



# What to Do When Stopped by Police



## Why do police stop people?

- 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.

## Feelings you get when stopped by a police officer.

- Confused
- Anxious
- Angry
- Scared
- Nervous

## When stopped by police, remember:

- A police officer may pull you over at any time for a traffic offense or police investigation.
- When you see the red/blue overhead lights and/or sirens, remain calm and safely pull over to the right side of the road.
- REMAIN in your vehicle unless the officer advises otherwise.
- Avoid any sudden movements, especially toward the floorboard, rear seat or passenger side of the vehicle.
- Do not immediately reach for your license or other documents until the officer requests them.

## Arizona State Law requires drivers to show:

- Driver's License
- Vehicle registration
- Insurance card

## Things to remember while on the traffic stop:

- If your documents are out of reach, tell the officer where they are before you reach for them.
- If you have a weapon in the vehicle, promptly notify the officer of its location.
- If the stop occurs during the darkness, turn on your interior lights so the officer can easily see the interior of your car.

## Passengers in the car.

- Please encourage passengers to remain quiet and cooperate with police instructions.
- The officer might ask for names of the passengers for documentation purposes only.
- Adult passengers will be asked for an identification if violating a traffic law (Arizona Revised Statutes).

## **The traffic ticket.**

- The officer may issue you the ticket.
- If you receive a ticket, accept it calmly.
- Accepting a ticket is NOT an admission of guilt.
- Your signature is usually, but not always required.
- If you feel the reason is unclear, ask the officer for details.
- Avoid becoming argumentative. Arguing with the officer will not change the officer's mind.
- If you contest the violation, you will have an opportunity to address the matter in court.
- Be honest with the officer.
- If you really did not see the stop sign, or were unaware of the speed limit, let the officer know.
- Being honest about any situation is good. Accepting responsibility for what we did can go a long way.

## **What to expect from an officer.**

- Each situation is different, and the police officer must alter his or her response to fit the circumstance.
- The officer will provide his or her name and serial number upon request.
- An officer NOT in uniform will present his or her proper commissioned card and badge upon request.
- The officer will tell you why you are being stopped.
- The officer will only use the force necessary to control the arrest of a suspect and to maintain the custody of the prisoner.
- The officer 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.
- The officer will only arrest a person for a crime committed in the officer's presence, or when the officer has probable cause to believe the person has already committed the crime.

Arizona traffic law requires that all drivers shall yield the right of way to emergency vehicles. Drivers are to immediately pull over to the right side of the road, stop and remain in a stopped position until the emergency vehicle has passed.