



General Assembly

January Session, 2023

Raised Bill No. 6719

LCO No. 4338



Referred to Committee on COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN

Introduced by:
(KID)

AN ACT CONCERNING EMERGENCY SERVICES AND INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER, COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS AND NONVERBAL LEARNING DISORDERS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) For the purposes of this
2 section, "emergency services" means law enforcement, fire fighting,
3 medical, ambulance and other emergency services.

4 (b) Not later than December 31, 2023, the Department of
5 Developmental Services and the Department of Emergency Services and
6 Public Protection shall jointly develop guidelines and best practices for
7 municipalities for the creation and implementation of emergency
8 services awareness programming for children and adults with autism
9 spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments and nonverbal learning
10 disorders. Such programming shall include, but not be limited to,
11 opportunities for such children and adults to observe and interact, in a
12 setting that is suited to the developmental and sensory needs of such
13 children and adults, with (1) uniformed emergency services personnel
14 and vehicles used by such personnel, (2) flashing lights and sirens

15 associated with such vehicles, and (3) mock traffic stops.

16 (c) Not later than January 1, 2024, the Department of Developmental
17 Services and the Department of Emergency Services and Public
18 Protection shall publish the guidelines and best practices developed
19 pursuant to subsection (b) of this section on said departments' Internet
20 web sites.

21 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) For the purposes of this
22 section, "emergency services" means law enforcement, fire fighting,
23 medical, ambulance and other emergency services.

24 (b) Not later than January 1, 2024, the Department of Developmental
25 Services, in consultation with the Department of Emergency Services
26 and Public Protection and at least one organization that advocates for
27 individuals with autism spectrum disorder, shall develop and assemble
28 sensory kits to be utilized by emergency services personnel who, in the
29 performance of their duties, interact with children and adults with
30 autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments or nonverbal learning
31 disorders. Such sensory kits shall (1) assist such children and adults in
32 managing emotions and anxiety during interactions with such
33 personnel and during emergencies to which such personnel respond,
34 and (2) include, but need not be limited to, noise-canceling headphones,
35 dark tinted glasses and tactile objects or toys used to reduce anxiety.

36 (c) On or before September 1, 2025, any municipality that created and
37 implemented emergency services awareness programming pursuant to
38 the guidelines and best practices published pursuant to subsection (c) of
39 section 1 of this act may apply to the Department of Developmental
40 Services, in a form and manner prescribed by the department, to receive
41 sensory kits developed and assembled pursuant to subsection (b) of this
42 section, for use by emergency services personnel in such municipality.
43 Upon receipt of any such application, the department shall provide such
44 municipality three sensory kits per ten thousand residents of such
45 municipality.

46 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) For the purposes of this

47 section, "emergency services" means law enforcement, fire fighting,
48 medical, ambulance and other emergency services.

49 (b) Not later than December 31, 2023, the Department of Emergency
50 Services and Public Protection shall develop a form for distribution by
51 municipal police departments to parents and guardians of children and
52 adults with autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairments and
53 nonverbal learning disorders. Such form shall record information that
54 may assist emergency services personnel in their interactions with such
55 individuals, including, but not limited to, the following:

56 (1) The individual's name, nickname, date of birth, sex, height,
57 weight, eye color, hair color and address and any scars or identifying
58 marks the individual has;

59 (2) The name of a person who may be contacted by such personnel in
60 an emergency pertaining to the individual, and such person's telephone
61 number;

62 (3) The individual's language and communication skills, including,
63 but not limited to, whether the individual (A) is verbal or nonverbal, (B)
64 speaks American Sign Language, and (C) can read or write,
65 communicate by pointing to pictures, repeat questions or respond "yes"
66 or "no" to questions;

67 (4) Whether the individual is sensitive to noise, touch, light, crowds
68 or other stimuli;

69 (5) Conditions, circumstances or items the individual dislikes or
70 avoids, including, but not limited to, eye contact, being wet or dirty,
71 interacting with strangers and certain clothing or shoes;

72 (6) Atypical behaviors the individual exhibits, including, but not
73 limited to, speaking loudly, self-injury, running if chased, vocal
74 stimming, making high-pitched noises, disregarding or having no sense
75 of danger and sensory seeking;

76 (7) Pertinent medical information, including, but not limited to,

77 whether the individual is hearing or visually impaired or has a seizure
78 disorder, motor or vocal tics or a high pain tolerance; and

79 (8) Methods such personnel may use to calm the individual,
80 including, but not limited to, use of a calm and quiet voice or noise-
81 canceling headphones, providing the individual with time alone or
82 specific food items and asking the individual how such personnel can
83 help the individual.

84 (c) Not later than January 1, 2024, the Department of Emergency
85 Services and Public Protection shall publish the form developed
86 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section on its Internet web site. On and
87 after January 15, 2024, each municipal police department shall make
88 copies of such form available in a publicly accessible area of such
89 department.

90 (d) The parent or guardian of any child or adult with autism spectrum
91 disorder, a cognitive impairment or nonverbal learning disorder may
92 complete the form published and made available pursuant to subsection
93 (c) of this section and return it to the municipal police department in the
94 municipality in which such child or adult resides.

95 (e) Upon receipt of a completed form returned pursuant to subsection
96 (d) of this section, a municipal police department shall record the
97 information provided on such form in a searchable electronic database
98 maintained by such police department, and make such database
99 available to (1) each police officer employed by such department for
100 purposes of determining whether a child or adult with autism spectrum
101 disorder, a cognitive impairment or nonverbal learning disorder resides
102 at an address to which such police officer is responding, and (2) the
103 public safety answering point established and operated by the
104 municipality pursuant to section 28-25a of the general statutes in which
105 such police department is located, for use in accordance with section 4
106 of this act.

107 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) On and after January 15, 2024,
108 each emergency dispatcher employed by a public safety answering

109 point established and operated pursuant to section 28-25a of the general
 110 statutes shall, when practicable, conduct a search of the electronic
 111 database made available to such public safety answering point pursuant
 112 to section 3 of this act, when dispatching law enforcement, fire fighting,
 113 medical, ambulance or other emergency services to a residential
 114 address, for the purposes of (1) determining whether a child or adult
 115 with autism spectrum disorder, a cognitive impairment or nonverbal
 116 learning disorder resides at such address, and (2) communicating
 117 information concerning any such child or adult to any such responding
 118 emergency services personnel.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section

Statement of Purpose:

To (1) require the Department of Developmental Services and the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to develop municipal guidelines and best practices for emergency services awareness programming for certain individuals, (2) require the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to develop and assemble sensory kits for distribution to certain municipalities, (3) require the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection to develop, and municipal police departments to make available, a form for optional completion by parents and guardians of certain individuals, (4) require municipal police departments to record information from such forms in searchable databases for use by police officers and public safety answering point dispatchers, and (5) require public safety answering point dispatchers to, when practicable, conduct searches of such databases.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]