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## Stopping for a Marked Police Car

For the majority of citizens, their first encounter with a police officer is through a traffic stop. Getting pulled over by an officer can be a stressful experience. Understanding what is expected reduces anxiety and fear and improves communication.

**Red and blue lights and/or siren mean pull over safely out of the flow of traffic. Use your turn signal so your movements are predictable.**

**Roll down your window and turn off your radio** so you can effectively communicate with the officer.

**If you are stopped at night, assist the officer by turning on the vehicle's interior light.** The officer may use a bright spotlight or a flashlight to illuminate the interior of the car.

**Don't be surprised if a second officer arrives.** This is a common practice for officer safety.

**Wait until the officer asks before displaying your driver's license and vehicle registration. Keep your seat belt buckled, and avoid sudden movement.** Maryland law requires drivers to display their license and vehicle registration upon demand of a uniformed officer. The officer may request identification from your passengers, as well. Ask passengers to remain calm and comply with the officers instructions.

**Remain in your vehicle, and keep your hands visible to the officer. Follow the officer's instructions.** It is reasonable and legal for an officer to require that you and your passengers get out of the vehicle, but do not get out until he or she asks.

**You may ask questions and provide an explanation for your actions, but avoid arguing with the officer.** The officer did not write the laws, establish the speed limit or set the fine. The appropriate time to present your argument is at traffic court.

**If you are issued a citation, you will be asked to sign it.** Signing is not an admission of guilt but an acknowledgment that you received the citation. Do not read the citation on the side of the road. After you are dismissed by the officer, safely move back into the travel portion of the road to reduce the risk of a collision.

*Howard County police are dedicated to safeguarding our roadways and reducing conditions that endanger citizens. Remember that obeying the speed limit and always wearing your seatbelt reduces the risk of a collision, personal injury or being stopped for a violation. Be safe!*

