

# What To Do If You Are Stopped By An El Camino College Police Officer



Being stopped by a police officer can be uncomfortable. Police officers share your feelings. More than half of the California police officers killed in the line of duty were conducting pedestrian or traffic stops. Our biggest concern is safety, yours and ours. The information herein will help everyone get home safely.

## What You Can Expect

Officers are trained to be courteous and professional when they contact you.

When it is safe or practical to do so, the officer will provide you with his/her business card upon request.

Officers who are not in uniform will also present proper identification upon request.

Within a reasonable amount of time, the officer will explain why you were stopped.

If you are disabled or ill, the officer will assist you.

## Talk To Us

The watch commander at any police station or facility is available to answer your questions regarding procedures, citations, or traffic stops.

You can contact us in person or by mail. If you wish to file a complaint against a police officer, you must use the form provided by a watch commander.

Watch commanders may discuss an officer's conduct, but cannot adjudicate any citations. Only a judge has that authority.

If you choose to report your concerns by phone, you may contact the station watch commander individually or you may dial 1-310-660-3100.

## Why Police Officers Conduct Stops

Public safety is the primary reason for any stop, for example:

Did you commit a traffic violation? (ran a red light, expired registration tags)

Do you match the description of someone wanted for a crime? (assault, theft, narcotics)

Was your vehicle or one like it used to commit a crime? (drive-by shooting, arson)

Is your vehicle safe? (broken taillight, cracked windshield)

Did you witness a crime? (robbery, shooting, burglary)

Do you need help?

### **What You Need To Know**

Red lights and/or siren mean pull over to the right where it is safe and where you will not block traffic.

If it is dark, the police officer will use a bright spotlight or flashlight to illuminate you and/or your car.

California law requires all drivers to show their license, registration and proof of insurance to a peace officer upon request.

The U.S. Supreme Court states it is reasonable and legal for a police officer to ask you and your passengers to exit the car.

According to California law, any person using a disabled placard or plate must present identification and evidence of issuance of that placard or plate upon request of a peace officer. Failure to do so will be evidence of misuse and the placard or plate may be confiscated.

According to California law, if you refuse to sign a citation, you may be arrested.

### **What You Should Do**

Remain in your vehicle and follow the officer's instructions.

Keep your hands where the officer can see them.

Avoid any sudden movements, and do not reach for your license or other item until the officer requests them.

Ask any passengers in your car to remain calm and comply with the officer's instructions.

Sign the citation if you receive one. This does not mean you are guilty; it is just your promise to appear in court at a later time.



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