



PRESS RELEASE — FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Loves Park Police Department is proud to join a nationwide movement helping individuals with autism and other communication differences feel safer and more confident during interactions with law enforcement. Community policing is about understanding the people we serve. The Blue Envelope Program is a simple step that can make a meaningful difference. By improving communication between officers and individuals with autism or communication differences, we can help ensure every interaction is safer and more supportive.

The Blue Envelope Program began in Connecticut in 2020 as a simple, effective solution to support drivers who face communication challenges during traffic stops. The program utilizes a bright blue envelope to hold essential vehicle documents, along with clear, concise instructions for both the driver and the officer.

The program quickly proved that small changes can have a life-changing impact, which propelled its rapid nationwide adoption. Today, resources have expanded, providing materials people can carry even when not driving, ensuring safer interactions during any first-responder encounter. By promoting empathy and clear communication, the program is designed to significantly reduce anxiety and misunderstandings for identified citizens.

Inside the Blue Envelope

Each envelope can hold important documents such as:

- Driver's license or ID
- Vehicle registration and proof of insurance
- Emergency contacts or designated support person information
- Communication instructions (preferred interaction style, language needs, other support notes)

The program also provides guidance to officers on how to communicate respectfully and effectively. Although designed mainly for traffic stops, the envelope may be used in any interaction with a Loves Park Police officer.



IMPORTANT VEHICLE PAPERS



DRIVER'S LICENSE | VEHICLE REGISTRATION | VEHICLE INSURANCE CARD | CONTACT CARD

COMMUNICATION STATUS

The driver uses the following method(s) to communicate

____vocal speech ____sign language ____pictures ____electronic device ____writing

POLICE OFFICER

- ✓ Driver may **exhibit** signs of anxiety due to bright lights and noises (e.g., your radio)
- ✓ Allow driver extra time to respond. Driver may need more time to formulate a response.
- ✓ Speak clearly and use the most simplistic explanations possible. Avoid unnecessary detail.
- ✓ Driver may display repetitive body movements or fidgeting and have unusual eye contact.
- ✓ Autistic individuals may have unusual responses to authority figures. Please show patience.
- ✓ If the driver becomes upset, consider contacting the person listed on the contact card in the envelope.
- ✓ Clearly tell the driver when the stop is over and they can leave.



DRIVER IS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

The officer is here to help keep you and others safe



"BLUE ENVELOPE" IMPORTANT MOTOR VEHICLE PAPERS

- ✓ Keep your hands on the steering wheel unless otherwise directed, even if the officer is not at your car
- ✓ The officer may shine a flashlight in your car, may have a radio, and may have flashing lights on their car
- ✓ When the officer gets to your car, let them know you have a blue envelope, answer the officer's questions, and ask the officer for permission before moving any parts of your body

Support Contact Person: _____ ☎ : _____ **Relationship:** _____

POLICE OFFICER AUTISM AWARENESS GUIDE ON BACK OF THIS ENVELOPE

How the Program Works

There is no registration required, and no personal information is needed.

Participation is as easy as:

- Visit a participating location
- Pick up your Blue Envelope and materials
- Keep them in your vehicle or personal belongings

Just like that, residents are now part of the program and a part of strengthening community safety.

Pick-Up Locations

Residents can pick up Blue Envelope materials at:

- **Loves Park Police Department** – [540 Loves Park Dr., Loves Park, IL 61111]
- **North Suburban Library** – [6340 N. 2nd St., Loves Park, IL 61111]
- **The Superhero Center for Autism** – [4205 Galleria Dr., Loves Park, IL 61111]
- **Bridgeway, Inc.** – [7200 Clinton Rd., Loves Park, IL 61111]

Questions?

If you have questions about the Blue Envelope Program or would like more information, please contact the Loves Park Police Department at 815-654-5015.