

Delaware's Blue Envelope Program



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES





Suggested Citation

Fletcher, A., Sawchenko, C., Steinbrecher, S., Mallory, S., DNEA CDS & DSP Teams. (2025). *Delaware's blue envelope program*. University of Delaware's Center for Disabilities Studies and the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism.

Delaware's Blue Envelope Program was created through a partnership between the Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism (DNEA) at the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies (CDS) and the Delaware State Police (DSP), with funding from the Office of Highway Safety (OHS), and support from the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and the Delaware Association of Chiefs of Police.



What is the Blue Envelope Program?

- The program aims to promote safe, clear, and respectful communication by helping law enforcement understand that a driver may have:
 - A communication difference
 - A sensory need
 - Mobility limitations, or
 - Other difference related to their disability.
- The envelope is designed to hold important documents, such as a car registration, insurance documents, and an emergency care plan.



How Does the Blue Envelope Help Drivers?

- Can help people with disabilities feel more confident and prepared during traffic stops
- Lists tips for interacting with the police (e.g., keep hands on the steering wheel)
- Allows the driver to:
 - Write in information about themselves
 - Identify an emergency contact
 - Add notes about their disability

Tips for Interacting with Police:

☐ My emergency care plan is in this envelope

My disability/disabilities:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Deaf or hard of hearing | <input type="radio"/> Autistic/Autism |
| <input type="radio"/> Tourette syndrome | <input type="radio"/> Other (see notes) |

My disability affects my:

- ☐ Vision
☐ Communication
☐ Mobility
☐ Other (see notes)

I use:

- ☐ An interpreter
☐ A mobility aid
☐ Assistive technology or a communication device
☐ Other (see notes)

Medical alert:

- ☐ Seizure disorder ☐ Diabetes ☐ Other (see notes)

Notes:



How Does the Blue Envelope Help Law Enforcement?

- It shares important information about the driver and their disability. For example, providing information about communication differences, sensory need(s), mobility limitations or other differences related to their disability
- It signals to officers that the driver may use or need additional supports (e.g., communication device, extra processing time, clear instructions, and reduced sensory input)
- It ensures fair application of the law and is not designed to allow an individual to escape justice.



Instructions to First Responder:
(Police Officer, Firefighter, EMT)



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES



Delaware's Blue Envelope

Blue Envelope

Important Vehicle Papers

- Driver's License
- Vehicle Registration
- Car Insurance

Instructions to First Responder:

(Police Officer, Firefighter, EMT)

- Driver or passenger has a disability
- Speak calmly and relaxed
- Speak clearly and use simple language
- Be patient and allow driver extra time to respond
- Turn off bright lights and reduce loud noises
- Try not to touch the person
- Tell the driver when they can leave

! This person may...

- Appear anxious due to lights/noises
- Be unaware of danger
- Be non-speaking and use a communication device
- Display repetitive body movements and unusual eye contact
- Not respond to verbal commands
- Wander if unattended
- Become upset; consider calling their emergency contact (flip envelope for additional information)
- Resist help



In an Emergency Call 911



IMPORTANT DISABILITY INFORMATION

Name: _____

Emergency contact and phone number: _____

Tips for Interacting with Police:

Do:

- Keep hands on steering wheel
- Listen to the police officer
- Let the police officer know you have a blue envelope
- When asked, give the blue envelope to the police officer

Don't:

- Reach for things without permission
- Leave without permission

☐ My emergency care plan is in this envelope

My disability/disabilities:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Deaf or hard of hearing | <input type="radio"/> Autistic/Autism |
| <input type="radio"/> Tourette syndrome | <input type="radio"/> Other (see notes) |

My disability affects my:

- ☐ Vision
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Mobility
- ☐ Other (see notes)

I use:

- ☐ An interpreter
- ☐ A mobility aid
- ☐ Assistive technology or a communication device
- ☐ Other (see notes)

Medical alert:

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Seizure disorder | <input type="radio"/> Diabetes | <input type="radio"/> Other (see notes) |
|--|--------------------------------|---|

Notes:



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES



Where can I get a Blue Envelope?

- They are free! Go to any Delaware State Police Troop or other participating first responder agency.
- No qualifying questions or identification is required to participate.
- Other DE municipalities are encouraged to participate in the program.



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES

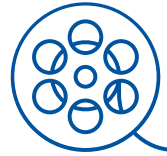


For More Information about Delaware's Blue Envelope Program



Any **municipal police or first responder agency** interested in offering Blue Envelopes should contact DSP Captain Lance Skinner.

Lance.Skinner@Delaware.gov



Media inquiries should contact the Public Information Officer (PIO) at Delaware State Police.



Delaware drivers and family members should visit their local DSP Troop.

<https://dsp.delaware.gov>



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES





Additional Trainings & Resources



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES



Live Practice Traffic Stops for Autistic Drivers & Passengers



- During the practice traffic stop, the police pull the car over and practice the steps of a traffic stop.
- Resources include a pre-driving video and resource guides:
 - *What to Do During a Traffic Stop or Car Crash*
 - *Talking to a Police Officer About My Autism*
 - *About My Autism Card*



Visit cds.udel.edu/dnea/mockdriving for resources and upcoming dates



Autism Training for Law Enforcement & First Responders



FIRST RESPONDERS
REQUEST TRAINING FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT

Learn about autism, the family perspective and how to use strategies to de-escalate on the scene through scenario-based learning.

DNEA | Delaware Network for Excellence in Autism

<https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org/professionals/first-responders/>



CENTER FOR
DISABILITIES STUDIES



Thank you!



DNEA | Delaware Network for
Excellence in Autism

<https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org>
Dnea-Info@Udel.Edu



<https://dsp.delaware.gov>

