

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS JANICE HAHN
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AGN. NO.
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Proclaiming April as Autism Acceptance Month

The reported prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has increased in recent years. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), approximately 1 in 31 children in the United States has been identified with ASD (CDC, 2022). ASD is a developmental disability caused by differences in the brain that can affect social interaction, communication, sensory processing, and behavior. Recognizing April as Autism Acceptance Month aligns with the global observance of World Autism Awareness Day on April 2, 2026, and reinforces efforts to promote understanding, acceptance, and inclusion for individuals on the autism spectrum.

Autism exists across a wide spectrum, and individuals with ASD possess unique strengths, talents, and perspectives that enrich families, workplaces, and communities. However, many individuals with autism and other developmental differences continue to face barriers in education, employment, and social participation. For those with profound autism, requiring 24/7 care, home and community resources are often lacking. As children with ASD grow into adolescence and adulthood, they may encounter challenges related to communication, sensory environments, employment, and navigating traditional social structures.

MOTION

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Safety also remains a concern for some families. Research indicates that individuals with autism may wander or leave safe environments, creating dangerous situations for themselves and significant concern for caregivers. In response, Los Angeles County (County) has developed innovative programs and resources to support individuals with ASD and their families.

For example, the L.A. Found program provides free tracking bracelets for individuals diagnosed with autism or other cognitive impairments, helping first responders locate missing individuals quickly and safely. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) works with Autism Interaction Solutions to provide training on autism identification, communication, and safety protocols. Additionally, LASD's Special Alert program allows caregivers to voluntarily provide information about individuals with intellectual, developmental, or physical disabilities living in their homes so that deputies can better respond when dispatched to a call.

Similarly, the Los Angeles County Fire Department's nationally recognized Sirens of Silence program promotes the message that "Care Needs No Words." The program includes training for first responders, sensory-friendly community events that foster positive interactions between residents and emergency personnel, and the distribution of safety-related items such as identification cards, seatbelt covers, and sensory tools.

The County is also expanding efforts to support individuals with developmental disabilities beyond safety and awareness. In April 2025, the Board of Supervisors unanimously advanced the motion "Los Angeles County Embracing Neurodiversity in the Workplace and Creating Career Pathways for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities¹," which seeks to expand employment opportunities, develop inclusive hiring

¹ [201360.pdf](#)

practices, and explore pilot programs that help neurodivergent individuals access meaningful careers within County government. This effort reflects a broader recognition that embracing neurodiversity strengthens our workforce, enriches innovation, and ensures that County government reflects the diverse communities it serves. Several County departments have already committed to supporting this initiative, including Department of Aging and Disabilities, Internal Services Department, Department of Mental Health, and LA County Library.

Through investment in programs that promote inclusion, accessibility, and opportunity, Los Angeles County strives to establish standards for how local governments can support individuals with autism and other developmental differences. By implementing innovative public safety initiatives, community partnerships, and forward-looking workforce policies that embrace neurodiversity, the County is building a model that demonstrates how inclusive systems can strengthen communities, individuals, and our existing workforce. As these efforts grow, the County can serve as a replicable blueprint for jurisdictions across the nation, providing thoughtful policy collaboration that can expand opportunities and improve the quality of life for people of all abilities.

In observing Autism Acceptance Month, we reaffirm our commitment to creating a County where neurodiversity is recognized as a source of strength, innovation, and resilience. By advancing policies that remove barriers, celebrate talents and different perspectives, the County is ensuring every resident has the opportunity to participate fully in community life. These efforts will uplift our own communities while helping to shape a more inclusive future where individuals of all abilities are respected, valued, and included.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors:

Proclaim the month of April 2026 as “Autism Acceptance Month” throughout Los

Angeles County and recognize World Autism Awareness Day on April 2, 2026, urging all residents, city officials, community organizations, and local partners to join in promoting awareness, acceptance, and inclusion for individuals with autism and developmental disabilities across all communities.

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