

By the Committee on Criminal Justice; and Senators Collins and Perry

591-02410-24

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1 A bill to be entitled  
 2 An act relating to autism spectrum disorder training  
 3 for law enforcement and correctional officers;  
 4 amending s. 943.1727, F.S.; providing definitions;  
 5 providing requirements for training officers for  
 6 interacting with individuals with autism spectrum  
 7 disorder; requiring the Criminal Justice Standards and  
 8 Training Commission to adopt rules requiring such  
 9 training as part of continued employment training for  
 10 officers; providing an effective date.

11  
 12 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

13  
 14 Section 1. Section 943.1727, Florida Statutes, is amended  
 15 to read:

16 943.1727 ~~Continued~~ Employment training relating to autism  
 17 spectrum disorder.—

18 (1) As used in this section, the term:

19 (a) "Agency" means the ability to make independent  
 20 decisions and act in one's own best interests.

21 (b) "Autism spectrum disorder" has the same meaning as in  
 22 s. 627.6686(2).

23 (2) The commission ~~department~~ shall establish an a  
 24 continued employment training component relating to individuals  
 25 with autism spectrum disorder as ~~defined in s. 627.6686.~~ The  
 26 ~~training component shall include, but need not be limited to,~~  
 27 ~~instruction on the recognition of the symptoms and~~  
 28 ~~characteristics of an individual on the autism disorder spectrum~~  
 29 ~~and appropriate responses to an individual exhibiting such~~

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30 ~~symptoms and characteristics.~~ Completion of the training  
31 component may count toward the 40 hours of instruction for  
32 continued employment or appointment as a law enforcement  
33 officer, correctional officer, or correctional probation officer  
34 required under s. 943.135.

35 (3) The employment training component for officers relating  
36 to interaction with individuals with autism spectrum disorder  
37 may include at least 4 hours of in-person instruction in the  
38 techniques and procedures described in this subsection:

39 (a) The nature and manifestation of autism spectrum  
40 disorders.

41 (b) Appropriate techniques for interviewing or  
42 interrogating an individual with autism spectrum disorder,  
43 including techniques to ensure the legality of statements made  
44 by the individual and techniques used to protect the rights of  
45 the individual.

46 (c) Techniques for locating an individual with autism  
47 spectrum disorder who runs away and is in danger and for  
48 returning that individual while causing as little stress as  
49 possible to the individual.

50 (d) Techniques for recognizing the agency of an individual  
51 with autism spectrum disorder while identifying potential  
52 abusive or coercive situations.

53 (e) Techniques for deescalating a potentially dangerous  
54 situation to maximize the safety of both the officer and the  
55 individual with autism spectrum disorder.

56 (f) Techniques for differentiating an individual with  
57 autism spectrum disorder from an individual who is belligerent,  
58 uncooperative, or otherwise displaying traits similar to the

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59 characteristics of an individual with autism spectrum disorder  
60 and understanding the law as it relates to the use of the Baker  
61 Act against an individual with autism spectrum disorder.

62 (g) Procedures to identify and address challenges related  
63 to the safety and wellbeing of individuals with autism spectrum  
64 disorder in a correctional facility.

65 (h) The impact of interaction with officers on individuals  
66 with autism spectrum disorder.

67 (4) All recruits must receive the employment training  
68 component relating to individuals with autism spectrum disorder.  
69 Such training component may be taught as part of other relevant  
70 components of the training.

71 (5) The commission shall by rule require that each officer  
72 receive, as part of the required instruction for continued  
73 employment or appointment as an officer, instruction in the  
74 techniques and procedures described in subsection (3).

75 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.