

By Senator Collins

14-00113B-25

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to autism spectrum disorder training  
3           for law enforcement officers; amending s. 943.1727,  
4           F.S.; defining the terms "agency" and "autism spectrum  
5           disorder"; requiring the Criminal Justice Standards  
6           and Training Commission, rather than the Department of  
7           Law Enforcement, to establish an employment training  
8           component relating to individuals with autism spectrum  
9           disorder; providing requirements for training law  
10          enforcement officers on interacting with individuals  
11          with autism spectrum disorder; requiring the  
12          commission to adopt specified rules requiring such  
13          training as part of basic recruit training and as part  
14          of the required instruction for continued employment  
15          and appointment as law enforcement officers; providing  
16          an effective date.

17  
18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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20           Section 1. Section 943.1727, Florida Statutes, is amended  
21           to read:

22           943.1727 ~~Continued~~ Employment training relating to autism  
23           spectrum disorder.—

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

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

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

29           (2) The ~~commission~~ ~~department~~ shall establish an a

14-00113B-25

20251364\_\_

30 ~~continued~~ employment training component relating to individuals  
31 with autism spectrum disorder ~~as defined in s. 627.6686~~. The  
32 ~~training component shall include, but need not be limited to,~~  
33 ~~instruction on the recognition of the symptoms and~~  
34 ~~characteristics of an individual on the autism disorder spectrum~~  
35 ~~and appropriate responses to an individual exhibiting such~~  
36 ~~symptoms and characteristics~~. Completion of the training  
37 component must ~~may~~ count toward the 40 hours of instruction for  
38 continued employment or appointment as a law enforcement officer  
39 required under s. 943.135.

40 (3) The employment training component for law enforcement  
41 officers relating to interaction with individuals with autism  
42 spectrum disorder must include in-person instruction for initial  
43 certification and online or in-person instruction for continued  
44 employment training or education required under s. 943.135(1) in  
45 all of the following:

46 (a) The nature and manifestation of autism spectrum  
47 disorder.

48 (b) Techniques for interviewing or interrogating an  
49 individual with autism spectrum disorder, including techniques  
50 to ensure the legality of statements made by the individual and  
51 techniques used to protect the rights of the individual.

52 (c) Techniques for locating an individual with autism  
53 spectrum disorder who has run away and is in danger and for  
54 returning that individual while causing as little stress as  
55 possible to the individual.

56 (d) Techniques for recognizing the agency of an individual  
57 with autism spectrum disorder while identifying potential  
58 abusive or coercive situations.

14-00113B-25

20251364\_\_

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

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

68 (g) The impact of an interaction with officers on  
69 individuals 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 law  
75 enforcement officer receive instruction in the techniques and  
76 procedures described in subsection (3) as part of basic recruit  
77 training and as part of the required instruction for continued  
78 employment or appointment as such an officer.

79 (a) By July 1, 2027, each basic skills course required for  
80 law enforcement officers to obtain initial certification, as  
81 required under s. 943.13(9), must incorporate such training.

82 (b) By July 1, 2028, each law enforcement officer must  
83 successfully complete such training, as required under s.  
84 943.131(4)(a), and as part of continued training or education  
85 required under s. 943.135(1). If an officer fails to complete  
86 the training required under this subsection, his or her  
87 certification must be placed on inactive status until the

14-00113B-25

20251364\_\_

88 officer's employing agency notifies the commission that he or  
89 she has completed the training.

90 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2025.