

## **IF YOU ARE STOPPED BY THE POLICE ON THE STREET...**

Most of the problems that you may have with the police can be avoided at the time they first stop and talk with you. Remember, they think they have a reason (reasonable suspicion or probable cause) to stop and ask you some questions.

When the officer(s) approaches you, you should stop and remain cool and calm. There are many factors that a police officer will take into consideration when he or she is observing you and thinks you **may be** breaking the law or doing something suspicious. Every situation is different and the officer will usually consider the following factors:

1. Do you appear to be running away and a crime has just been reported in the area?
2. Are you hanging around with some people who are under police investigation for one thing or another?
3. Are you at or near where a crime has just been reported?
4. Are you somewhere where the officer thinks people have no reason to be at that time of day or night and your presence is suspicious, and you act even more suspiciously when the officer sees that you have spotted him or her?
5. The officer thinks that you may have stolen property in your possession.
6. The officer legally stops you on the street or while driving in your car and you refuse to answer simple questions, give false or evasive answers or make contradicting statements.
7. Someone has pointed you out as a possible suspect involved in a crime.
8. Are you hanging around places and people who are using or selling drugs?
9. Are you using obscene language, acting disorderly, or drunk and/or high in a public place?

While all of these things are taken into consideration by the officer in determining whether he or she should stop you or ask you more questions, remember the officer has the right and the obligation to find out what is going on. If the officer feels, after talking to you, that you have committed a crime and places you under arrest, he or she will inform you that, you have the right to remain silent; anything you say can and will be used against you in court; you have the right to talk to a lawyer for advice before you answer any questions and to have a lawyer with you during questioning; if you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed for you before any questioning if you wish. If you understand your rights, and are you willing to answer some questions, or make a statement. If you don't want to talk after you have been informed of your rights, then you **DO NOT** have to.