

You and the Law

Guidelines for Interacting with Law Enforcement



“The easiest way to avoid conflict with law enforcement officials is simply to stay out of trouble.”

YOUR BASIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Your basic rights and responsibilities may not always be clearly defined by law enforcement officials. If stopped or detained, politely ask the officer “why” in a manner that is not confrontational.

The first words spoken by either the officer or the citizen involved may very well determine the tone of the encounter and even the eventual outcome.

IF YOU ARE STOPPED ON THE STREET:

- Answer all questions pertaining to your identity.
- Remember, you are not required to give testimony against yourself. (You do have a right to remain silent.)
- Do not “bad mouth” or walk away from the law enforcement officials.
- If an officer has a “reasonable suspicion” that you may be carrying a weapon or illegal substance, you may be subjected to a “pat-down” search. Do not resist the search.

IF YOU ARE STOPPED IN A CAR:

- Slow down; safely pull over as soon as you can.
- Stay in the driver’s seat with both hands in sight on the steering wheel. **Do not exit the car unless asked to do so.**
- Comply with the officer’s request to see your driver’s license and registration.
- If the officer believes a crime has been committed your car can be searched without a court-issued warrant.
- If you are issued a ticket, sign it. (Doing so is not an admission of guilt.)

You and the Law

Officer Conduct and Your Response

“The best way to avoid conflict is to not provoke the officer while having a discussion about law enforcement matters.”

- Do not resist arrest for any reason.
- Control your emotions.
- Do not make threatening motions or statements to the officers talking to you.
- Never attempt to interfere with the arrest of others who may be with you.
- Always note the name of the officers with whom you come in contact.
- Record, document and report officer misconduct immediately.

To file a complaint on an officer go to: AkronCops.org
You may also call police operations 330.375.2900
or the police auditor 330.375.2712

Adapted from: The Law and You, Allstate Insurance Co. 2005

To view the full copy of the “You and the Law” booklet, go to:
AkronCops.org or
AkronPeaceMakers.org

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

- 9-1-1 (For Emergencies Only)
- Crime Stoppers: 330.434.COPS (330.434.2677)
- Teen Suicide Crisis Line: 1.800.SUICIDE (1.800.784.2433)
- Children Who Witness Crime: 330.376.0716
- Victim Assistance Crisis Hotline: 330.376.0040
- Battered Women’s Shelter: 1.888.395.4357 or 330.374.1111
- Rape Crisis: 330.434.7273
- The Tina Project (Teen Date Violence): 330.374.0740 X 126
- Akron Police Auditor (Phillip Young): 330.375.2705

For more information contact the
Akron Police Department at 330.375.2390 or
the Akron PeaceMakers at 330.375.2712

You and the Law is sponsored by:



Akron PeaceMakers



Akron Public Schools

