



# Know Your Rights: Your Guide to Interacting with Law Enforcement

## What you should know:

- Law enforcement officials are trusted members of our community
- Remain calm and respectful when interacting with law enforcement
- Always use respectful language to express your rights
- Be informed about your rights regarding law enforcement searches

*Information sent to families via  
APS School Talk  
Get your copy today!*

*For more information visit us @  
<https://www.apsva.us/departments-of-administration/know-your-rights-when-interacting-with-law-enforcement/>*

### KNOW YOUR RIGHTS: YOUR GUIDE TO INTERACTING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT



*"Keeping our students and staff safe and secure is a top priority of APS. We know that when students feel safe they are more ready to learn, and staff is better able to focus on instruction."  
-Dr. Pat Murphy, Superintendent*

#### WHEN INTERACTING WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT:

- **Remain calm.** You may calmly ask if you are free to leave; if you are, then you may quietly and calmly walk away.
- **If you wish, you have the right to remain silent.** Just tell the officer, "I wish to remain silent." If you are asked to write a statement or sign one, you can refuse by stating, "I do not want to make a statement at this time," or "I wish to remain silent."
- **You may ask to speak to your parent or guardian by saying, "I would like to speak to my parent/guardian."** However, law enforcement can talk to you without a parent/guardian present, or before a parent/guardian has been made aware of an incident.
- **You have the right to ask for a lawyer if you are arrested, and remain silent.**

#### YOU SHOULD NOT:

- Argue, resist or flee.
- Make or sign statements you are uncomfortable with or don't understand.
- Resist or try to harm an officer.

#### IF YOU ARE SEARCHED BY LAW ENFORCEMENT:

- **You do not have to consent to a search.** If you do not wish to consent to a search, politely tell the officer "I do not consent to this search." However, the officer may continue the search.
- Generally, you can be searched by law enforcement only if you are suspected of committing a crime, though there are some exceptions.

*A search is when an officer looks through your belongings, including your phone, to investigate a crime. Voluntarily giving an officer your belongings, including your phone, is considered consenting to a search.*



*Think.  
Breathe.*

**Know Your Rights.**



When interacting with law enforcement, always be respectful. Remember they are here to help and protect us.

Don't be afraid to exercise your rights in a respectful way.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT IS:



- **A part of our community.**
- **Here to help when you need them.**
  - To protect us from threats and danger
- **Trusted members of our community who are a resource to you.**
  - If you are a victim of a crime, law enforcement can assist you and provide valuable information and resources.
  - If you are a witness to a crime, law enforcement can be an important asset to you.
- During criminal investigations where a student is identified as having been involved in a possible criminal incident, law enforcement will strictly adhere to the rights afforded to all people by the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of Virginia and all applicable case law.

*Law enforcement officials are members of our community and serve an important role in our society. They serve to protect, keep us safe, assist, respond to emergencies, and engage communities.*

