

GENERAL ORDERS | SOUTH MIAMI POLICE DEPARTMENT



G.O. Number: 22.3	Subject: Persons with Disabilities Registry	
Chapter: Crime Prevention and Community Involvement	Number of Pages: 06	
CFA Standard(s):	Effective: 02/01/2024	
By Order of Chief of Police: Reo Hatfield III Chief of Police <i>Reo B Hatfield</i>	Revised: N/A	Status: New

SECTIONS:

- 22.3.1 Definitions**
- 22.3.2 Eligibility Criteria**
- 22.3.3 Registration Process**
- 22.3.4 Approval and Registry Process**
- 22.2.5 Annual Renewal Requirement**
- 22.2.6 Identification Cards and Decals**
- 22.2.7 Responsibilities**

RESCINDS: Any other existing orders in conflict.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to provide an overview and delineate the procedures governing the Persons with Disabilities Registry Program authorized by the “Protect Our Loved Ones Act” (CS/HB 1275). This initiative aims to equip officers tasked with responding to incidents involving individuals with specific disabilities, ensuring they are adequately prepared to engage with and address the needs of such individuals.

SCOPE: All departmental personnel.

POLICY: The South Miami Police Department establishes the policy that any member accessing information from the registry database must do so solely for the purpose of improving and facilitating more informed responses to citizens dealing with certain developmental, psychological, and/or other disabilities or conditions. The Department recognizes that enhancing interactions may not always be possible, and in certain situations, such as exigent circumstances, deviation from this policy may be necessary. It explicitly emphasizes that officer safety shall not be compromised in order to enhance such interactions.

22.3.1 DEFINITIONS

- A. **AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD):** refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social, skill, repetitive behaviors, and nonverbal communication.
- B. **COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT:** is when a person has trouble remembering, learning new things, concentrating, or making decisions that affect their everyday life. Cognitive impairment ranges from mild to severe.
- C. **SPECIAL NEEDS:** any of various difficulties (such as a physical, emotional, behavioral, or learning disability or impairment) that causes an individual to require additional or specialized services or accommodations.

22.3.2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A. **Eligibility:** Individuals meeting the following criteria are eligible to enroll in the South Miami Police Department Persons with Disabilities Registry.
 - 1. Current resident of the City of South Miami or qualifying occupant; and
 - 2. Individuals must have any of the following certified disability and/or condition(s);
 - a. Autism
 - b. Blind
 - c. Deaf
 - d. Non-verbal
 - e. Intellectual disability
 - f. Dementia; and/or
 - g. Any other cognitive impairment.

22.2.3 REGISTRATION PROCESS

- A. An adult with a qualifying disability may enroll himself or herself in the SMPD Person with Disability Registry. If a person with a disability has been declared incapacitated, a parent or legal guardian of the person may enroll him or her in the registry. Parents and guardians may voluntarily enroll minors and incapacitated individuals in the registry. The application shall be submitted electronically on SMPD's Persons with Disability Registry webpage portal.
1. The registry form should be completed and submitted via the webpage portal and must include any of the following (as applicable):
 - a. Confirmation of a disability or condition and it must be certified by a licensed physician or licensed physician assistant or a licensed advanced practice registered nurse.
 - b. Confirmation of a psychological condition and it must be certified by a licensed psychologist, licensed mental health counselor, or a psychiatrist.
 2. Parents, legal guardianship, or other legal authority enrolling a minor or incapacitated person should complete the registry form and include the above confirmation by a medical practitioner and any of the following (as applicable):
 - a. A birth certificate as described in FS. 382.013;
 - b. A power of attorney, as defined in FS. 709.2102(9);
 - c. A court order establishing parental rights or guardianship; or
 - d. Letters of guardianship as described in FS. 744.345.
 3. The information will be kept confidential and made available only to law enforcement entities.

22.2.4 APPROVAL AND REGISTRY PROCESS

- A. Upon submission of the application form, the form will be sent directly to the Communications Coordinator for review.
- B. If the application meets the eligibility and registration criteria for participation in the program, the Communications Coordinator will enter the person's information in the Records Management (RMS) and in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems.
 - 1. The data entered into the RMS will be linked to the respective "Names" module, with an "Alert" indicating the specific disability or condition.
 - 2. The information entered into the CAD system will be attached to the "Premise" component adhering to the approved information entry criteria.
- C. The applicant will receive written notification of their approval or denial within five (5) business days of the review. In the event of denial, the specific reason for the decision will be clearly stated.
- D. An incapacitated adult enrolled into the registry by another person must be notified of that enrollment in writing at his or her address of record within five (5) business days after such enrollment.
- E. A minor enrolled into the registry must be notified of that enrollment in writing at his or her address of record within five business days after his or her 18th birthday.
- F. An individual who is 18 years of age or older and possesses the necessary competence may formally request removal from the registry by submitting a written request.

22.2.5 ANNUAL RENEWAL REQUIREMENT

- A. Each participant in the program must annually resubmit their applications to verify that their requests still align with the eligibility criteria and remain up-to-date.
- B. It will be the responsibility of the Communications Coordinator to verify all current requests and document updates in the RMS and CAD as appropriate.

22.2.6 IDENTIFICATION DECALS

- A. Every program participant will be provided with an identification card, decal, and wristband. These items serve as indicators for responding officers, signaling that the individual or residence they are encountering may involve someone with a qualified disability.
- B. The Person with Disability Registry Decal should be placed on the front door or nearest window to the front entrance of the residence and should be easily visible.
- C. Participants shall immediately report a lost or stolen identification card or decal to the South Miami Police Department and request a replacement.



Person with Disabilities Registry Identification Logo

22.2.7 RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Officers will be responsible for ensuring that information received from the RMS and/or CAD systems is kept confidential unless communicating any of the information with other law enforcement entities.
- B. Officers responding to calls for service are required to check their Mobile Connect Terminals (MCT) for dispatch notes and notifications. Calls for service dealing with

registered individuals will appear under the “Premise” and/or “Alert” tabs on their dispatch screen.

- C. Officers responding to a residence, regardless if the dispatch information advises of a premise alert, should make it a practice to check for the program’s decal on the front door or nearest window prior to making contact with any of the occupants.
- D. In situations where an officer does not have the ability to review the MCT information, the officer shall request for Communications personnel to review the database and communicate any pertinent information.
- E. To the extent possible, the information contained in the alerts shall be used to prepare the officer to interact with the individual using dignity and respect for the individual needs/and or differences.