



Building trust between law enforcement and the communities they protect is critical to creating a safe environment for all residents. When immigrants and refugees do not trust or believe they are afforded the protections of law enforcement, not only do local crimes go unreported, but new arrivals never fully feel a part of their community.

Fostering positive relationships, breaking preconceived notions, and clarifying the duties and responsibilities of local law enforcement are imperative for increasing overall public safety, which is why the City of Atlanta is committed to expanding services and protections for our immigrants and refugees. For example, the City of Atlanta has taken steps such as increasing multicultural and multilingual support within the Atlanta Police Department and addressing immigration services assistance fraud (“notario fraud”) to earn the trust of our new arrivals and create a safer community for all Atlantans.



welcomingatlanta@atlantaga.gov

311 is Atlanta’s primary phone number for government information and non-emergency services.



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This information is intended to help you understand your rights and responsibilities during interactions with law enforcement.



Your Rights and Responsibilities



The mission of the Atlanta Police Department is to create a safer Atlanta by reducing crime, ensuring the safety of our citizens and building trust in partnership with our community.

Your Rights and Responsibilities

40-5-20. License required

(a) No person, except those expressly exempted in this chapter or in Chapter 6 of this title, shall drive any motor vehicle upon a highway in this state unless such person has a valid driver's license under this chapter for the type or class of vehicle being driven. Any person who is a resident of this state for **30 days** shall obtain a Georgia driver's license before operating a motor vehicle in this state. Before the end of the 30 days, you can drive with a **VALID** out-of-state driver's license.

40-5-21. Exemptions generally

- (2) A nonresident with a valid driver's license from his or her place of origin and a international driving permit.
- (10) Any migrant farm worker who works in this state less than 90 days in any calendar year and who possesses a valid driver's license issued by another state.



40-5-29. License to be carried and exhibited on demand

(a) Every licensee shall have his or her driver's license in his or her immediate possession at all times when operating a motor vehicle.

(b) Every licensee shall display his or her license upon the demand of a law enforcement officer. A refusal to comply with such demand not only shall constitute a violation of this subsection but shall also give rise to a presumption of a violation of subsection (a) of this Code section and of Code Section 40-5-20.

WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF A POLICE OFFICER WANTS ME TO SIGN A CITATION OR TICKET AND I REFUSE?

The traffic ticket contains an actual notice to you of a pending court date at which you must appear. By signing the ticket, you are providing an acknowledgment of receipt of the "notice to appear." Since the officer is charging you with a violation of law, he could take you into custody. By signing the traffic ticket, you avoid being taken into custody at that time, and are "released on your own recognizance" pending the court date. By signing the traffic ticket, you remain free and retain the right to show up at the hearing to contest the issuance of the citation or summons.

Signing the ticket *IS NOT* an admission of guilt.

If you refuse to sign, you will be arrested.

What To Do if

You Are Pulled Over

After you've pulled over to a safe spot, you might want to show the officer a few other token courtesies. At this point, you have little to lose and perhaps something to gain.

First off, roll down your window all the way. You may also want to turn off the engine, place your hands on the steering wheel, and, if it's dark, turn on your interior light. This will tend to allay any fears the officer may have. (After all, police officers are killed every day in such "ordinary" traffic-stop situations, and the officer's approach to the vehicle is potentially the most dangerous part for him/her.)

Don't start rummaging through your back pocket for your wallet and license, or in your glove compartment for your registration, until the officer asks you for them. For all the officer knows, you could be reaching for a gun.

If you are at all concerned that the person who stopped you is not actually a police officer (for example, if the car that pulled you over is unmarked), you should ask to see the officer's photo identification along with his badge. If you still have doubts, you can ask that the officer call a supervisor to the scene or you can request that you be allowed to follow the officer to a police station.

You can also call 9-1-1 to find out if you are being pulled over by a real police officer.

One of the most important things to remember is this:

DO NOT GET OUT OF YOUR CAR unless you are told to do so by the police officer.