

Filming the police: Tips for the Public

Everyone has the right to film and photograph police officers in public. Whether you are using your camera to record a police interaction or you are a police officer trying to do your job safely and effectively, you should be polite, respectful, and calm. The list below reflects legal rights and practical tips that we hope will encourage civil interactions, not confrontations.

I want to film a police interaction. What should I do?

Dos:

- Do take an additional step back if asked to move further away.
- Do demonstrate that you are not a threat by openly holding the camera without any sudden or aggressive movements.
- Do cease any activity that an officer determines is interfering in a legitimate law enforcement operation.
- Do calmly ask the officer to state a basis for their actions if they try to detain you or order you to stop filming.

Don'ts:

- Don't interfere with the officer doing his or her job or physically get in the officer's way
- Don't insult or threaten officers or act aggressively, make any sudden movements, or hold your camera up like a gun.
- Don't record secretly. Be respectful of the dignity of all those involved in the police interaction.
- Don't resist arrest or run.