



CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

NOVEMBER 3-6, 2010

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Contact:

Neal Buccino, NJ State Parole Board, 609-292-4031 office; 609-468-9728 cell; neal.buccino@spb.state.nj.us
Paul Loriquet, NJ Department of Law and Public Safety, 609-292-4791, paul.loriquet@lps.state.nj.us

NJ Fugitives Get Chance to Surrender Safely ***“Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey” a major law enforcement, community collaboration in Somerset, New Brunswick***

NEW BRUNSWICK – Fugitives hiding from the law in New Jersey will soon have the opportunity to surrender safely at a neutral location, take responsibility for their crimes and receive favorable consideration from the court.

The initiative, called ***Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey***, will operate from **Wednesday, November 3** through **Saturday, November 6** at **First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, 771 Somerset Street, Somerset, NJ, 08873**. Individuals will be able to turn themselves in at the church from **9 am to 4 pm** throughout the four days. The individuals will be transported and their cases adjudicated at temporary courtrooms a few blocks away, at the McKinley Community School in New Brunswick.

New Jersey Attorney General Paula T. Dow and State Parole Board Chairman James T. Plousis said Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey represents an unprecedented, multi-agency collaboration in Middlesex, Somerset, Mercer and Monmouth counties. An estimated 2,500 fugitives are expected to turn themselves in, from across New Jersey. (A total of 2,245 turned themselves in at Fugitive Safe Surrender-Camden in November 2008, and 4,103 surrendered at Fugitive Safe Surrender-Newark in November 2009).

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey is made possible through a partnership by the Office of the Attorney General and the U.S. Marshals Service, Rutgers University, State Parole Board and a host of agencies and organizations at the Federal, State, county, municipal, community-based and faith-based levels.

Dow and Plousis today joined Middlesex County Prosecutor Bruce J. Kaplan, Acting Somerset County Prosecutor A. Peter DeMarco, Jr., Mercer County Prosecutor Joseph L. Bocchini Jr., Monmouth County Prosecutor Luis A. Valentin, Somerset County Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano, Sr., the Reverend DeForest B. Soaries, Jr., Lori Scott Pickens, Director of Community Outreach at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, Stacy Northrop, who turned herself in at New Jersey’s first Fugitive Safe Surrender event in 2008, and other leaders to announce the launch of this important venture.

“November 3rd through 6th is a perfect window of opportunity for those wanted by the law to take responsibility for their crimes,” said Attorney General Paula T. Dow. “Fugitives should take advantage of this limited opportunity by safely surrendering and in return face favorable consideration from the justice system.”

“Those who turn themselves in will receive favorable consideration. Each case is different, but if you surrender peacefully you will get a much better outcome than if the police have to find you and bring you in,” State Parole Board Chairman – and former US Marshal – James T. Plousis said. “Each participant reduces the danger inherent in fugitive apprehensions. They also save taxpayer dollars, and free up the police and courts to take on other matters.”

“Each time one of our law enforcement officers is called upon to apprehend a fugitive, there is a risk that the officer could be seriously harmed,” Middlesex County Prosecutor Bruce J. Kaplan said. “What makes the Fugitive Safe

Surrender program so successful is that it helps protect the safety of police officers, as well as the safety of those who surrender."

"Fugitive Safe Surrender allows people to stand up, face the court and clear their warrants, and finally get their lives back on track," Acting Somerset County Prosecutor A. Peter DeMarco, Jr. said. "It creates a safer environment for the entire community, including those who surrender, their families and neighborhoods, and the police who are responsible for bringing fugitives to justice."

"The success of the Fugitive Safe Surrender program speaks for itself," Somerset County Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano, Sr. said. "This is an unprecedented opportunity for fugitives to make things right – not only for themselves but also for their families and the community. Life is difficult enough without having to look over your shoulder, wondering if this is the day I'll be caught. This affords them the opportunity for a fresh start and safety for all those involved."

"We are opening our church to Fugitive Safe Surrender because we believe in the benefits of offering a second chance to those who have broken the law," said Reverend DeForest B. Soaries, Jr. of First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens. "By taking this big step, people who live in hiding today can find peace of mind, freedom within the law, and the opportunity to take on new responsibility for themselves and their families."

"The Rutgers School of Criminal Justice and the Police Institute at Rutgers are proud to be coordinating this effort with our law enforcement and community partners," said Lori Scott Pickens, Director of Community Outreach at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice. "Fugitive Safe Surrender creates partnerships between law enforcement and community groups that last beyond the initial surrender event, and lead to ongoing benefits."

The US Marshals Service launched the first **Fugitive Safe Surrender** initiative in 2005, in Cleveland, Ohio, after a city police officer was murdered in the line of duty while attempting to capture a wanted fugitive. Since then, a total of 25,216 individuals have turned themselves in at 17 **Fugitive Safe Surrender** events nationwide.

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey is open to individuals wanted by New Jersey law enforcement agencies on non-violent felony or misdemeanor warrants, including family matters and child support warrants. It is not an amnesty program, but **Fugitive Safe Surrender** does offer favorable consideration from the court, often in the form of reduced fines or probation requirements instead of incarceration.

Individuals wanted for violent crimes, or with previous convictions for violent crimes, also may surrender. However, those with violent crimes are more likely to be taken into custody. At **Fugitive Safe Surrender** sites nationwide, about 98 percent of individuals who surrendered were released to return home the same day, and about 2 percent were taken into custody. This is because the vast majority of those who turn themselves in are wanted for non-violent offenses and have no history of violence.

The initiative is only open to US citizens or legal residents. Individuals who are not US citizens or legal residents are not eligible to participate.

More detailed information in English and Spanish, including video statements from law enforcement officials and from individuals who surrendered at **Fugitive Safe Surrender-Newark** in November 2009, can be found at www.FSSNJ.com.

Fugitive Safe Surrender is made possible with help from a host of agencies and organizations at the Federal, State, county, municipal, community-based and faith-based levels. The Rutgers School of Criminal Justice and the Rutgers Police Institute are convening the discussions between partner agencies, inviting social service organizations to participate and offer services to those who surrender, organizing and training volunteers to serve at the surrender site, and conducting community outreach to make fugitives and their families aware of the opportunity to surrender. A full list of the partner agencies and organizations is available.

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What is Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey?

WHEN:

9 am to 4 pm November 3rd – 6th, 2010.

WHERE:

First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens
771 Somerset Street
Somerset, New Jersey 08873

WHO:

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey is open to individuals who are wanted by New Jersey law enforcement agencies on non-violent felony or municipal warrants (including family matters and child-support warrants).

Individuals wanted for violent crimes (or with previous convictions for violent crimes), may also surrender. However, they are more likely to be taken into custody.

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey is ONLY open to US citizens and legal residents. Anyone who is not a US citizen or legal resident is NOT eligible for this program.

WHAT:

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey will enable individuals who are hiding from the law to turn themselves in at a neutral location for four days during the first week of November, 2010.

It will be the third *Fugitive Safe Surrender* event held in New Jersey. In November 2008, a total of 2,245 individuals surrendered at *Fugitive Safe Surrender-Camden*. In November 2009, a total of 4,103 surrendered at *Fugitive Safe Surrender-Newark*. A total of 25,216 individuals have turned themselves in at 17 *Fugitive Safe Surrender* events nationwide.

Fugitive Safe Surrender is NOT an amnesty program. However, those who turn themselves in will receive favorable consideration from the court. This typically results in probation or reduced fines.

It is expected that the vast majority of those who turn themselves in will not go to jail. Nationwide, about 98 percent of those who turned themselves in at *Fugitive Safe Surrender* events were not taken into custody and were allowed to return home within hours of surrendering. This is because most individuals who turn themselves in are wanted for non-violent crimes and do not have violent criminal histories.

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey will be hosted in Somerset and New Brunswick. The surrender site will be First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, 771 Somerset Street, Somerset, NJ 08873. When fugitives enter at this location, law enforcement officers will run criminal background checks to learn about their outstanding warrants. After a short wait at the church, the fugitives will be transported a few blocks away to the McKinley Community School in New Brunswick. Part of the school will be converted into a courthouse, where the fugitives will work with judges and lawyers to resolve their warrants and outstanding matters.

Fugitive Safe Surrender has several benefits, most notably public safety. The United States Marshals Service created *Fugitive Safe Surrender* after a Cleveland police officer was killed while attempting to capture a wanted fugitive. Fugitive apprehensions are dangerous not just for police but for the fugitives themselves, their families and their communities. Every fugitive who voluntarily surrenders helps to remove that risk.

Fugitive Safe Surrender allows fugitives to take responsibility for their actions, stop running from the law, address and clear their warrants, and start building legitimate lives in the community. *Fugitive Safe Surrender* also provides the opportunity to connect with social service agencies for help with employment, health care, housing, drug rehabilitation and other services.

BACKGROUND:

Fugitive Safe Surrender is an initiative of the United States Marshals Service, launched in Cleveland in 2005.

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey is made possible through a partnership led by the US Marshals Service and New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.

Key partners include the Police Institute – Rutgers Newark, School of Criminal Justice; First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens; New Jersey State Parole Board; the Prosecutor's Offices of Middlesex, Somerset, Mercer and Monmouth counties; the Superior Court of New Jersey and its Middlesex and Somerset Vicinages, the City of New Brunswick and the County of Middlesex, and other agencies and organizations at the federal, state, county, municipal, community and faith-based levels.

A full list of partner agencies is available.



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Frequently Asked Questions: Fugitive Safe Surrender – Central Jersey

November 3rd – 6th, 2010, 9 am to 4 pm
First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens
771 Somerset Street, Somerset, New Jersey 08873
(A secular surrender site can be made available)
For More Information (Members of the Public): 732-828-2009

1. Can I turn myself in at the Fugitive Safe Surrender site even if my warrant is NOT from the four participating counties of Middlesex, Somerset, Mercer or Monmouth?

Yes. This **Fugitive Safe Surrender** initiative benefits people with warrants issued by any law enforcement agency in New Jersey. If you are wanted by law enforcement in any New Jersey county, you will be welcomed at this **Fugitive Safe Surrender** site.

2. Will there be attorneys on-site to assist me when I surrender?

Yes. In fact, the New Jersey Office of the Public Defender is an active partner in **Fugitive Safe Surrender** and lawyers will be available to provide legal assistance in appropriate cases.

3. Will I go to jail if I turn myself in at Fugitive Safe Surrender?

Everyone's case is different. However, approximately 98% of people who surrendered during **Fugitive Safe Surrender** events nationwide did NOT go to jail. They were released directly from the **Fugitive Safe Surrender** location within hours of turning themselves in.

This is because most persons who surrender during **Fugitive Safe Surrender** are wanted for non-violent offenses and have no history of violence.

4. What if I am not a U.S. citizen or legal resident?

Fugitive Safe Surrender is open ONLY to individuals who are U.S. citizens or legal residents. If you are not a U.S. citizen or legal resident you are NOT eligible for this program.

5. I don't have a driver's license. What sort of ID do I need to bring?

You can bring any form of ID that you have – Social Security card, birth certificate, Medicare/Medicaid card, etc. If you do not have any ID, you may still turn yourself in during **Fugitive Safe Surrender**. Most **Fugitive Safe Surrender** participants will be fingerprinted once they register at the surrender site.

6. Do I have to be there at 9 am or can I come any time during the day?

Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey will operate from 9 am to 4 pm from November 3rd – 6th, 2010 at First Baptist Church of Lincoln Gardens, 771 Somerset Street, Somerset, New Jersey 08873.

You are welcome during those hours. The doors will open at 9 am and close promptly at 4 pm on those four days. To reduce the amount of time you will have to wait to resolve your matters, you are encouraged to come early during the first three days of this event.

7. Do you provide childcare at the site?

No. Resources will not be present to provide childcare at **Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey**.

8. Will I learn how to get help finding employment, housing, health care, drug rehabilitation or other social services at Fugitive Safe Surrender?

Yes. Representatives of several social service agencies will be present to offer information on local services including employment, health care, housing, drug rehabilitation, and other social services.

9. Can I still turn myself in if I am wanted on a violent charge?

All fugitives are welcome to surrender at **Fugitive Safe Surrender**, and some people with warrants for violent crimes – or previous convictions for violent crimes – surrender, too. Unlike those persons with warrants for non-violent crimes or who have no history of violence, individuals wanted for violent crimes (or with previous convictions for violent crimes) are more likely to be taken into custody.

10. Is Fugitive Safe Surrender an amnesty program?

NO, **Fugitive Safe Surrender** is not an amnesty program. **Fugitive Safe Surrender** offers individuals who want to re-enter the mainstream of their communities a first step toward a second chance, in the form of favorable consideration from the court. The handling of criminal charges is decided by the prosecutor and judge, but favorable consideration is typically given in the spirit of the program.

11. Is there a religious requirement to participate in the program?

There is no religious requirement to participate in the program. **Fugitive Safe Surrender** provides fugitives with the opportunity to surrender to authorities in a faith-based or other neutral setting. If you want to participate in **Fugitive Safe Surrender-Central Jersey** but do not want to surrender in a faith-based setting, alternative arrangements can be made. You may call **(732) 828-2009** to discuss how this can be done.

12. Is there a telephone number to call for more information?

Yes. Members of the public may call **(732) 828-2009** or visit www.FSSNJ.com to learn more.