

CHECKLIST FOR INTERACTION WITH INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES³

Actions		Checks
Determine if a person may have a disability. Does the person		
	Have an appearance that signals a disability (e.g., Down syndrome, Fragile X, or other)?	
	Have a caregiver?	
	Display age-inappropriate behavior?	
	Live with parents or relatives?	
	Fail to respond to requests or commands?	
	Respond slowly to requests or commands?	
	Have difficulty coming up with solutions to his or her problem?	
	Have difficulty repeating to you what you have requested?	
	Have difficulty or no ability to communicate?	
If the person encountered is suspected of having a disability, did I		
	Advise the dispatcher as soon as the situation permits?	
	Require the individual to obtain legal counsel before questioning him or her?	
	Take extra precautions in making a <i>Terry stop</i> to ensure that the person understands his or her right to leave?	
If a physical altercation appears possible, did I		
	Request emergency medical service or crisis intervention team support?	
	Use appropriate judgment in determining the level of risk involved?	
	Try verbal reduction techniques designed to de-escalate the crisis?	
In making a decision to restrain a person, did I consider		
	The risk that the restraint might cause an escalation in behavior?	
	The risks of positional or aspirational asphyxiation?	
	Weight	
	Communication problems	
	Ability to observe the person's face	
	Increased risk of gastro-esophageal reflux	
	Increased risk of placing the person in a prone or supine position	
	Increased risk of placing pressure on the neck, back, or chest	

(Continued)

(Continued)

Actions		Checks
	Ways to reduce risk?	
	Using alternatives to prone or supine restraint (e.g., standing, seated, or side immobilization)?	
	Ensuring I have the ability to see signs of distress on the person's face?	
	Monitoring breathing and color no less frequently than every 60 seconds?	
	Taking actions to help the person calm down while in restraint?	
	Releasing the person from restraint if signs of difficulty breathing or discoloration are noted?	
	Minimizing the duration of the restraint?	

1. Guffey, M. E., & Loewy, D. (2018). *Business communication: Process and product* (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
2. Guffey & Loewy (2018).
3. State of Tennessee, Department of Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities. (2015, April). DIDD services and investigation processes training for Tennessee law enforcement officers. Retrieved from <http://tn.gov/didd/topic/law-enforcement-training>