

Sheriffs launch Blue Envelope program statewide

Drivers on autism spectrum can take part to reduce the stress of traffic stops

By News staff
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Albany County Sheriff Craig Apple speaks about the Blue Envelope program, which is being implemented statewide by the New York State Sheriffs' Association to safeguard drivers on the autism spectrum.

Lori Van Buren/Times Union

ALBANY — The New York State Sheriffs' Association announced Thursday the statewide implementation of the Blue Envelope program, intended to help drivers with autism during encounters with law enforcement officials.

The program, touted at a news conference at the association's downtown Albany headquarters, provides drivers with a light blue envelope to hold a photocopy of their license, vehicle registration, insurance information, and contact information for a support person. The envelope alerts law enforcement officers that the driver has autism and to adapt how they approach the interaction.

The program aims to streamline communication and reduce anxiety during traffic stops. It also offers drivers guidelines on what to do and expect during traffic stops to make the interaction less stressful and safer for all involved.

Some areas across New York, including Saratoga County, previously launched the program and similar efforts exist in Vermont, Arizona, and Massachusetts.

The sheriffs' group also used the event to remind the public of its Yellow Dot program, which is designed to help first responders provide life-saving medical attention during that first “golden hour” after a crash or other emergency. A Yellow Dot in a vehicle driver’s-side rear window of a vehicle alerts first responders that vital medical information is stored in the glove compartment.

The Blue Envelope and Yellow Dot programs are free. Contact your county sheriff’s office for more information about the Blue Envelope program. More information about the Yellow Dot program is available at <https://nysheriffs.org/public-safety-programs/>