

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; providing
21 requirements for training law enforcement officers on
22 interacting with individuals with autism spectrum
23 disorder; requiring the training component to be
24 included in a specified course by a specified date;
25 requiring specified law enforcement officers to

complete the training component by a specified date;
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 with drivers with autism spectrum disorder.

(3) Beginning January 1, 2027, an individual with autism spectrum disorder may request a blue envelope from the

51 department or a tax collector's office.

52 **Section 2. Section 943.1727, Florida Statutes, is amended**
53 **to read:**

54 943.1727 ~~Continued~~ Employment training relating to autism
55 spectrum disorder.—

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

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

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

61 (2) The ~~commission~~ department shall establish an a
62 ~~continued~~ employment training component relating to individuals
63 ~~with~~ autism spectrum disorder ~~as defined in s. 627.6686. The~~
64 ~~training component shall include, but need not be limited to,~~
65 ~~instruction on the recognition of the symptoms and~~
66 ~~characteristics of an individual on the autism disorder spectrum~~
67 ~~and appropriate responses to an individual exhibiting such~~
68 ~~symptoms and characteristics.~~ Completion of the training
69 component counts ~~may count~~ toward the 40 hours of instruction
70 for continued employment or appointment as a law enforcement
71 officer required under s. 943.135.

72 (3) The employment training component for law enforcement
73 officers which relates to interaction with individuals with
74 autism spectrum disorder must include in-person instruction for
75 initial certification and online instruction for continued

76 employment training or education required under s. 943.135(1) in
77 all of the following:

78 (a) The nature and manifestation of autism spectrum
79 disorder.

80 (b) Techniques for interviewing or interrogating an
81 individual with autism spectrum disorder, including techniques
82 to ensure the legality of statements made by the individual and
83 techniques used to protect the rights of the individual.

84 (c) Techniques for locating an individual with autism
85 spectrum disorder who has run away and is in danger and for
86 returning that individual while causing as little stress as
87 possible to the individual.

88 (d) Techniques for recognizing the agency of an individual
89 with autism spectrum disorder while identifying potential
90 abusive or coercive situations.

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

94 (f) Techniques for differentiating an individual with
95 autism spectrum disorder from an individual who is belligerent,
96 uncooperative, or otherwise displaying traits similar to the
97 characteristics of an individual with autism spectrum disorder
98 and for understanding the law as it relates to the use of the
99 Baker Act on an individual with autism spectrum disorder.

100 (g) The impact of an interaction with officers on

101 individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

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

105 (4)(a) By July 1, 2028, each basic skills course required
106 for law enforcement officers to obtain initial certification, as
107 required under s. 943.13(9), must incorporate such training
108 component. Such training component may be taught as part of
109 other relevant components of the training.

110 (b) Each certified law enforcement officer must
111 successfully complete such training component as part of the
112 basic recruit training required under s. 943.13(9) or as part of
113 continued training or education required under s. 943.135(1) by
114 July 1, 2030.

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