Traffic stops can be a stressful event

There are several reasons why you might be stopped by the police:

- You may have committed a traffic violation
- You may fit the description of a suspect
- You may have witnessed a crime
- The officer may think you need help or are otherwise at risk

If you are stopped by the police while driving, you may feel confused, anxious or even angry. These are natural feelings, but keep in mind that traffic stops are also stressful for the police officer. Nationally many officers are injured or killed while making a “routine” traffic stop.

In this brochure, we offer some general tips and advice for the motorist that can help make a traffic stop safer and less stressful for you AND the police officer.

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WHY DO THE POLICE STOP PEOPLE?

The quality of life throughout the City of Tacoma is heavily dependent upon the free movement of people and vehicles. The Tacoma Police Department has a major share of responsibility for achieving and maintaining that degree of order necessary to make this free movement possible.

Our primary objective in the movement of people and vehicles is a concern for public and officer safety.

Traffic enforcement is one of the many tasks performed by Tacoma police officers, but for some citizens, it can be an emotionally traumatic experience. In many cases, this is the only contact a person may have with a law enforcement officer.

The officers of the Tacoma Police Department are aware of these conditions and attempt to make each traffic stop and contact educational.

IN THE INTEREST OF PUBLIC SAFETY, COOPERATION WITH THE POLICE IS A COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY.