

# Memorandum



**Date:** December 19, 2023

**To:** Honorable Chairman Oliver G. Gilbert, III  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Item No. 2(B)(3)  
January 17, 2024

**From:** Daniella Levine Cava  
Mayor

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniella Levine Cava".

**Subject:** Report to Develop an "Occupant with Autism" Program, Provide Decals to Residents, and Create a Website Where Residents Can Voluntarily Provide Information to the Police Department About Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder – Directive 230873

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## **Executive Summary**

The following information is provided in response to Resolution No. R-555-23, sponsored by Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) on June 21, 2023, directing the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to develop an "Occupant with Autism" program, through which Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) can provide decals to residents and create a website for residents to voluntarily provide information to the MDPD about individuals in their household with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The decal will alert emergency responders that there is a person with ASD in the home or vehicle which enables responders to draw on their ASD training. This training informs law enforcement that there is someone in the home or vehicle that may not speak, respond to, or comply with verbal commands and may not have an awareness of danger. Additionally, the resolution further directed the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to identify legally available funds from the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023 County Budget that independently or combined may be used to fund the "Occupant with Autism" decal program, and to include funding for the same in the County Mayor's Proposed Budget for subsequent fiscal years.

## **Background**

The University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities estimates that there may be as many as 50,000 individuals with ASD in Miami-Dade County (MDC). On January 20, 2021, MDC entered into an agreement with the Center for Autism and Related Disabilities to provide training to enable MDC to provide training to enable MDC staff, including police officers and firefighters, to better understand, communicate with, and serve the neurodivergent community. Additionally, providing training to MDC first responders and public safety personnel on best practices for on-scene crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques when interacting with persons with ASD.

On June 21, 2023, Resolution No. R-555-23 was adopted by the Board approving the development of an "Occupant with Autism" program. On Monday, July 17, 2023, the MDPD's Community Affairs Bureau met with the Communications Department to develop an "Occupant with Autism" decal (see attached) and the website model.

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The MDPD will be informing residents of the “Occupant with Autism” program through multiple platforms, to include but not limited to, community engagement and social media. The decals will be provided free of charge to anyone in MDC. They will be distributed to those who register via the MDPD’s ASD website. It is recommended to place them near the front door of a home, or in the rear window of a vehicle to ensure that law enforcement officers are aware an occupant has ASD.

The MDPD’s Fiscal Administration Bureau has identified funds for FY 2022-2023 to fund the “Occupant with Autism” program. Program funding for subsequent fiscal years will be budgeted accordingly.

Should you require additional information, please contact Director Stephanie V. Daniels, Miami-Dade Police Department, at 305-471-3272.

Per Ordinance No. 14-65, this memorandum will be placed on the next available Board meeting agenda.

Attachments (3)

1. Website Content for “Occupant with Autism” Program
2. Registration Form
3. Autism Decal Design

c: Geri Bonzon-Keenan, County Attorney  
Gerald K. Sanchez, First Assistant County Attorney  
Jess M. McCarty, Executive Assistant County Attorney  
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff  
Stephanie V. Daniels, Director, Miami-Dade Police Department  
Jennifer Moon, Chief, Office of Policy and Budgetary Affairs  
Adeyinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor  
Basia Pruna, Director, Clerk of the Board  
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator

## **“Occupant with Autism” Program**

The Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) is committed to a high level of protection and service for all of our residents. The purpose of the “Occupant with Autism” program is to alert emergency responders that there is a person with autism in the home or vehicle.

MDPD is providing decals free of charge to anyone in the community who would like to place them in their vehicle; while enabling our police officers to utilize their autism training to assist with individuals who may not respond or comply with verbal commands.

If you would like to register for the program but do not wish to affix the decal to your home, simply fill out the form below and request zero decals. This will allow MDPD to flag the address in our dispatch system, so arriving officers will be aware that a person with autism lives in the home.

If you have any questions, please contact the MDPD Community Affairs Bureau at [CABinfo@MDPD.com](mailto:CABinfo@MDPD.com).

# OCCUPANT WITH AUTISM PROGRAM

First Name

Last Name

Phone Number

E-mail Address

Street Address

Apt. #

Street Address 2

City

State

Zip Code

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## NAME OF OCCUPANT(S) WITH AUTISM

First Name

Last Name

Date of Birth

## Comments

Please provide any additional information; i.e. responsiveness, special instructions

Receive an e-mail copy of this form

E-mail Address

This field is not part of the form submission



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