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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 and card by a specified date; providing  
12 requirements for the envelope and card; authorizing  
13 individuals with autism spectrum disorder to request  
14 the envelope and card from the department or a tax  
15 collector's office beginning on a specified date;  
16 amending s. 943.1727, F.S.; defining the terms  
17 "agency" and "autism spectrum disorder"; requiring the  
18 Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission  
19 within the Department of Law Enforcement to establish  
20 an employment training component relating to  
21 individuals with autism spectrum disorder; providing  
22 requirements for training law enforcement officers on  
23 interacting with individuals with autism spectrum  
24 disorder; requiring the training component to be  
25 included in a specified course by a specified date;  
26 requiring specified law enforcement officers to  
27 complete the training component by a specified date;  
28 providing an effective date.  
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30 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:  
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32 Section 1. Section 320.021, Florida Statutes, is created to  
33 read:

34 320.021 Blue envelope and blue card program.—

35 (1) The department shall establish a blue envelope and blue  
36 card program for the purpose of improving communication between  
37 individuals with autism spectrum disorder and law enforcement  
38 officers.

39 (2) (a) By January 1, 2027, the department shall develop and  
40 make available to individuals with autism spectrum disorder a  
41 blue envelope that is intended to hold a copy of an individual's  
42 driver license and his or her vehicle registration, proof of  
43 insurance, and emergency contact information, and a blue card,  
44 which envelope or card may be provided by an individual with  
45 autism spectrum disorder to a law enforcement officer during an  
46 interaction with the law enforcement officer.

47 (b) The exterior of the blue envelope must identify the  
48 individual as an individual with autism spectrum disorder and  
49 include communication guidelines intended to assist law  
50 enforcement officers during interactions with drivers with  
51 autism spectrum disorder.

52 (c) The blue card may be digital or a durable, wallet-sized  
53 card and must identify the individual as an individual with  
54 autism spectrum disorder and include communication guidelines  
55 intended to assist law enforcement officers during interactions  
56 with individuals with autism spectrum disorder.

57 (3) Beginning January 1, 2027, an individual with autism  
58 spectrum disorder may request a blue envelope, blue card, or

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59 both a blue envelope and blue card from the department or a tax  
60 collector's office.

61 Section 2. Section 943.1727, Florida Statutes, is amended  
62 to read:

63 943.1727 ~~Continued~~ Employment training relating to autism  
64 spectrum disorder.—

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

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

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

70 (2) The ~~commission~~ ~~department~~ shall establish ~~an a~~  
71 ~~continued~~ employment training component relating to ~~individuals~~  
72 ~~with~~ autism spectrum disorder as ~~defined in s. 627.6686.~~ The  
73 ~~training component shall include, but need not be limited to,~~  
74 ~~instruction on the recognition of the symptoms and~~  
75 ~~characteristics of an individual on the autism disorder spectrum~~  
76 ~~and appropriate responses to an individual exhibiting such~~  
77 ~~symptoms and characteristics.~~ Completion of the training  
78 component ~~counts~~ ~~may count~~ toward the 40 hours of instruction  
79 for continued employment or appointment as a law enforcement  
80 officer required under s. 943.135.

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

87 (a) The nature and manifestation of autism spectrum

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88 disorder.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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117 component. Such training component may be taught as part of  
118 other relevant components of the training.

119 (b) Each certified law enforcement officer must  
120 successfully complete such training component as part of the  
121 basic recruit training required under s. 943.13(9) or as part of  
122 continued training or education required under s. 943.135(1) by  
123 July 1, 2030.

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