



# Filming the Police

## Tips for Police Officers and Those Who Film Them

Everyone has the right to film and photograph police officers in public (absent extraordinary circumstances). At the same time, everyone should perform their roles respectfully. 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. Here are some practical tips that we hope will encourage civil interactions, not confrontations.

## I am a *police officer* and I see someone recording me. What should I do?

### Do

**Do** treat everyone with courtesy and respect.

**Do** verbally acknowledge the public's right to film/photograph.

**Do** recognize that photographers may not be under an obligation to share their footage, though you may request it.

### Don't

**Don't** tell a photographer to stop recording or leave the area entirely; if they are interfering with your job, ask them to back up.

**Don't** detain someone for filming or photographing when they have committed no articulable crime.

**Don't** destroy footage or threaten to do so.

**Don't** ask a photographer to back up unless he or she is interfering with your ability to do your job.



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## **I am a *member of the public* and I want to film a police interaction. What should I do?**

### **Do**

**Do** treat everyone with courtesy and respect.

**Do** step back if directed.

**Do** demonstrate you are not a threat by holding the camera without any sudden or aggressive movements.

**Do** calmly ask the officers to state a basis for their actions if they try to detain you.

### **Don't**

**Don't** distract or interfere with the officers doing their job or physically get in the officers' way.

**Don't** insult or threaten officers, act aggressively, or make any sudden movements.

**Don't** record secretly. This might upset people around you or police officers, and the legality of doing so is unclear.

**Don't** resist arrest or run.