

What to do When You Are Stopped by University Police Services

Nevada Law requires that all drivers shall yield the right of way to emergency vehicles. Drivers are to immediately pull over parallel to the right-hand edge, stop, and remain in position until the emergency vehicle has passed.

Why Do University Police Services Officers Stop People?

There are many different reasons why you might be stopped by the University Police. Whatever the reason, the police officer needs your cooperation.

- You may have committed a traffic violation
- You may fit the description of a suspect
- The officer may think you are in trouble, need help, or are otherwise at risk
- You may have witnessed a crime

If you are stopped by the University Police Services while driving, you may feel confused, anxious, or even angry. These are natural feelings, but remember, traffic stops are also stressful and dangerous for the officer.

Each year, numerous police officers are killed or seriously injured while making the "routine" traffic stop. Traffic stops are especially dangerous during the hours of darkness.

This understandable concern for citizen and officer safety provides the basis for standard police procedures.

With this in mind, there are things that you, the law abiding citizen, can do to help lessen what may be an unpleasant experience.

Remember, when stopped by University Police Services:

- The officer may pull you over at any time for a traffic offense or investigation.
- When you see the emergency lights and/or hear the siren, remain calm and safely pull over parallel to the right side of the road.
- Stay in your vehicle unless the officer asks you to get out.
- Keep your hands on the steering wheel so the officer can see them.
- Avoid any sudden movements, especially toward the floorboard, rear seat, or

passenger side of the vehicle.

- Wait for the officer to ask you for your license or other documents before you reach for them. Nevada law requires drivers to show their drivers license, registration, and proof of insurance upon request.
- If your documents are out of reach, tell the officer where they are before you reach for them.
- If the stop occurs during darkness, put on your dome or interior lights so the officer can easily see that all is in order.
- You, as the operator, are solely responsible for your vehicle and its occupants. If there are passengers in your vehicle, encourage them to remain quiet and cooperate with the officer's instructions.
- Be honest with the officer. If you really didn't see the stop sign or were unaware of the speed limit, let the officer know.
- Additional officers routinely respond to traffic stops to ensure that all is well. It would be normal to see two or three marked or unmarked units on a routine traffic stop.
- If you are issued a citation, accepting it or signing it is not an admission of guilt. If you feel the instructions or the reasons for the stop are vague or unclear, ask the officer for details.
- Avoid becoming argumentative. Arguing will not change the officer's mind. You will have the opportunity to contest the citation in court.
- The enforcement of traffic laws helps keep everyone safe.

Each situation is unique and police officers must alter their response to fit the circumstance.

Generally, officers:

- Will provide their name upon request.
- If not in uniform, will present proper identification; you may request to examine their credentials to verify they are an officer.
- In unmarked vehicles, will display emergency lights. They will understand if you slowly drive to a well-lit or populated area before stopping your vehicle. If possible you can use a cell phone and call University Police Services dispatch at **702-895-3668** to verify that a University Polices Services Officer is behind you.

- University Police Services will inform a person of the reason for being stopped.
- Will only arrest a person when they have probable cause to believe the person has committed a crime.
- May search the body of a person or search a vehicle, to prevent injury to themselves or another person, or to prevent the disposal or destruction of evidence.

Questions? Compliments? Complaints?

If you have a question about procedures or a complaint about your treatment, contact University Police Services and ask to speak with a supervisor. You may also send a letter of compliment if you feel the officer was particularly helpful in your situation.

Remember: In the interest of public safety, cooperation with the University Police Services is a community responsibility.

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