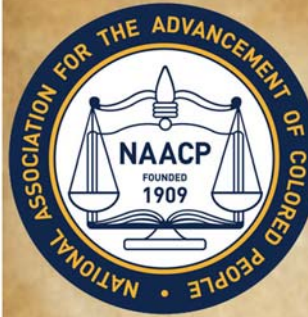


How to reduce risk to yourself

Stay calm. Don't run, resist, or obstruct the officers. Do not lie or give false documents. Keep your hands where the police can see them.

What to do if you are arrested or detained

- Say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately. Don't give any explanations or excuses. Don't say anything, sign anything, or make any decisions without a lawyer.
- If you have been arrested by police, you have the right to make a local phone call. The police cannot listen if you call a lawyer. They can and often do listen if you call anyone else.



NAACP

Coraopolis Branch



Know your Rights if Stopped by Police

Know your Rights if Stopped by the Police

Being stopped by police is a stressful experience that can go bad quickly. Here we describe what the law requires and also offer strategies for handling police encounters.

We want to be clear: The burden of de-escalation does not fall on private citizens — it falls on police officers. However, you cannot assume officers will behave in a way that protects your safety or that they will respect your rights even after you assert them. You may be able to reduce risk to yourself by staying calm and not exhibiting hostility toward the officers.

The truth is that there are situations where people have done everything, they could to put an officer at ease, yet still ended up injured or killed.



I've been stopped by the police in public

Your rights

- You have the right to remain silent. For example, you do not have to answer any questions about where you are going, where you are traveling from, what you are doing, or where you live. If you wish to exercise your right to remain silent, say so out loud. (In some states, you may be required to provide your name if asked to identify yourself, and an officer may arrest you for refusing to do so.)
- You do not have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings, but police may pat down your clothing if they suspect a weapon. Note that refusing consent may not stop the officer from carrying out the search against your will, but making a timely objection before or during the search can help preserve your rights in any later legal proceeding.
- If you are arrested by police, you have the right to a government-appointed lawyer if you cannot afford one. You do not have to answer questions about where you were born, whether you are a U.S. citizen, or how you entered the country. (Separate rules apply at international borders and airports as well as for individuals on certain nonimmigrant visas, including tourists and business travelers.)

You have rights —
know them