



CLYDE H. PARRY
CHIEF OF POLICE

GENERAL ORDER

AUTISM/AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

GENERAL ORDER – 66C

Implementation Date: March 9, 2017

Revokes: None (Previously Issued as 66A)

66C.1 INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the Coral Springs Police Department to provide fair treatment to individuals with autism or an autism spectrum disorder who are a victim, suspect, or defendant in an investigation and to comply with the Wes Kleinert Fair Interview Act [FSS 943.0439].

66C.2 DEFINITIONS

Autism – a pervasive, neurologically based developmental disability of extended duration which causes severe learning, communication, and behavior disorders with age of onset during infancy or childhood. Individuals with autism exhibit impairment in reciprocal social interaction, impairment in verbal and nonverbal communication and imaginative ability and a markedly restricted repertoire of activities and interests. [FSS 393.063(3)]

Autism Spectrum Disorder – a developmental disability that can cause significant social, communication, and behavioral challenges. Included are any of the following disorders as defined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders of the American Psychiatric Association:

1. Autistic Disorder
2. Asperger's Syndrome
3. Pervasive Developmental Disorder, not otherwise specified. [FSS627.6682(2)(b), FSS 641.31098(2)]

Developmental Disability – a disorder or syndrome that is attributable to intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, autism, spina bifida or Prader-Willie syndrome; that manifests before the age of 18 and that constitutes a substantial handicap that can reasonably be expected to continue indefinitely. [FSS 393.063(9)]

Professional – a psychiatrist, psychologist, mental health counselor, special education instructor, clinical social worker or related professional with experience in treating, teaching, or assisting patients or clients who have been diagnosed with autism, or an autism spectrum disorder, or related developmental disability or must be certified in special education with a concentration focused on persons with autism or an autism spectrum disorder. [FSS 943.0439]

66C.3 POLICY/PROCEDURE

66C.3.1 Interviews of Subjects with Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder

A. Individuals with autism or autism spectrum disorder may request that a professional (as previously defined) be present at all interviews. This applies to an individual who is a victim, a suspect, or a defendant formally accused of a crime.

B. Once requested by the individual or their parent or guardian, sworn members shall make a good faith effort to ensure that a professional is present at all interviews.

1. It is not the responsibility of the member to provide the professional.

2. Members will ask the individual or the parent/guardian if they have a professional they would like to request. Either the member, the individual, or the parent/guardian can contact the professional to make arrangements.

3. If no specific professional is requested, the member may refer the individual or the parent/guardian to the Center for Autism or Related Disabilities (CARD) at 1-800-9-AUTISM (1-800-928-8476).

C. Members will advise the individual or the parent/guardian making the request that all expenses related to the attendance of the professional at the interview shall be the responsibility of the requesting parent, guardian, or individual.

Note: If the individual making the request is a victim, they may seek reimbursement from the defendant, if convicted, as part of restitution.

D. Members shall document all attempts to obtain a qualified professional.

E. If after all known sources have been exhausted and a good faith effort has been made to obtain a professional, the member may conduct the interview without a professional present.

F. Failure to have a professional present at the time of interview shall not be the basis for suppression of the statement or the contents of the interview, or for a cause of action against the member or the Department.

66C.3.2 Reporting Requirements

A. In all arrest cases involving someone diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder, officers will check the "PMD" box on the Probable Cause Affidavit.

B. In addition to any required offense incident, supplement, and/or arrest reports, the responding officer will complete the CIT/Special Needs Tracking Form for every individual with an autism spectrum disorder they encounter.

C. The CIT/Special Needs Tracking Form, along with copies of any reports required by treatment and/or medical centers, will be forwarded to the CIT Coordinator.

D. The CIT Coordinator will review the documents and forward the CIT/Special Needs Tracking Form of any person with Autism or Autism Spectrum Disorder to the Community Involvement Coordinator for follow up with individual and/or caregiver.

66C.3.3 Training

All sworn members shall receive initial and periodic refresher training regarding the policy and procedures for interviewing individuals with autism or autism spectrum disorders.

APPROVED



Clyde H. Parry
Chief of Police