



## Module 12. Legal & Policy Topics

**Time:** 90 minutes

**Slides:** 25

**Purpose:** This module will review federal and state laws, as well as agency policies and procedures, that guide the work of law enforcement. Laws and policies specific to disability rights is the focus here, with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) serving as the foundation for discussion. The goals for this module include:

- Helping participants understand the rights of people with disabilities, including expectations of law enforcement to know and uphold disability rights;
- Emphasizing how officers' use of de-escalation techniques is required by law;
- Reviewing civil involuntary commitment laws and practices, to include discussion regarding the overlap of federal, state, and local rules guiding the removal of individuals from the community; and
- Providing guidance on the use of less restrictive alternatives before placing an individual in custody for evaluation/commitment.

### **Learning Objectives:**

After completing this module, participants should be able to:

1. Discuss the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to include knowledge about the range of individuals identified for protection under this landmark legislation;
2. Describe federal and state laws that affect their interactions with persons with disabilities and those experiencing a crisis, including those perceived to have a disability;
3. Summarize legal obligations when working with persons with disabilities and those experiencing a crisis; and
4. Explain the standards for their state's civil commitment, the responsibilities of law enforcement agencies in the commitment determination process (based upon state and local laws), and when civil commitment may be an appropriate response.

*This curriculum was created through support by Grant No. 2020-NT-BX-K001 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the SMART Office. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*