

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to law enforcement officer
3 interactions with individuals with autism spectrum
4 disorder; creating s. 320.021, F.S.; requiring the
5 Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to
6 establish a program to improve communication between
7 individuals with autism spectrum disorder and law
8 enforcement officers under certain circumstances;
9 requiring the department to develop and make available
10 to individuals with autism spectrum disorder a certain
11 envelope by a specified date; providing requirements
12 for the envelope; authorizing individuals with autism
13 spectrum disorder to request the envelope from the
14 department or a tax collector's office, beginning on a
15 specified date; amending s. 943.1727, F.S.; defining
16 the terms "agency" and "autism spectrum disorder";
17 requiring the Criminal Justice Standards and Training
18 Commission within the Department of Law Enforcement to
19 establish an employment training component relating to
20 individuals with autism spectrum disorder; requiring
21 that such employment training component be developed
22 jointly by the commission and an organization that
23 meets certain requirements; providing requirements for
24 training law enforcement officers on interacting with
25 individuals with autism spectrum disorder; requiring

the commission to adopt certain rules requiring such training as part of basic recruit training and as part of the required instruction for continued employment and appointment as law enforcement officers; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 320.021, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

320.021 Blue envelope program.—

(1) The department shall establish a blue envelope program for the purpose of improving communication between individuals with autism spectrum disorder and law enforcement officers during motor vehicle-related interactions.

(2) By January 1, 2027, the department shall develop and make available to individuals with autism spectrum disorder a blue envelope that is intended to hold a copy of an individual's driver license and his or her vehicle registration, proof of insurance, and emergency contact information, which envelope may be provided by the individual to a law enforcement officer during a motor vehicle-related interaction. The exterior of the blue envelope must identify the individual as an individual with autism spectrum disorder and include communication guidelines intended to assist law enforcement officers during interactions

51 with drivers with autism spectrum disorder.

52 (3) Beginning January 1, 2027, an individual with autism
53 spectrum disorder may request a blue envelope from the
54 department or a tax collector's office.

55 **Section 2. Section 943.1727, Florida Statutes, is amended**
56 **to read:**

57 943.1727 ~~Continued~~ Employment training relating to autism
58 spectrum disorder.—

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

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

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

64 (2) The ~~commission~~ department shall establish ~~an a~~
65 ~~continued~~ employment training component relating to individuals
66 with autism spectrum disorder. Such training component must be
67 developed jointly by the commission and an organization that
68 advocates on behalf of, and offers training to law enforcement
69 officers in this state on interactions with, individuals with
70 autism spectrum disorder as defined in s. 627.6686. The training
71 component shall include, but need not be limited to, instruction
72 on the recognition of the symptoms and characteristics of an
73 individual on the autism disorder spectrum and appropriate
74 responses to an individual exhibiting such symptoms and
75 characteristics. Completion of the training component counts may

76 ~~count~~ toward the 40 hours of instruction for continued
77 employment or appointment as a law enforcement officer required
78 under s. 943.135.

79 (3) The employment training component for law enforcement
80 officers which relates to interaction with individuals with
81 autism spectrum disorder must include in-person instruction for
82 initial certification and online or in-person instruction for
83 continued employment training or education required under s.
84 943.135(1) in all of the following:

85 (a) The nature and manifestation of autism spectrum
86 disorder.

87 (b) Techniques for interviewing or interrogating an
88 individual with autism spectrum disorder, including techniques
89 to ensure the legality of statements made by the individual and
90 techniques used to protect the rights of the individual.

91 (c) Techniques for locating an individual with autism
92 spectrum disorder who has run away and is in danger and for
93 returning that individual while causing as little stress as
94 possible to the individual.

95 (d) Techniques for recognizing the agency of an individual
96 with autism spectrum disorder while identifying potential
97 abusive or coercive situations.

98 (e) Techniques for de-escalating a potentially dangerous
99 situation to maximize the safety of both the officer and the
100 individual with autism spectrum disorder.

101 (f) Techniques for differentiating an individual with
102 autism spectrum disorder from an individual who is belligerent,
103 uncooperative, or otherwise displaying traits similar to the
104 characteristics of an individual with autism spectrum disorder
105 and for understanding the law as it relates to the use of the
106 Baker Act on an individual with autism spectrum disorder.

107 (g) The impact of an interaction with officers on
108 individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

109 (h) Information about the blue envelope program
110 established under s. 320.021 and the "SAFE" designation included
111 in the motor vehicle record pursuant to s. 320.02(15).

112 (4) All recruits must complete the employment training
113 component relating to individuals with autism spectrum disorder.
114 Such training component may be taught as part of other relevant
115 components of the training.

116 (5) The commission shall by rule require that each law
117 enforcement officer receive instruction in the techniques and
118 procedures described in subsection (3) as part of basic recruit
119 training and as part of the required instruction for continued
120 employment or appointment as such an officer.

121 (a) By July 1, 2028, each basic skills course required for
122 law enforcement officers to obtain initial certification, as
123 required under s. 943.13(9), must incorporate such training.

124 (b) By July 1, 2029, each law enforcement officer must
125 successfully complete such training, as required under s.

HB 365

2026

126 | 943.131(4) (a) and as part of continued training or education
127 | required under s. 943.135(1).

128 | **Section 3.** This act shall take effect July 1, 2026.