

## *IN ANY POLICE ENCOUNTER*

### **RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The police can stop and question you if they have reasonable suspicion that you have done something illegal. In such a stop, they can "pat- down" your clothing to check for a concealed weapon if they suspect you have one. Do not physically resist, but make it clear that you do not consent to any further search.
2. You are not legally required to answer a police officer's questions. You cannot legally be arrested just for refusing to answer questions or to identify yourself to a police officer. But if you are arrested or cited, failure to identify yourself can lead to additional charges or to you being detained when you might otherwise get only a citation.
3. What you say to the police is always important. What you say can be used against you, and it can cause the police to arrest you.
4. You do not have to consent to any search of yourself, your possessions, your car or your home. If you do not consent to a search, be sure to tell the police. If you do consent to a search, it can affect your rights later in court.
5. If the police say they have a search warrant, ask to see it and check to make sure that it lists the right person or address.
6. Do not interfere with, or obstruct, the police; you can be arrested for it.
7. You have a right to record (audio and video) police activity so long as you can do so safely and do not physically interfere with their work.

### **REALITY**

1. Be polite and respectful. Although "bad mouthing" or criticizing a police officer may be legally protected speech, it is not recommended and might cause you problems.
2. Stay calm, control what you say, as well as your body language and emotions.
3. Don't get into an argument with the police.
4. Keep your hands where the police can see them. Don't make any sudden movements.
5. Don't ever touch a police officer.
6. Don't run.
7. Even though refusing to answer questions is not a crime, it can make the police suspicious about you. If you do decide to talk, remember, anything you say can be used against you.
8. Don't resist even if you believe you are innocent.
9. Don't interfere when an officer is doing his or her job.
10. If you believe that you have been the victim of police misconduct:
  - a. Don't complain or tell the police that they are wrong or that you will file a complaint against them.
  - b. Remember the officers' names, badge numbers and/or patrol car numbers. If the names or badge numbers are not visible, you may politely ask the officer for the

information.

- c. Write down everything you can remember as soon as you can. Memories fade quickly.
- d. Try to find witnesses. Try to get their names, email addresses and phone numbers.
- e. If you are injured, take photographs of the injuries as soon as possible, get medical attention, and tell the doctor what happened.