Your basic rights and responsibilities when interacting with law enforcement

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is dedicated to providing a safe environment for all faculty, staff, and students. Safety is a shared responsibility and the Department of Public Safety's highest priority is to help you develop the tools to safely navigate a large, diverse urban community.

A key element in this effort is to give you guidelines on how to effectively communicate and interact with members of the Brown University Department of Public Safety and other law enforcement agencies. This brochure is designed to increase your understanding of how to respond if you are stopped by an officer.

Resources

University Offices & Contacts

Department of Public Safety
Chief of Police – 863-3103
Professional Standards
Manager – 863-3313
Division of Campus Life
Student Services – 863-4800
Office of Institutional Diversity – 863-4214

Online Information

A Guide to Citizen Comments, Complaints, and Expressions
brown.edu/about/administration/public-safety/forms

This guide offers complete information about the complaint process, links to online complaint inquiry and commendation forms, as well as frequently asked questions.

Public Safety Oversight Committee
brown.edu/about/administration/public-safety/public-safety-oversight-committee

Student Rights and Responsibilities
www.brown.edu/dept/Division_of_Campus_Life/student-rights-and-responsibilities

Office of Institutional Diversity
www.brown.edu/about/administration/institutional-diversity/oversight/discrimination-harassment/policies

Providence Police Department
www.providencepolice.com
Information about the municipal agency and its personnel, to include procedures for submitting citizen complaints.

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What Should I Expect if Stopped by an Officer?  
Refer to the following suggestions when interacting with law enforcement officers. It is important to remember that during an encounter with a law enforcement official you may very well set the tone for the investigation.

Your Basic Rights and Responsibilities when Interacting with Law Enforcement  
As part of our efforts to facilitate safety on campus, it occasionally becomes necessary for Brown University Department of Public Safety (DPS) officers to stop members of the University community and ask for information. Being stopped by an officer does not mean you are a suspect of a crime. To assist DPS in promoting a safe and secure environment, members of the University community are responsible for presenting their identification if it is required.

What Am I Expected to Do?  
• Comply with the officer's directives as soon as possible. Keep your hands visible and turn on your interior light. Always be sure to have your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance while operating a motor vehicle.
• If involved in a motor vehicle stop, slow down and pull over as soon as possible. Turn on your hazard lights and pull over to the side of the road. Never try to address your situation while driving.
• Comply with the officer's directives and identify yourself by presenting university identification.
• Followed in a motor vehicle stop, slow down and pull over as soon as possible. Fold down your hazard lights and turn on your interior light. Always be sure to have your driver's license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance while operating a motor vehicle.
• The officer to identify himself/herself when being questioned.
• The officer to state his/her name and provide a badge number and the unit number.
• The officer to provide an explanation of the reason for the stop as soon as possible.
• The officer to offer a “Employee Identification Card” policy.

What Are My Responsibilities?  
Students  
As a student at Brown University, you are expected to abide by Rhode Island state law, and to follow Brown University policies. We anticipate that you will have positive experiences when dealing with Brown University officers; however, we feel it is helpful for you to have suggested procedures to follow. Department of Public Safety officers are authorized to enforce state law and university rules and regulations.

At Brown University, there is a policy within the Code of Student Conduct that covers interactions with officers, including the responsibility you have to present your identification when requested by a law enforcement official. If you do not present your identification when requested by an officer, you can be charged through the ORS of Student Life, Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures in accordance with Offense V. Failing to comply with the proper directive(s) of a University official, including refusing to identify oneself or refusing to present University identification. The student’s responsible staff member, including members of the Department of Public Safety.

Faculty/Staff  
The Brown University Department of Public Safety’s policy states that University employees explaining the responsibilities for the use of the Brown Employee Identification Card.

Accused in this policy, the University provided a staff with a “Brown Card” employee identification card. Employees with valid Brown Cards are entitled to use a variety of campus services limited to Brown affiliates (e.g., libraries, athletics facilities). The Brown Card remains the property of Brown University. It is entregated to each staff member (while employing the University) and retired employees.

The Brown Card must be presented when seeking access or privileges determined through the Brown University One Card System or upon request of a University official.

Interactions with Law Enforcement at your off-campus residence  
Searches of residences should occur with a warrant in hand. They may seek the immediate location without a warrant whenever they arrest an individual, or in response to report of a crime in progress. The police must have a warrant signed by a judge to search your home, and you must be allowed to see and make a copy of the warrant. If it is an arrest warrant, look to make sure that there are the right person. If the warrant is proper on its face, you must step aside and let the police enter your home.