



## IF YOU'RE STOPPED FOR QUESTIONING

1. You have the right to remain silent. If police ask you a question, you don't have to answer it. What you say to the police is always important. What you say can be used against you, and it can give the police an excuse to arrest you.
2. You have a right to refuse to answer any questions.
3. Police may "pat-down" your clothing if they suspect a concealed weapon. Don't physically resist, but make it clear that you don't consent to any search.
4. Ask if you are free to leave.
5. Don't run away, even if you believe what is happening is unreasonable. That could lead to your arrest.



## IF YOU'RE STOPPED IN YOUR CAR WHILE DRIVING

1. You must show your driver's license and registration when stopped while driving a car. In most other situations, Washington law does not make it a crime to refuse to identify yourself to a police officer.
2. Upon request, show them your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance. In certain cases, your car can be searched without a warrant. To protect yourself later, you should make it clear that you do not consent to a search. It is not lawful for police to arrest you simply for refusing to consent to a search.
3. If you're given a ticket, you should sign it; otherwise you can be arrested. You can always fight the case in court later.
4. If you're suspected of drunk driving (DUI) and refuse to take a blood or breath test, your driver's license may be suspended.



## IF YOU'RE ARRESTED OR TAKEN TO A POLICE STATION

1. You have the right to remain silent and to talk to a lawyer before you talk to the police. Tell the police nothing except your name and address. Don't give any explanations, excuses, or stories. You can make your defense later based on what you and your lawyer decide is best.
2. Ask to speak to a lawyer immediately and confidentially. Even if you can't pay for a lawyer, you have a right to contact one, and you should ask the police to let you contact a lawyer before answering any questions.
3. Sometimes you can be released without bail, or have bail lowered. Have your lawyer ask the judge about this possibility. Generally, you must be taken before the judge on the next court day after arrest.
4. Don't make any decisions in your case until you have talked with a lawyer.



## IN YOUR HOME

1. If the police knock and ask to enter your home, you don't have to admit them unless they have a warrant signed by a judge.
2. However, in some emergency situations (like when a person is screaming for help inside, or when the police are chasing someone) officers are allowed to enter and search your home without a warrant.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. You don't have to consent to any search of yourself, your car, or your house. If you DO consent to a search, it can affect your rights later in court. If the police say they have a search warrant, ASK TO SEE IT.
2. Don't interfere with or obstruct the police — you can be arrested for it.

We all recognize the need for effective law enforcement, but we should also understand our own rights and responsibilities — especially in our encounters with the police. If your rights are violated, don't try to deal with the situation at the scene. You can discuss the matter with an attorney afterwards.



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## WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE STOPPED BY THE POLICE

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OF WASHINGTON FOUNDATION

**BE POLITE & RESPECTFUL**

.....  
**STAY CALM** and in control of  
your words and body language.

.....  
**DON'T GET INTO AN ARGUMENT**  
with the police.

.....  
Remember, anything you say or  
do **CAN BE USED AGAINST YOU.**

.....  
**KEEP YOUR HANDS** where  
the police can see them.

.....  
**DON'T RUN. DON'T TOUCH**  
any police officer.

.....  
**DON'T RESIST** even if you  
believe you are innocent.

.....  
**DON'T COMPLAIN** on the  
scene; you can do this later.

**DON'T MAKE ANY STATEMENTS**  
regarding the incident.

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**ASK FOR A LAWYER**  
immediately upon your arrest.

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Remember **OFFICERS'**  
**BADGE** numbers.

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**WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING**  
you remember ASAP.

.....  
Try to find **WITNESSES** & their  
names & phone numbers.

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If you are injured, **TAKE**  
**PHOTOGRAPHS OF INJURIES** as  
soon as possible, but make sure you  
**SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION FIRST.**

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If you feel your rights have been  
violated, **CONTACT A LAWYER.**