashier fraud-recognition training partnership with high-risk retail locations.
- Complete advanced training for all senior-liaison deputies; confirm coordination protocols with Adult Protective Services and the Maryland Attorney General's office.
- SALT Council begins quarterly public reporting on participation and outcomes.

Phase 4 (Months 13–18): Evaluation & Institutionalization

- Conduct a formal 12-month program evaluation against the metrics in Section 6.
- Present findings and a renewal/expansion budget request to county leadership ahead of the next fiscal cycle.
- Establish a dedicated budget line for FCSSP so the program is insulated from the informal attrition that ended the prior TRIAD, SALT, and Adopt-a-Senior programs.

Phase	Timeframe	Primary deliverable
Phase 1	Months 1–3	SALT Council reconstituted; needs assessment complete; liaisons designated; platform selected
Phase 2	Months 4–6	Pilot live in 1–2 districts; first seminars held; baseline training underway
Phase 3	Months 7–12	Countywide rollout; retail partnerships formalized; advanced training complete
Phase 4	Months 13–18	Formal evaluation; dedicated budget line established; renewal plan presented

6. Performance Metrics & Evaluation

To avoid the fate of the prior programs, FCSSP should report against a small set of standing metrics from day one, so its value is visible to county leadership at every budget cycle rather than only anecdotally.

- Number of active Adopt-a-Senior participants and automated check-in enrollees, by patrol area.

- Average response time from a missed check-in to a completed welfare check.
- Number of elder fraud attempts reported, intercepted before loss, and referred for investigation.
- Attendance and reach of public fraud-prevention seminars.
- SALT Council meeting frequency and number of policy recommendations acted upon.
- Deputy participation rates in baseline and advanced elder-focused training.

7. Resourcing & Funding Considerations

The framework is designed to rely primarily on redirected duties within the existing structure rather than net-new headcount, with targeted funding for the automated check-in platform, training, and outreach materials.

7.1 Staffing Approach

Senior-liaison responsibilities can generally be layered onto existing patrol positions rather than requiring new sworn positions, at least through the pilot and initial rollout phases. A program coordinator role, potentially civilian or part-time, is recommended by Phase 3 to manage SALT Council logistics, data reporting, and partner coordination.

7.2 Potential Funding Sources

- Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, which supports services for elder fraud and abuse victims.
- Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) program, which supports community policing initiatives.
- Maryland Department of Aging grant programs and area agency on aging partnerships.
- AARP Fraud Watch Network, which provides free public education materials and speaker resources.
- County general fund allocation, phased in as the program demonstrates measurable impact.

Exact staffing and budget figures should be developed jointly with FCSO's budget office once Phase 1's needs assessment quantifies demand; this white paper intentionally presents a framework rather than fixed dollar amounts, which should be validated against current FCSO staffing levels and county fiscal constraints.

8. Risks & Mitigations

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Program attrition after initial launch, as occurred previously	Loss of trust with senior residents; repeated cycle of stand-up/stand-down	Dedicated budget line by Phase 4; standing metrics reported to leadership each budget cycle; written SALT charter independent of any single staff member
Staffing strain on patrol from added visit/check-in duties	Reduced availability for other calls for service	Phase rollout by district; prioritize automated check-ins for lower-

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
		need residents to reserve deputy time for higher-need visits
Low awareness/enrollment among eligible seniors	Underutilized program despite need	SALT Council and senior center partnerships used for direct outreach and enrollment, not just marketing
Data privacy concerns with check-in and visit records	Resident hesitancy to enroll; potential misuse of personal data	Opt-in enrollment only; access to records limited to responding deputies and program coordinator; retention policy set in Phase 1

9. Conclusion & Recommendation

Frederick County has already proven, through its own prior operation of TRIAD, SALT, and Adopt-a-Senior, that this model works locally. What lapsed was not the concept but the leadership priorities and infrastructure protecting it, a dedicated budget line, a written charter, and standing metrics that make its value visible year over year. The county's senior population has grown far faster than the general population since these programs were last fully staffed, which makes this the right moment to rebuild the framework, not simply as it was, but sized and modernized for the county Frederick has become.

Recommendation: The Sheriff's Office should approve Phase 1 of the Frederick County Senior Safety Partnership, reconstituting the SALT Council and completing the countywide needs assessment, within the current budget cycle, positioning the program for pilot launch within six months.