

YOUR RIGHTS AND THE POLICE - CALIFORNIA

Encounters with the police can be intimidating. People have differing experiences with the police, some of which are not always legal. This guide is meant to provide you with information on your rights when stopped by the police and what you should and should not do during these stops.

YOUR RIGHTS

- You have the right to remain silent.
- You have the right to be free from warrantless searches and seizures.
- If you are arrested, you have the right to a government-appointed lawyer.

DO

- Do ask “Am I free to go?” If they say “yes,” leave calmly. If they say “no,” ask “Can you tell me why you are stopping me?”
- Do say “I want to remain silent.” You do not have to answer questions or sign anything.
- Do show your license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance when asked if you are in your vehicle.
- Do say “I want to talk to a lawyer.” It is advisable to talk to a lawyer before making any decisions.

DON'T

- Do not lie. Say “I want to remain silent.”
- Do not attempt to bribe the police.
- Do not physically resist a search or ‘pat-down’. Say “I do not consent to a search.”

IF YOUR RIGHTS ARE VIOLATED

- Write down everything you remember. Get contact information of witnesses.
- If you are injured, seek medical attention immediately and photograph your injuries.
- File a complaint with the police department.