questions to ask

General Questions

- Do you have any recent photos?
- What is the person wearing? Is the clothing “weather appropriate”?
- Does the person have a coexisting medical condition—diabetes, heart condition, etc.? How long until next medications would be taken?
- Does the person regularly do activities on her/his own—walking, going to the store, etc.?
- What is the person’s general daily routine?
- Does the person have fears of crowds, strangers, or...?
- Is the person part of an Alzheimer’s registry system (local or national) or locative technology program?
Wandering Questions

- Has the person gone missing before?
- Did the person leave on foot or by car? (If by foot) Does the person have access to a car or car keys?
- Through which door did the person exit the residence/building?
- Does the person have favorite places to visit—library, store, coffee shop, etc.?
- Are there activities the person seeks out or enjoys?
- Is the person drawn to certain landmarks, buildings, or objects?
- Is the current location the person's hometown or near it? Could they have gone to a former residence, workplace, church, etc.?
- When was the last time the person ate/drank/used the bathroom? Could they have wandered in search of those things?
- Has there been any noteworthy unusual behaviors recently?

Cognitive Ability

- Describe current symptoms (may lead to additional line of questioning).
- Is the person verbally communicative?
- Does the person understand where they are?
- Does the person understand current year/time, or does the person confuse different time periods?
- Does the person frequently recall any significant places/people from a prior time period in their life?
- Does the person still remember a home address or telephone number?
- Does the person still use money? Is it likely they are carrying any money?
- Does the person know how to use public transportation or use it regularly?
- Would the person recognize and respond to police officers or someone in uniform?
- Would the person be fearful of police or persons in uniforms for any reason?
- Has the person ever been combative toward you or others?
- Is there any chance that the individual is carrying a firearm? Does the person know how to use it?
- Would the person trust us if we found him/her? Is there something comforting I can take to help establish trust—a favorite sweater, snack, slippers, photo?

This project was supported by Grant No. 2010-SJ-BX-K005 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.