



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 562

January Session, 2025

Substitute House Bill No. 7159

House of Representatives, April 7, 2025

The Committee on Transportation reported through REP. BERGER-GIRVALO of the 111th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CREATING YELLOW ENVELOPES TO PROMOTE ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FIRST RESPONDERS AND PERSONS WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES AND INCREASING AWARENESS OF BLUE AND YELLOW ENVELOPES AMONG FIRST RESPONDERS.

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, (1) "police officer" and "law enforcement unit" have the same
3 meanings as provided in section 7-294a of the general statutes; (2)
4 "emergency medical services personnel", "commercial ambulance
5 service", "rescue service", "ambulance service" and "paramedic intercept
6 service" have the same meanings as provided in section 19a-175 of the
7 general statutes; and (3) "firefighter" has the same meaning as provided
8 in section 7-323j of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

9 (b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Commissioner of Motor
10 Vehicles, in consultation with the Commission on Women, Children,
11 Seniors, Equity and Opportunity, an association of police chiefs in the

12 state, an association of fire chiefs in the state, an association of
13 emergency medical services personnel in the state and at least one
14 organization that advocates for persons with cognitive impairments or
15 physical disabilities, shall:

16 (1) Design yellow envelopes that (A) provide written information and
17 guidance on the outside of the envelopes regarding ways to promote
18 accommodations and enhance effective interactions and
19 communication between a police officer, emergency medical services
20 personnel or firefighter and a person with cognitive impairments or
21 physical disabilities, and (B) are capable of holding a person's motor
22 vehicle operator's license, registration, insurance identification card and
23 other information or materials related to such person's cognitive
24 impairment or physical disability;

25 (2) Develop public awareness materials, including, but not limited to,
26 brochures about the yellow envelopes designed in accordance with
27 subdivision (1) of this subsection and blue envelopes designed in
28 accordance with section 14-11j of the general statutes, information cards
29 designed to fit inside a wallet, lanyards, seat belt covers, buttons,
30 ribbons, key chains, bracelets, stickers, window decals and magnets,
31 that contain information about ways to promote accommodations and
32 enhance effective interactions and communication with a person with
33 cognitive impairments, physical disabilities or autism spectrum
34 disorder; and

35 (3) Disseminate such yellow envelopes and public awareness
36 materials (A) at the main office and branch offices of the Department of
37 Motor Vehicles, law enforcement units, municipal and volunteer fire
38 departments, commercial ambulance services, commercial rescue
39 services, volunteer and municipal ambulance services, ambulance
40 services and paramedic intercept services operated and maintained by
41 a state agency, and (B) to emergency medical services personnel.

42 (c) Upon (1) receipt of such yellow envelopes and public awareness
43 materials, and (2) request by a person with a cognitive impairment or
44 physical disability or such person's parent, guardian, family member or

45 driver, such department, unit, service or emergency medical services
46 personnel shall provide a yellow envelope and any available public
47 awareness materials at no charge to such person, parent, guardian,
48 family member or driver.

49 Sec. 2. Subsection (a) of section 2-128 of the general statutes is
50 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
51 *passage*):

52 (a) The Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and
53 Opportunity shall:

54 (1) Focus its efforts on the following quality of life desired results for
55 women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-
56 American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican
57 populations of the state: That all such persons are (A) healthy, safe and
58 achieve educational success; (B) free from poverty; and (C) free from
59 discrimination;

60 (2) With the advice of the executive committee of the commission,
61 make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor for
62 new or enhanced policies, programs and services that will foster
63 progress in achieving the desired results described in subdivision (1) of
64 this subsection. Such recommendations shall, when applicable, include,
65 but need not be limited to: (A) Systems innovations, model policies and
66 practices which embed two-generational practice in program, policy
67 and systems change on the state and local levels, in accordance with
68 section 17b-112l; (B) strategies for reducing family poverty, promoting
69 parent leadership and family civics; (C) the promotion of youth
70 leadership opportunities that keep youth engaged in the community;
71 and (D) strategies and programs that address equitable access, impede
72 bias, and narrow the opportunity gap for women, children and their
73 families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-
74 American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state. Such
75 recommendations may include other state and national best practices,
76 and recommendations on federal funding maximization;

77 (3) With the advice of the executive committee of the commission,
78 review and comment, as necessary, on any specific proposed state
79 legislation or recommendations that may affect women, children and
80 their families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian
81 Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state
82 and provide copies of any such comments to members of the General
83 Assembly;

84 (4) With the advice of the executive committee of the commission,
85 advise the General Assembly concerning the coordination and
86 administration of state programs that affect women, children and their
87 families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-
88 American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state;

89 (5) Gather and maintain, as necessary, current information regarding
90 women, children and their families, seniors and members of the African-
91 American, Asian Pacific-American and Latino and Puerto Rican
92 populations of the state that can be used to better understand the status,
93 condition, and contributions of such groups. Such information, as
94 appropriate and pertinent to the desired results delineated in
95 subdivision (1) of this subsection, shall be included in the annual report
96 submitted in accordance with subsection (b) of this section and shall be
97 made available to legislators and other interested parties upon request;

98 (6) Maintain liaisons between women, children and their families,
99 seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-American
100 and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state and government
101 agencies, including the General Assembly; [and]

102 (7) Conduct educational and outreach activities intended to raise
103 awareness of and address critical issues for women, children and their
104 families, seniors and members of the African-American, Asian Pacific-
105 American and Latino and Puerto Rican populations of the state; and

106 (8) Consult with (A) at least one organization that advocates for
107 persons with cognitive impairments, physical disabilities or autism
108 spectrum disorder and offers courses that are certified by the Police

109 Officer Standards and Training Council established under section 7-
110 294b, (B) an association of police chiefs in the state, (C) an association of
111 fire chiefs in the state, and (D) an association of emergency medical
112 services personnel in the state, to coordinate and identify various
113 education and training programs for first responders concerning
114 techniques for handling incidents, promoting accommodations and
115 enhancing effective interactions and communication between a first
116 responder and a person with a cognitive impairment, physical disability
117 or autism spectrum disorder.

118 Sec. 3. Section 7-294h of the general statutes is repealed and the
119 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2026*):

120 On and after January 1, 2017: (1) Each police basic or field training
121 program conducted or administered by the Division of State Police
122 within the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection
123 shall provide a minimum of twenty-seven hours of training relative to
124 the handling of juvenile matters which includes, but is not limited to,
125 the following: (A) Techniques for handling incidents involving
126 juveniles; (B) information relative to the processing and disposition of
127 juvenile matters; (C) applicable procedures in the prosecution of cases
128 involving juveniles; (D) information regarding resources of the juvenile
129 justice system in the state; (E) the use of graduated sanctions; (F)
130 techniques for handling trauma; (G) restorative justice practices; (H)
131 adolescent development; (I) risk-assessment and screening tools; (J)
132 emergency mobile psychiatric services; and (K) on and after January 1,
133 [2020,] 2026, information relative to the blue envelopes designed
134 pursuant to section 14-11j and yellow envelopes designed pursuant to
135 section 1 of this act and techniques for handling incidents, such as
136 wandering, that involve juveniles and adults with autism spectrum
137 disorder, cognitive impairment or nonverbal learning disorder,
138 provided the curriculum for such techniques is available at no cost to
139 the division from (i) institutions of higher education, health care
140 professionals or advocacy organizations that are concerned with
141 juveniles and adults with autism spectrum disorder, cognitive
142 impairment or nonverbal learning disorder, or (ii) a collaboration of

143 such institutions, professionals or organizations; (2) each police basic or
144 field training program conducted or administered by the Police Officer
145 Standards and Training Council established under section 7-294b or by
146 a municipal police department in the state shall provide a minimum of
147 fourteen hours of training relative to the handling of juvenile matters as
148 provided in subdivision (1) of this section; and (3) each police review
149 training program conducted or administered by the Division of State
150 Police within the Department of Emergency Services and Public
151 Protection, by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council
152 established under section 7-294b or by a municipal police department in
153 the state shall provide a minimum of one hour of training relative to the
154 handling of juvenile matters as provided in subdivision (1) of this
155 section.

156 Sec. 4. Section 7-323l of the general statutes, as amended by section 3
157 of public act 24-136, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
158 thereof (*Effective January 1, 2026*):

159 (a) The commission shall:

160 (1) Recommend minimum standards of education and physical
161 condition for candidates for any firefighter position;

162 (2) Establish standards for fire service training and education
163 programs, and develop and conduct an examination program to certify
164 those fire service personnel who satisfactorily demonstrate their ability
165 to meet the requirements of the fire service training and education
166 program standards;

167 (3) Establish an optional fire service training and education program
168 [in the] that provides information relative to the blue envelopes
169 designed pursuant to section 14-11j and yellow envelopes designed
170 pursuant to section 1 of this act and techniques for handling of incidents,
171 such as wandering, that involve juveniles and adults with autism
172 spectrum disorder, cognitive impairment or nonverbal learning
173 disorder, provided the curriculum for such techniques is made available
174 at no cost from (A) institutions of higher education, health care

175 professionals or advocacy organizations that are concerned with
176 juveniles and adults with autism spectrum disorder, cognitive
177 impairment or nonverbal learning disorder, or (B) collaborations of such
178 institutions, professionals or organizations;

179 (4) Conduct fire fighting training and education programs designed
180 to assist firefighters in developing and maintaining their skills and
181 keeping abreast of technological advances in fire suppression, fire
182 protection, fire prevention and related fields;

183 (5) Recommend standards for promotion to the various ranks of fire
184 departments;

185 (6) Be authorized, with the approval of the Commissioner of
186 Emergency Services and Public Protection, to apply for, receive and
187 distribute any state, federal or private funds or contributions available
188 for training and education of fire fighting personnel;

189 (7) Recommend that the Commissioner of Emergency Services and
190 Public Protection approve or reject the establishment of, or, when
191 appropriate, suspend or revoke the approval of, regional fire schools in
192 accordance with section 7-323u;

193 (8) Advise the Division of Fire Services Administration within the
194 Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection on the
195 management of the Statewide Fire Service Disaster Response Plan;

196 (9) Implement the recommendations of the study of the fire service
197 authorized pursuant to subdivision (36) of subsection (b) of section 41
198 of public act 23-204; and

199 (10) Submit to the Governor, the joint standing committee of the
200 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to public safety
201 and security, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a, and the
202 Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection an annual
203 report (A) relating to the activities, recommendations and
204 accomplishments of the commission, and (B) making recommendations
205 on the funding necessary for the operation of, the maintenance of and

206 capital improvements to the state fire school and regional fire schools.

207 (b) The commission may recommend, and the Commissioner of
208 Emergency Services and Public Protection may adopt, regulations in
209 accordance with the provisions of chapter 54 as necessary to implement
210 the provisions of this section.

211 Sec. 5. Section 19a-179e of the general statutes is repealed and the
212 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2026*):

213 (a) Not later than June 30, 2020, and annually thereafter, the
214 Department of Public Health shall, within available appropriations,
215 compile a list of training programs that are available to members of
216 commercial ambulance services, commercial rescue services, volunteer
217 and municipal ambulance services, ambulance services and paramedic
218 intercept services operated and maintained by a state agency and
219 emergency medical services personnel, as defined in section 20-206jj.
220 Such training programs shall be approved by the Commissioner of
221 Public Health and include information relative to the blue envelopes
222 designed pursuant to section 14-11j and yellow envelopes designed
223 pursuant to section 1 of this act and techniques for handling incidents,
224 such as wandering, that involve juveniles and adults with autism
225 spectrum disorder, cognitive impairment and nonverbal learning
226 disorder. Such training programs may be offered by institutions of
227 higher education, health care professionals and advocacy organizations
228 that are concerned with juveniles and adults with autism spectrum
229 disorder, cognitive impairment or nonverbal learning disorder, and
230 collaborations of such institutions, professionals or organizations. The
231 department may accept private donations for the purposes of this
232 section.

233 (b) Not later than July 1, 2020, and annually thereafter, the
234 Department of Public Health shall make the list compiled pursuant to
235 subsection (a) of this section available to members of commercial
236 ambulance services, commercial rescue services, volunteer and
237 municipal ambulance services, ambulance services and paramedic
238 intercept services operated and maintained by any state agency and

239 emergency medical services personnel, as defined in section 20-206jj.

240 Sec. 6. Section 7-323j of the general statutes is repealed and the
241 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2026*):

242 As used in this part, "commission" means the Commission on Fire
243 Prevention and Control; "municipality" means town, city, consolidated
244 town and city, consolidated town and borough, borough, school district,
245 fire district, fire and sewer district, sewer district, lighting district or any
246 other municipal corporation or taxing district upon which is placed the
247 duty of, or which has itself assumed the duty of, protecting its
248 inhabitants from loss by fire; "fire fighting duties" means and includes
249 duties performed in connection with the suppression and prevention of
250 fires, fire training and rescue, fire investigation, arson investigation,
251 details and assignments to protect the public safety against fire and
252 other related work; ["firefighters"] "firefighter" means any person who
253 is regularly employed and paid by any municipality or by a contractor
254 which is a nonprofit corporation for the purpose of performing fire
255 fighting duties for a municipality on an average of not less than thirty-
256 five hours per week or any volunteer who performs fire fighting duties.

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>	2-128(a)
Sec. 3	<i>January 1, 2026</i>	7-294h
Sec. 4	<i>January 1, 2026</i>	7-323l
Sec. 5	<i>January 1, 2026</i>	19a-179e
Sec. 6	<i>January 1, 2026</i>	7-323j

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 1(b)(3), Subpara. designators were added for clarity; and in Section 1(c), "the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles and each law enforcement unit, municipal and volunteer fire department, commercial ambulance service, commercial rescue service, volunteer and municipal ambulance service and ambulance service and paramedic intercept service operated and maintained by a state agency and emergency

medical services personnel" was changed to "such department, unit, service or emergency medical services personnel" for clarity.

TRA *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 \$	FY 27 \$
Department of Motor Vehicles	TF - Cost	Approximately \$2,000	Minimal

Note: TF=Transportation Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), in consultation with other organizations described in the bill, to design yellow envelopes that can hold a driver's license, registration, and insurance card, and that include guidance on effective interactions between emergency personnel and a person with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities.

Beginning January 1, 2026, DMV must provide these envelopes to the locations and organizations outlined in the bill which, based on DMV's prior experience with the blue envelope program, is anticipated to cost approximately \$2,000 for production and distribution. Ongoing costs for additional envelopes, as needed, are expected to be minimal.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact is expected to be minimal and dependent on the number of envelopes produced.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7159*****AN ACT CREATING YELLOW ENVELOPES TO PROMOTE ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FIRST RESPONDERS AND PERSONS WITH COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENTS OR PHYSICAL DISABILITIES AND INCREASING AWARENESS OF BLUE AND YELLOW ENVELOPES AMONG FIRST RESPONDERS.*****SUMMARY**

This bill requires the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), in consultation with the Commission on Women, Children, Seniors, Equity and Opportunity (CWCSEO) and other specified entities, to develop yellow envelopes and related public awareness materials for people with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities (see below). As required under existing law, DMV similarly offers blue envelopes by request to people with autism spectrum disorder, which (1) include information about improving communication between these individuals and police officers and (2) hold their driver's license, registration, and insurance card (CGS § 14-11j). (These envelopes are meant to be handed to officers during a traffic stop.)

The bill requires DMV to provide the yellow envelopes and public awareness materials to its department offices and certain first responders (i.e. law enforcement units, municipal and volunteer fire departments and ambulance services, commercial ambulance and rescue services, emergency medical services (EMS) personnel, and state-operated ambulance and paramedic intercept services). It correspondingly requires these people and entities to give the envelopes and materials, by request and at no cost, to people with a cognitive impairment or physical disability (or their parent, guardian, family member, or driver).

The bill requires CWCSEO to coordinate and identify related

education and training programs for first responders. It also requires several existing trainings for various first responders to begin providing information about the blue and yellow envelopes.

Lastly, it makes a technical change (§ 6).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except the training requirements unrelated to CWCSEO are effective January 1, 2026.

YELLOW ENVELOPES AND PUBLIC AWARENESS MATERIALS

The bill requires DMV, by January 1, 2026, to take the following actions in consultation with CWCSEO; one state association each of police chiefs, fire chiefs, and EMS personnel; and at least one organization that advocates for people with cognitive impairments or physical disabilities:

1. design yellow envelopes (a) to hold a driver's license, registration, insurance card, and other materials about a person's cognitive impairment or physical disability and (b) with written information on how police, EMS, or firefighters can accommodate and effectively interact with these individuals; and
2. develop brochures about both yellow and blue envelopes, as well as certain other public awareness materials (e.g., lanyards and stickers) that generally have the same information as must be written on these envelopes.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

CWCSEO Training Coordination

The bill requires CWCSEO to coordinate and identify education and training programs for first responders related to improving their interactions with people with a cognitive impairment, physical disability, or autism spectrum disorder. This includes techniques for handling incidents, promoting accommodations, and enhancing communication. CWCSEO must do so in consultation with (1) at least one organization that advocates for these individuals and offers courses certified by the Police Officer Standards and Training Council and (2)

one state association each of police chiefs, fire chiefs, and EMS personnel.

First Responder Trainings

The bill also requires several existing trainings for various first responders to provide information about the blue and yellow envelopes, including:

1. the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection Division of State Police's police basic or field training program, starting by January 1, 2026;
2. the Commission on Fire Prevention and Control's optional fire service training and education program; and
3. certain Department of Public Health-approved training programs available to members of various ambulance, rescue, and paramedic intercept services.

Existing law generally already requires these trainings to provide information on techniques for handling incidents involving people with autism spectrum disorder, cognitive impairment, and nonverbal learning disorder.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Transportation Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 35 Nay 0 (03/19/2025)