

USCRI KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

A Guide for Immigrants



Regardless of immigration status, all individuals in the United States have guaranteed rights under the Constitution. The following guide is to inform non-U.S. citizens of their legal rights in various situations with law enforcement and immigration officers.

Some [state laws](#) may vary. Separate rules apply at [checkpoints](#) and when entering the United States at ports of entry, including at borders and airports.

This information is for educational purposes and should not be used as a substitute for legal assistance. If you or someone you know needs legal assistance, please contact an attorney.

IF A LAW ENFORCEMENT OR IMMIGRATION OFFICER STOPS YOU IN YOUR VEHICLE

IN ALL STOPS:

- Police and immigration officers will request you to pull over, usually by using flashing lights and turning on police sirens. If this happens, turn on your emergency flashing lights, slow down, and pull over to the side of the road as soon as possible. Only pull over in well-lit, safe public areas.
- Turn off the engine, turn on the internal light, open the window part way and place your hands on the wheel.
- Drivers and passengers have the right to remain silent. If you are a passenger, you can ask if you are free to leave. If the officer says yes, calmly leave.

IF POLICE STOP YOU:

- If police request your name and driver's license, you must provide this information.
- Ask them, "What is the reason I am being stopped?" You can also ask, "Am I free to leave?" If yes, then slowly roll up your window and calmly drive away.
- When the police stop you for a traffic violation, they can request your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance. If you have these documents, you must show them.
- If police request your driver's license, registration, and proof of insurance, you must show those documents.
- Do not answer questions about anything else, including immigration status or national origin. Say, "I do not want to answer your questions."
- The police, but not immigration officers, have the right to search a vehicle if they have reason to believe that something illegal is in the vehicle. Do not resist.
- The police can order you and your passengers out of your vehicle for their safety. Calmly comply if requested.



IF AN IMMIGRATION OFFICER STOPS YOU:

- If an immigration officer stops you, you do not have to identify anyone in the car but the driver. If the officers ask who is with you, you can answer, "They are my passengers."
- An immigration officer can order you and your passengers out of your vehicle for their safety. Calmly comply if requested.
- If an immigration officer wants to search your vehicle, they can only do so with a valid search warrant signed by a state or federal judge (not an immigration judge)
- An immigration officer can fingerprint you if they believe you violated an immigration law.



[refugees.org](https://www.refugees.org)
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