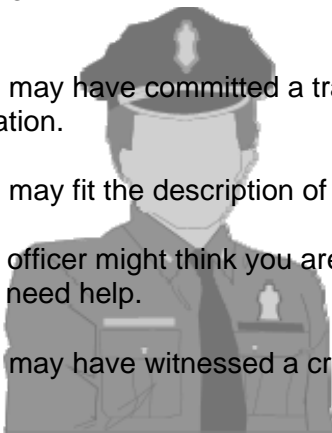


WHY DO POLICE STOP PEOPLE?

There are many different reasons why you might be stopped by the police. Whatever the reason, the officer needs your cooperation.

- You may have committed a traffic violation.
- You may fit the description of a suspect.
- The officer might think you are in trouble and need help.
- You may have witnessed a crime.



If you are stopped by the police while driving, you may feel confused, anxious, or even angry. These are natural feelings, but remember, traffic stops can also be stressful and dangerous for the police officer. Each year, a number of law enforcement officers are killed or seriously injured while making a “routine” traffic stop. Police officers are especially vulnerable during the hours of darkness.

With this in mind, there are things that you, as a law-abiding citizen, can do to help lessen the unpleasantness of the experience.

REMEMBER:

IN ALL CASES WHEN STOPPED, A PERSON IS REQUIRED TO COOPERATE WITH POLICE INSTRUCTIONS.

NYS Vehicle & Traffic Law requires that all drivers shall yield the right of way to emergency vehicles. Drivers are to immediately pull over parallel to the right-hand edge, stop and remain in a stopped position until the emergency vehicle has passed.

WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE, REMEMBER:



1. A police officer may pull you over at anytime for a traffic offense or police investigation.
2. When you see the red overhead lights and/or hear the siren, remain calm and safely pull over parallel to the right side of the road.
3. Remain in your vehicle unless the officer advises otherwise.
4. Keep your hands on the steering wheel so the officer can see them. Hands that are hidden can indicate danger to an officer.
5. Avoid any sudden movements, especially toward the floorboard, rear seat or passenger side of the vehicle. Those actions can be interpreted as reaching for weapons.
6. Do not immediately reach for your license or other documents until the officer requests them. NYS Law requires drivers to show their license, registration and insurance card upon request.
7. If your documents are out of reach, tell the officer where they are before you reach for them.
8. If the stop occurs during darkness, put on your dome or interior lights so the officer can easily see that all is in order with no hidden threats.
9. If there are passengers in your vehicle, encourage them to remain quiet and cooperate with instructions. You, as the operator, are solely responsible for your vehicle and its occupants.
10. The officer may issue you a ticket. If you feel the reason is vague or unclear, ask the officer for details.
11. Avoid becoming argumentative. Arguing will not change the officer's mind. If you contest the violation, you will have an opportunity to address the matter in court.
12. Many departments use one-officer patrol cars, especially in the suburbs. Do not be alarmed if you see more than one marked unit for a traffic stop.
13. Finally, if you receive a ticket, take receipt of it calmly. Accepting it is not an admission of guilt.

Each situation is unique and the police officer must suit his/her response to fit the circumstances.

GENERALLY, A POLICE OFFICER:

- Will provide his or her name and badge number upon request.
- A police officer who is not in uniform will present proper identification; you may request to examine their credentials so that you are satisfied they are a law enforcement officer.
- Will inform a person of the reason for being stopped.
- Will only use the force necessary to effect an arrest of a suspect and to maintain the custody of the prisoner.
- Will not search the body of a person of the opposite sex except to prevent injury to the officer or another person, or to prevent the disposal or destruction of evidence, and
- Will only arrest a person for an offense committed in the officer's presence, or when the officer has probable cause to believe the person has already committed the crime.
- The Suffolk County Police Department does not inquire as to the immigration status of victims, witnesses, or persons who are requesting or receiving police assistance.



QUESTIONS / COMPLAINTS / COMPLIMENTS

The Suffolk County Police Department welcomes your feedback. Compliments or complaints regarding the Suffolk County Police Department or its personnel can be reported to any supervisor in the SCPD or by telephoning the Internal Affairs Bureau at (631) 852-6265; or, by contacting the Suffolk County Human Rights Commission directly at (631) 853-5480.

Police Headquarters 30 Yaphank Avenue, Yaphank	852-6000
Internal Affairs Bureau, Yaphank Toll free 1-888-382-1798	852-6265
Hate Crimes Unit, Yaphank	852-6553
1st Precinct 555 Rt. 109, Lindenhurst	854-8100
2nd Precinct 1071 Park Avenue, Huntington	854-8200
3rd Precinct 1630 5 th Avenue, Bayshore	854-8300
4th Precinct 345 Old Willets Path, Hauppauge	854-8400
5th Precinct 125 Waverly Avenue, Patchogue	854-8500
6th Precinct 400 Rt. 25, Selden	854-8600
7th Precinct 1419 William Floyd Parkway, Shirley	852-8700



RICHARD DORMER
POLICE COMMISSIONER



STEVE LEVY
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



WHAT TO DO WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE



www.SuffolkPD.org

PDCS-7148a