



HOUSE BILL 21: Drivers License Designation/Autism.

2025-2026 General Assembly

Committee:	House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	March 17, 2025
Introduced by:	Reps. Penny, Hawkins	Prepared by:	Hannah Kendrick Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	First Edition		

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 21 would require the Department of Motor Vehicles ("DMV"), in consultation with other entities, to develop a drivers license designation that may be granted to a person with autism spectrum disorder upon request and would be entered into the electronic record associated with the requesting person's drivers license.*

BILL ANALYSIS:

Section 1 would direct the DMV, in consultation with the Department of Public Safety, the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services, and the State Highway Patrol, to develop a drivers license designation that may be granted to a person with autism spectrum disorder. The designation would be entered into the electronic record associated with the requesting person's drivers license. The request for the designation would be entirely voluntary.

Autism spectrum disorder would be defined as it is in G.S. 58-3-192 (governing insurance coverage of autism spectrum disorder) which states autism spectrum disorder as defined by the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders or the most recent edition of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems.

A person would have to provide verification or documentation substantiating a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder that is recommended as acceptable by the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services. Acceptable documentation would include documentation of certification or examination by a medical, health, or mental health professional showing evidence of autism spectrum, or documentation deemed by DMV to be satisfactory.

Information collected would only be available to law enforcement for the purpose of ensuring mutually safe interactions between law enforcement and persons with autism spectrum disorder.

Section 2 and **Section 3** would require the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education and Training Standards Commission and the North Carolina Sheriffs' Education and Training Standards Commission to establish minimum educational and training standards for employment and continuing education about (i) recognizing and appropriately interacting with persons with autism spectrum disorder, and (ii) drivers license identifiers of persons with autism spectrum disorder.

EFFECTIVE DATE: This act would be effective when it becomes law, and would apply to autism spectrum disorder designation requests made on or after January 1, 2026.

**Jessica Boney, Legislative Analysis Division, substantially contributed to this summary.*

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