

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



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.

*"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 as 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.**





*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.*

## LAW ENFORCEMENT IS:

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- **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.