

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS POLICE ENCOUNTERS

This content is intended to serve as general information; it is not legal advice nor intended as legal advice.



IF YOU'RE STOPPED IN YOUR CAR:

- Stop the car in a safe place as quickly as possible. Turn off the car, turn on the internal light, open the window partway, and place your hands on the wheel.
- If asked, show police your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance.
- If an officer or immigration agent asks to search your car, you can refuse. But if police see or believe your car contains evidence of a crime, they can search it without your consent.
- Both drivers and passengers have the right to remain silent. If you're a passenger, you can also ask if you're free to leave. If yes, silently leave.

IF YOU'RE ASKED ABOUT YOUR IMMIGRATION STATUS:

- You have the right to remain silent. You do not have to answer questions about where you were born, whether you're a U.S. citizen, or how you entered the country. (Separate rules apply at international borders and airports, and for individuals on certain non-immigrant visas, including tourists and business travelers.)
- If you're not a U.S. citizen and have valid immigration papers, you should show them if an immigration agent requests it.
- Do not lie about your citizenship status or provide fake documents.

IF YOU'RE ARRESTED BY POLICE:

- Do not resist.
- If you are arrested, you must truthfully answer an officer's questions about your name, the address where you live and your birth date if asked.
- Say you wish to remain silent regarding all other questions and ask for a lawyer. If you can't afford a lawyer, the government must provide one.
- Don't say anything, sign anything, or make any decisions without a lawyer.
- You have the right to make a local phone call. The police cannot listen if you call a lawyer.
- Don't discuss your immigration status with anyone but your lawyer.
- An immigration officer may visit you in jail. Do not answer questions or sign anything before talking to a lawyer.
- Read all papers fully. If you don't understand or cannot read the papers, say you need an interpreter.

IF YOU'RE TAKEN INTO IMMIGRATION (OR ICE) CUSTODY:

- You have the right to a lawyer, but the government will not provide one. If you don't have a lawyer, ask for a list of free or low-cost legal services.
- You have the right to contact your consulate or have an officer inform the consulate of your arrest.
- Tell the immigration officer you wish to remain silent. Do not discuss your immigration status with anyone but your lawyer.
- Do not sign anything without talking to a lawyer. If you sign, you may be giving up your opportunity to try to stay in the U.S.
- Know your immigration number ("A" number) and give it to your family. It will help them locate you.