

Every contact with a citizen is unique and the police officer must adapt his/her response to fit the individual circumstances.

GENERALLY, a Police Officer:

- Will provide his or her name and ID number upon request.
- Who is not in uniform will present proper identification; you may ask to see their badge and ID card. This will let you know that they are a law enforcement officer.
- Will tell you why you are being stopped.
- Will only use force if necessary. This may be to arrest a suspect, to keep a prisoner in custody, or to regain control of a dangerous situation.
- Will not search the body of the person of the opposite sex except to prevent injury to the officer or another person, or to prevent the disposal or destruction of evidence. Officers may and will check the clothing (pat-frisk) of a person of the opposite sex.
- 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 a crime.

COMPLIMENTS QUESTIONS COMPLAINTS

If you have a question about what we do or a complaint about your treatment, you can contact the Pittsfield Police Department (in-person or on the phone) and ask to speak with the Officer-in-Charge. We also have complaint forms in the Department's Lobby and on the Department's website. Also, please let us know if we have helped you in any way. You may send a letter of compliment at any time.

Pittsfield Police Department Mission Statement:

The mission of the Pittsfield Police Department is to work in partnership with the community, to protect life and property, and to enhance the quality of life in our city.

Dispatch Center:	413-448-9700
Emergency:	911
Chief's Office	413-448-9717

**For more information, please visit the
Pittsfield Police Department's web site at:**

www.pittsfieldpd.org

What to expect when stopped by the POLICE



***Pittsfield Police Department
39 Allen Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
(413) 448-9700***

"Dedicated to Excellence"

Why do the police stop people?

There are many different reasons why you might be stopped by the police.

Whatever the reason, the officer needs you to cooperate.

- You may have broken a traffic rule
- You may look like a suspect
- The officer may think you are in trouble and need help
- You may have seen a crime

REMEMBER:

The police officer is simply doing his/her job. In all cases, you should be courteous and cooperate with the police. You can expect the police to treat you with courtesy and respect.

People have different feelings when stopped by the police while driving. Some may feel confused, anxious, frightened, or even angry. These are natural feelings.

Traffic stops can also be stressful and dangerous for police officers. Each year many police officers are killed or injured during “routine” traffic stops. These stops can be more dangerous when it is dark outside.

WHEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE REMEMBER:

1. Police Officers may pull you over any time for a traffic offense, or if they are helping to solve a crime.
2. If you see or hear a police car behind you with emergency lights and/or siren on, remain calm. Safely pull over to the right side of the road and stop.
3. Stay in the car unless the officer asks you to do something else.
4. Keep your hands on the steering wheel. This is so the officer can see them.
5. Do not make quick moves. Do not move quickly towards the floor, back seat, or passenger side of the vehicle.
6. Wait until the officer asks for your driver’s license, vehicle registration, or other documents (passport, paperwork with home address) before reaching for them.
7. If you cannot reach your documents, tell the officer where they are before reaching for them.

8. If you are stopped at night, turn on your inside light. This lets the officer see that everything is o.k.
9. Ask the other people in the car to sit quietly, and ask them to cooperate with the officer. Turn off the car’s stereo.
10. The officer may give you a ticket. If you do not know why, please ask the officer politely for details.
11. Please do not argue with the officer. This will not help. You may contest the ticket in court. The ticket has instructions on how to do this.
12. Be honest with the officer. If you did not see the stop sign, or did not know the speed limit, let the officer know. Being honest never hurts.
13. You may see two or more cars at a traffic stop. This is normal.
14. Stay calm. If you get a ticket, just take it. You are not admitting to guilt. This is just a promise to pay the fine, or to appear in court.

