

YOUR RIGHTS AT CHECKPOINTS AT FERRY TERMINALS

Officers of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Agency (CBP) periodically have set up temporary checkpoints at the ferry terminal for persons getting off ferries. Typically the agents ask foot passengers, drivers and vehicle passengers about their citizenship or residency.

If people respond that they were born in the United States, officials generally wave them through the checkpoint. People who state that they were born outside the United States, or that they are not U.S. citizens, are questioned further.

- U.S. citizens are not required to carry documents proving their citizenship, unless they are leaving the United States.
- Non-citizens age 18 or older are required to carry their immigration documents at all times. A non-citizen can be arrested for failure to show the documents at the request of a Customs agent.
- No one, citizen or non-citizen, is obliged to answer questions by Customs and Border Patrol agents. It is not a crime to remain silent; however, it may cause a delay in your travel.
- Even a non-citizen who is not carrying immigration papers has the right to remain silent. Whatever you say to a government agent may be used against you. A non-citizen who is detained can request to speak with an attorney before answering questions; however, the government is not required to provide one.
- If you are a driver in a car and a law enforcement agent demands to see your driver's license, vehicle registration, or proof of insurance, you must show these.
- You are always required to follow lawful orders from a law enforcement official, including a Customs agent.



- Agents can detain a car, driver and passengers if they have reasonable suspicion to believe a crime or traffic infraction has been committed. Depending on circumstance, the detention could last from several minutes to several hours. Detentions do not necessarily constitute an arrest. If you are detained, it is a good idea to note the names of the agents involved, and the beginning and end times of the detention.

For advice about a specific legal problem, please contact an attorney.

For information regarding immigrant rights, call the Northwest Immigrants' Rights Project at 1-800-445-5771.

For information about your rights when contacted by law enforcement, go to www.aclu-wa.org. If you believe you have been unlawfully detained or otherwise had your rights violated, call the ACLU of Washington complaint and referral line at 206-624-2180.

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Project

