

By the Committees on Fiscal Policy; and Criminal Justice; and
Senators Collins and Perry

594-03670-24

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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 specified rules requiring
9 such training as part of basic recruit training or as
10 part of the required instruction for continued
11 employment or appointment as officers; providing an
12 effective date.

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14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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16 Section 1. Section 943.1727, Florida Statutes, is amended
17 to read:

18 943.1727 ~~Continued~~ Employment training relating to autism
19 spectrum disorder.—

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

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

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

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

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30 ~~characteristics of an individual on the autism disorder spectrum~~
31 ~~and appropriate responses to an individual exhibiting such~~
32 ~~symptoms and characteristics.~~ Completion of the training
33 component may count toward the 40 hours of instruction for
34 continued employment or appointment as a law enforcement
35 officer, correctional officer, or correctional probation officer
36 required under s. 943.135.

37 (3) The employment training component for officers relating
38 to interaction with individuals with autism spectrum disorder
39 must include in-person instruction for initial certification and
40 online instruction for continued employment training in the
41 techniques and procedures described in this subsection:

42 (a) The nature and manifestation of autism spectrum
43 disorders.

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

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

53 (d) Techniques for recognizing the agency of an individual
54 with autism spectrum disorder while identifying potential
55 abusive or coercive situations.

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

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59 (f) Techniques for differentiating an individual with
60 autism spectrum disorder from an individual who is belligerent,
61 uncooperative, or otherwise displaying traits similar to the
62 characteristics of an individual with autism spectrum disorder
63 and understanding the law as it relates to the use of the Baker
64 Act against an individual with autism spectrum disorder.

65 (g) Procedures to identify and address challenges related
66 to the safety and well-being of individuals with autism spectrum
67 disorder in a correctional facility.

68 (h) The impact of interaction with officers on individuals
69 with autism spectrum disorder.

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

74 (5) The commission shall by rule require that each officer
75 receive instruction in the techniques and procedures described
76 in subsection (3) as part of basic recruit training or as part
77 of the required instruction for continued employment or
78 appointment as an officer.

79 (a) By July 1, 2026, each basic skills course required for
80 a law enforcement, correctional, and correctional probation
81 officer to obtain initial certification, as required under s.
82 943.13(9), must incorporate such training.

83 (b) By July 1, 2028, each law enforcement, correctional,
84 and correctional probation officer must successfully complete
85 such training as required under s. 943.131(4) (a), or as part of
86 continued training or education required under s. 943.135(1). If
87 an officer fails to complete the training required under this

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88 subsection, his or her certification must be placed on inactive
89 status until the officer's employing agency notifies the
90 commission that he or she has completed the training.

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