

# 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 ON THE STREET

- If someone claims to be a law enforcement officer, ask to see their badge or identification. Write down the identification number.
  - Police or immigration officers can ask for your name.
  - If they question you further, you may ask, "Am I under arrest?" If they say no, ask, "Am I free to go?" If the answer is yes, you may calmly walk away.
    - If they say you are stopped and not free to leave, you have the right to know why.
  - If they try to question you again, immediately say, "I would like to speak to an attorney before answering any questions." At this point, the officer must stop questioning you.
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- You have the right to remain silent at all times. Anything you say can be used against you.
  - Do not discuss your immigration or citizenship status with police or immigration officers.
  - Do not believe anything the police or immigration officers may say to get you to talk.
  - If an immigration officer asks for your immigration papers, you must show them if you have them with you. You do not have to show immigration papers to local or state police.
  - Do not consent to a search of your body, bag, or possessions. If a police or immigration officer asks if they can search your things, you have the right to say no.
    - If an officer searches you, they are allowed to pat down your outer clothing only. The officer cannot squeeze or reach into your pockets unless they believe they felt a weapon after patting you down.
    - Say, "I do not consent to your search," even if they keep going with the search.
  - Do not empty your pockets voluntarily, throw belongings away, or reach towards your waistband as the officer approaches.
  - Immigration officers and some state police can ask about your name, address, and age, or request photo ID. If asked, calmly give this information, and do not lie.

