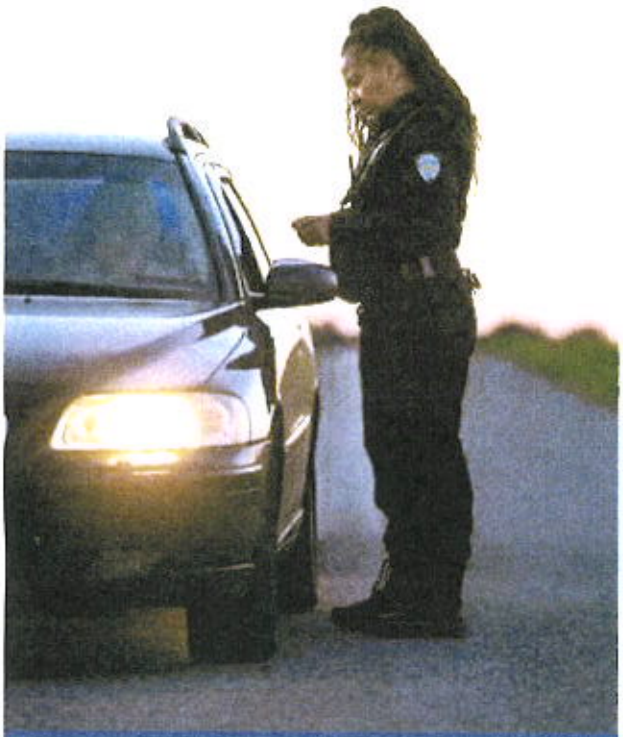

WHAT TO DO
WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE

ALLEGHENY COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WHEN STOPPED IN YOUR CAR...

You may be pulled over in your car if a police officer has reasonable suspicion or probable cause that a violation of the Vehicle Code has been commited. An officer will signal for you to pull over by flashing their lights and/or siren.

It is best to pull over to a safe location and stay calm. Remain in your car unless told to do otherwise and do not make any sudden movements. If pulled over at night, you should turn your dome light on.
You should be prepared to hand the officer your driver's license, proof of insurance of the vehicle, and the vehicle's registration.

If an unmarked car signals you to pull over at night and you are not sure if it is a police officer, turn on your 4-way flashers and dome light. Then, slowly drive to the nearest well lit public area. Unmarked police cars will be equipped with RED and BLUE lights.

WHEN THE POLICE COME TO YOUR DOOR...

If the police knock at your door and ask to come inside your home, you do not have to let them in unless they have a signed warrant by a judge, or if it is an emergency or they are in pursuit of a suspect. Before allowing the police to enter your home, ask to see the warrant to ensure they are at the right house and/or have the correct person listed. The warrant gives the officer(s) the legal right to temporarily seize the listed property on the warrant.

The police may also search without a warrant whenever an arrest is made. They may search his/her person and the immediate area. Police can also search after consent is given.

YOU SHOULD HAVE...

- A valid driver's license
- Proof of insurance
- The registration of the vehicle

HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF

- What is your name?
- Where do you live?
- Do you have any identification?

These are simple questions that, under certain circumstances, police officers have the right and obligation to ask. You should be prepared to answer these questions when stopped by police.

The officer could be investigating a neighborhood complaint or may have been informed that a crime has just been committed in the area. The officer may suspect that you are involved or you have helpful knowledge or information about the incident. The officer also might believe that you are in need of assistance or help.

Officers have a responsiblity and an obligation to obtain pertinent information to resolve any calls or incidents. This can include asking questions that are relevant to the information he/she received regarding the assignment.

Remember that the officer(s) are asking you these questions for a reason, even if it might not seem like it at the time. Not answering these questions can lead to a more serious situation.

f you do not consent to their request to search, be ure to state clearly that you do not agree to any ind of search. If the police do not have a warrant, ou may, but do not have to let them in, unless they emand to enter. If police insist to come into your ome over your objection, ask to see their badge nd/or identification and write down their badge umbers and names. You may also request one of heir business cards.

WHEN STOPPED BY POLICE ON THE STREET

When the officer(s) approach you on foot, you should stop and remain cool and calm. Remember, they think they have a reason to stop and ask you questions. They have the right and obligation to find out what is going on. Officers may consider the following when deciding to stop and question you:

- You appear to be running away from a crime that has been reported in the area
- You are hanging around people who are under police investigation
- Someone has pointed you out as a possible suspect involved in a crime
- You are in a location that seems suspicious for that time of day or night
- You are hanging around places or people who are using or selling drugs
- You are using obscene language, acting disorderly, or drunk/high in a public place

REMEMBER

1. Remain cool and calm
2. Identify yourself and have a physical form of identification
3. Cooperate and speak clearly
4. **DO NOT** threaten or touch the police officer
5. Ask to see identification or a police badge

For more information visit:
alleghenycountyda.us

If you have further questions regarding what the police can & cannot do, please contact your local police department or the District Attorney's Office.

In the case of an emergency
DIAL 911

Allegheny County
District Attorney's Office
412-350-4401

ORIGINALLY CREATED & DISTRIBUTED IN 1997 BY THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY CHIEFS OF POLICE ASSOCIATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE ALLEGHENY COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

IF PLACED UNDER ARREST...

If the officer feels that you have commited a crime and places you under arrest, he/she will inform you of the following:

- You have the right to remain silent
- Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law
- You have the right to talk to an attorney and have him/her present with you while you are being questioned
- If you cannot afford to hire a lawyer, one will be appointed to represent you before any questioning, if you wish
- You can decide at any time to exercise these rights and not answer any questions or make any statements

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO...

- Audio & video record police activity as long as you can do so safely and do not interfere with an officer's lawful duties.
- Contest the justification of your arrest in court. You **DO NOT** have the right to use force to resist arrest at any time.
- Challenge a ticket by requesting a hearing in front of a district judge. If you do not agree with the judge's decision, you have the right to appeal.
- A preliminary hearing after being arrested. The police are required to prove why you were arrested.
- File a complaint with the Chief of Police if you feel that you were mistreated or treated unfairly by municipal police officers.