

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why does the deputy ask for identification first?

A. The deputy is trained to do so. Remember, you have the advantage of knowing with whom you are dealing. The officer doesn't.

Q. When a car is stopped, it appears that the deputy is "sneaking up" on the driver. At night the deputies shine their lights into the car. Why is that?

A. Deputies are trained to minimize their exposure to traffic and to potential danger from within the vehicle. At night, the bright light illuminates the interior of the vehicle which is another safety consideration for the deputy.

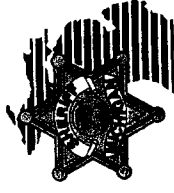
Q. If I've only been pulled over for a traffic offense, why do other police cars show up?

A. It is not uncommon for deputies who are in close proximity to back each other up, even if they aren't requested. This is just routine for safety reasons.

Q. Why does the deputy sit in the car for so long? What are they doing?

A. Technology now allows a deputy to verify your driving status and check your registration directly from the patrol car. While it may seem as if the deputy has you stopped for a long time, in reality, it's only for a few minutes.

***"Pride
&
Excellence"***



The Ingham
County Sheriff's
Office presents:

What Should I Do If I am Stopped By a Sheriff's Deputy?



**A Guide For The
Citizens of
Ingham County**

Visit Us On
The Web:
www.ingham.org

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Sheriff

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We wish to thank the following agencies for their assistance in the development of this brochure:

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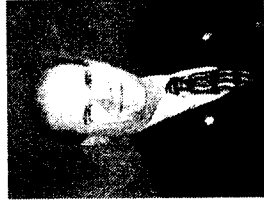
Oxford, Ohio

The New Castle County Police Dept.,

New Castle, Delaware

The Ingham County Sheriff's Office has developed this guide to help you understand why you might be stopped by a deputy and how you can expect to be treated. It's important for you to understand what to expect when a deputy stops you on the street, or when you are driving your car.

We also want you to know that you have the right to contact the Sheriff's Office about an officer's actions at any time. If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us. We want to hear from you!



*Gene L. Wriggelsworth,
Sheriff Ingham County
Sheriff's Office*

What Should I Do If I'm Stopped On The Street?

If a deputy stops you on the street, he or she has a reason. The deputy may have reason to suspect that you are in violation of a law. It's also possible that a crime was committed nearby and the officer thinks that you might be able to help.

In any case, **DON'T RUN** from the deputy. Be calm. **LISTEN**. Find out what the deputy wants. Don't assume that you know the reason that you are being stopped. If it's possible, provide identification when you are asked. It's best if you can be cooperative. When asked questions, please **ANSWER TRUTHFULLY**. If you don't, this will only make matters worse, and you may end up causing further problems for yourself. In any circumstance, you certainly have the right to ask questions of the deputy. But in doing so, please remain calm. **YELLING AND THREATENING** a deputy will only make a situation more difficult.

What Should I Do If I'm Pulled Over In My Car?

If you are driving a car and a deputy signals you to stop, you must pull over.

Stay in your car, and if it's dark, turn on the interior light. Do not leave your car unless directed to do so by the officer.

Keep your hands on the steering wheel. Wait for the deputy to approach your vehicle. The deputy will request your license, registration and proof of insurance. As police officers, we are trained to ask for identification first, and then to provide an explanation for the stop. Please provide the deputy with the required documents. **An Ingham County Sheriff's Deputy will always inform you of the reason that you're being stopped.**

Traffic violations are the most common reason for stopping a vehicle. However, you may also have been stopped for a registration or equipment violation. A criminal investigation may be another reason for being stopped. Your vehicle may match the description of a vehicle that was involved in a crime.

At some point during the stop, the deputy may ask you and any passengers to step from the car. This request may be for safety reasons, or the officer may suspect the presence of illegal contraband in the car. The courts have upheld an officer's right to make such a request. Please comply with this request.

Our actions during a traffic stop are guided by the fact that many police officers are assaulted and killed each year during traffic stops. Our goal is to protect you, the motorist, and to ensure our own safety.

Finally, if you are issued a citation and you disagree, don't argue at the scene. You have the right to contest a citation before a judge or magistrate at a later time. This doesn't require the service of an attorney, and the time involved is often minimal.

I'd Like To Speak With Someone Regarding The Deputy's Actions. What Should I Do?

Your comments are very important to us. If you would like to compliment or complain about a deputy's actions, please:

- Call us at 676-8211 and ask to speak with a supervisor, or
- Write a note or a letter and mail it to:

Ingham County Sheriff's Office
630 N. Cedar
Mason, MI 48854