



PRINCE WILLIAM

Police Department

COMMUNITY TIPS

FOR POLICE INTERACTIONS



A NATIONALLY ACCREDITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY

POLICE INTERACTIONS

The mission of the Police Department is to effectively and impartially enforce the law while serving and protecting the community. This includes traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, welfare concerns, and community outreach. Police may interact with community members if they are suspected of committing a crime, may have witnessed a crime, or in the area where a crime occurred.

TIPS DURING POLICE INTERACTIONS

Police interactions can be unnerving leaving community members uncertain how to act or respond. Just because you are approached by a police officer does not mean or imply you have done anything wrong. You may have information helpful to solving a crime. We understand these interactions may be inconvenient and should be on your way shortly.

If you are approached by an officer, there is likely a reason. Cooperation, compliance, and keeping your hands visible are always recommended for the officer's safety, and yours.

TRAFFIC STOP TIPS

If you are stopped in a vehicle, safely pull your vehicle to the nearest shoulder or parking lot.

- Remain in your vehicle, sit calmly, and keep hands visible (including passengers).
- Follow the officer's instructions and present necessary documents when asked.
- If you need to access anything in another compartment, inform the officer of your intentions and await acknowledgment.
- Although not required, informing the officer if you or a passenger is armed is encouraged.
- If you are stopped at night, or it's dark out, you may turn on an interior light to be more visible to the officer.

VERIFY POLICE LEGITIMACY

If you are concerned about the legitimacy of an officer, such as with an unmarked police vehicle, you can acknowledge the officer's presence by turning on your four-way flashers and driving at a safe speed to a well-lit or safe location.

**YOU CAN ALSO CALL THE NON-EMERGENCY LINE AT
703-792-6500 FOR VERIFICATION.**

POLICE SEARCHES

During any interaction, a police officer may determine a search is needed. Sometimes searches are for officer safety reasons, or if the officer perceives the search is permissible under the law with probable cause. These instances can include but are not limited to at the time of arrest, when there's a reason to believe a law was violated, for officer safety purposes if there is an indication of a weapon, and/or for evidence preservation.

An officer may also ask for your consent in cases not covered under the law. You may respectfully decline unless the officer articulates a reason as previously described.

DISPUTE A STOP OR SEARCH

Police stops and searches may cause contention at the time. Disagreeing with a stop or reason for a search is certainly understandable; however, there is a time, place, and process for airing grievances with a law enforcement encounter.

- You can call the non-emergency line at 703-792-6500 and request to speak to a supervisor.
- File a complaint (forms available online via link below).
- Dispute the charge in court.

Having a dispute during a stop can escalate unnecessarily in a potentially unsafe area, like the side of the road. Let cooler heads prevail and report your objections after the stop has concluded. It is our goal to provide quality police services.



CONTACT US

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO LEARN ABOUT YOUR
POLICE DEPARTMENT. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR
COMMENTS, PLEASE CONTACT US.**

EMERGENCY 9-1-1

NON-EMERGENCY

703-792-6500

EASTERN DISTRICT POLICE STATION

15948 Donald Curtis Drive, Woodbridge, VA 22191

703-792-7200

CENTRAL DISTRICT POLICE STATION

5036 Davis Ford Road, Woodbridge, VA 22192

703-792-8555

WESTERN DISTRICT POLICE STATION

8900 Freedom Center Boulevard, Manassas, VA 20110

703-792-5111

OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

703-792-4127

ONLINE: pwcva.gov/police

PETER NEWSHAM, CHIEF OF POLICE

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

5036 Davis Ford Road, Woodbridge, VA 22192

703-792-6650

ELECTRONIC FORMS ONLINE | PWCVA.GOV/POLICEFEEDBACK