

Real Rights: young people engaging with law enforcement

 Denmark



Developed by Baker McKenzie and the Global Initiative on Justice with Children, Real Rights provides young people – especially young people in vulnerable populations – with legal information for when children encounter police in public settings. Thanks to the pro bono work of over 1,500 volunteer professionals, this database provides answers for children in contact with the police from initial contact to searches and questioning.

Rights:

What rights do I have when I encounter law enforcement?

Question Asked

- Stopped By The Police On The Street, Now What?
- When Can Police Search You and Your Surroundings?
- Reasons Police May Detain or Arrest You
- The Difference Between Police TELLING Me What To Do And ASKING Me To Do Something
- Do Police Need A Warrant To Arrest You?
- How Do You Know If You Are Under Arrest?
- What To Do After Being Warned of Your Rights
- Police Questioning You
- How do I Contact A Lawyer and When?
- Do Police Always Have To Tell The Truth?
- How Do I Make A Complaint If I Have Questions or Feel My Rights Have Been Violated?
- What If I Feel I Was A Victim of Discrimination or Racism?
- How can I respond to circumstances involving discrimination?
- What Can You Do If The Police Perform an Improper Search? Or I Was Improperly Detained?

Stopped by the police on the street, now what?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

- Stay calm. It is not a good idea to run. Speak carefully and clearly. Anything you say can be used against you in a court of law.
- It is not a good idea to touch the officers. Keep your hands where the police can see them.
- It is not a good idea to resist, even if you're innocent or if you think the police are acting unfairly or unlawfully.

Police Act (retsinformation.dk) Police Act, Section 5

Criminal law (retsinformation.dk) Criminal Code, Section 119

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Can the police arrest you for refusing to answer questions?

You only have to tell the police your:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- address; and
- CPR number (personal identity number).

If you do not have a CPR number, you must tell the police your nationality. You may also be required to say when and how you entered Denmark.

You do not need to say anything else; Denmark has a clear right that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

There is a general requirement of probable cause. However, in the past "stop and search zones" have been set up in parts of Copenhagen which allowed police to search people for weapons without probable cause.

[The Local](#)

What if the officers do not identify themselves?

You should ask them. The officers are obligated to identify themselves to residents if requested but can opt to give their ID number rather than their name. This is a recent development as in 2016, the Danish National Police (Rigspolitiet) makes it an obligation for the officers to identify themselves.

Danish cops wear ID badges for first time since 1918 (thelocal.dk)

What if an officer just begins speaking to me but does not order me to do anything?

You must state your name, address and date of birth to the police. You do not have to say anything else. The police must inform you of these rights before the interview.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

If you don't speak the local language, you have the right to an interpreter who can interpret to and from your own language. The police will provide the interpreter, and you do not have to say anything until the interpreter arrives.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1450446951753&uri=CELEX:32010L0064> Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings

What if the officer is not in uniform or identified as an officers but I think it is one?

You should ask them. The officers are obligated to identify themselves to residents if requested but can opt to give their ID number rather than their name. This is a recent development as in 2016, the Danish National Police (Rigspolitiet) makes it an obligation for the officers to identify themselves.

Danish cops wear ID badges for first time since 1918 (thelocal.dk)

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Can I tell police I do not want to speak without a lawyer?

Yes. You have the right to speak to a lawyer of your own choice before you decide whether you will agree to a police interview. If you don't know a lawyer, the police will find one for you. Your lawyer has the right to be present during the interview but may not advise you on how to answer specific questions.

The Police have a duty to inform you of the fact that you are entitled to have an attorney present and that you have the right to remain silent. A suspect is only obliged to inform the police of your identity, that is stating your name, your CPR number (your personal identity number) and your address. You are not obliged to provide any other information. If you do not have a Danish CPR number, you must as a minimum state your birthdate and possibly your nationality. In certain situations, you may also be obliged to state when and how you have entered Denmark.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

If I sit down, am I resisting?

It depends. Generally, an arrest cannot be made if the circumstances of your actions are disproportionate to the act of stopping or arresting you, so merely sitting down would not give rise to an arrest in most cases. However, if you are at a protest or public rally, the police may order the crowd to dissolve only if the assembly poses a danger to the public peace or in order to prevent a riot. In these cases, the police have broader authority to arrest those present at the scene.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750

Police Act (retsinformation.dk) Police Act, Section 8

If I am stopped in a group, and some kids run, can I run?

No, this may be treated as obstruction to the police authority and is a criminal offense.

Criminal law (retsinformation.dk) Criminal Code, Section 119

Can I tell others (siblings, for example) to run?

No, this may be treated as obstruction to the police authority and is a criminal offense.

Criminal law (retsinformation.dk) Criminal Code, Section 119

If the officer's language is not my first language, can I tell them without waiving my rights?

If you don't speak the local language, you have the right to an interpreter who can interpret to and from your own language. The police will provide the interpreter, and you do not have to say anything until the interpreter arrives.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage European Justice - An official website of the European Union

You must state your name, address and date of birth to the police. You do not have to say anything else. The police must inform you of these rights before the interview. It depends on your case and the gravity of the charges whether it would be favorable to your case that you make a statement to the police. If you don't know whether you should answer questions, you should ask your lawyer.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) Section 750, 752

If I did not do anything, can they stop me?

Yes, they can. If the police have probable cause and think you may pose a threat to public order, even if they are wrong.

Police Act ([retsinformation.dk](https://www.retsinformation.dk)) Police Act, Section 5

When can police search you and your surroundings?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

- The police can inspect a person's body and examine clothing and other objects, including vehicles, in his or her possession when he or she is suspected of being in possession of objects intended to disturb public order or intended to endanger the safety of individuals or the public.
- Police Act ([retsinformation.dk](https://www.retsinformation.dk)) Police Act, Section 5

What if a police officer wants to search my phone?

The police may check your mobile phone to find your telephone number and the IMEI number of your telephone on the following conditions:

The police have good reason to suspect that you have committed a prosecutable offence (i.e. broken the law or committed a crime where the action may lead to a hearing in court).

The search is assumed to be very important to the investigation the police are working on.

The Court of Justice confirms that EU law precludes the general and indiscriminate retention of traffic and location data, except in the case of a serious threat to national security ([european.eu](https://european-courts.eu)) Court of Justice of the European Union

<https://www.retsinformation.dk/eli/lt/2017/410> Law Enforcement Act, Section 1

European e-Justice Portal - Defendants (criminal proceedings) ([european.eu](https://european-courts.eu)) European Justice - An official website of the European Union

What if a police officer asks me for my password to my phone?

A recent Danish Supreme Court ruling found that judicial oversight isn't always required when accessing suspects' phones. It also ruled that forcing a suspect's thumb onto their phone to gain access without a judge's authorization was within the scope of the law.

<https://www.comparitech.com/blog/vpn-privacy/police-cell-phone-spying/>

What if they tell me to give them my password or other access to my phone?

A recent Danish Supreme Court ruling found that judicial oversight isn't always required when accessing suspects' phones. It also ruled that forcing a suspect's thumb onto their phone to gain access without a judge's authorization was within the scope of the law.

<https://www.comparitech.com/blog/vpn-privacy/police-cell-phone-spying/>

Do I have to give them my device password if they demand it from me if I am not under arrest? What if they just ask for it?

A recent Danish Supreme Court ruling found that judicial oversight isn't always required when accessing suspects' phones. It also ruled that forcing a suspect's thumb onto their phone to gain access without a judge's authorization was within the scope of the law.

What tools can police use to search me? What technology?(Facial recognition, hidden cameras, finger print searches, etc.)

The police may take your fingerprints on the following conditions:

- You are suspected of having committed an offence and the measure is necessary for the police investigation.
- The police have good reason to suspect that you have committed an offence for which you may be sentenced to imprisonment for 18 months or more.

The police may take a DNA sample or blood sample from you on the following conditions:

- There are reasonable grounds to suspect that you have committed an offence for which you may be sentenced to imprisonment for 18 months or more, and the measure is considered to be very important to the investigation.
- A blood sample may be taken if alcohol or drug intake is an element of the crime of which you are suspected.

The police decide whether to take your fingerprints, DNA and blood samples. It does not require a court decision.

The police may keep your fingerprints and DNA samples but must destroy them after a certain period of time.

Source: https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

Can they search my backpack or other item I am carrying?

Yes, the police can examine any of your belongings if you are suspected of being in possession of objects intended to disturb public order or intended to endanger the safety of individuals or the public.

Police Act (retsinformation.dk) Police Act, Section 5

Can they take my picture or record me?

The police may take your fingerprints and a photo of you on the following conditions:

- You are suspected of having committed an offence and the measure is necessary for the police investigation.
- The police have good reason to suspect that you have committed an offence for which you may be sentenced to imprisonment for 18 months or more.

The police decide whether to take a photo of you. It does not require a court decision.

However, if the prosecution drops the case, or if you are acquitted, the police must destroy their photo of you. The police may keep your fingerprints and DNA samples but must destroy them after a certain period of time.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

Can they ask me where I am going and why?

They can but you don't have to answer.

Denmark has a clear right that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

Reasons police may Detain or Arrest you

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

The police may arrest you because they suspect you of committing (or having committed) a violation of the law, or if they suspect that you currently have evidence of a crime.

Sometimes police have a warrant for an arrest. You should be clear on what kind of warrant is being presented to you if that is the case.

It is a good idea to review any paper from police/warrant carefully, to ensure you understand what exactly is covered.

If arrested, you may be charged with a felony for a more serious crime (with potential jail time of one year or more), a misdemeanor for a less serious crime (with jail time of less than one year) or a violation.

If the police arrest you, they also have the right to search you. Anything found during this search may be used as evidence against you.

European e-Justice Portal - Defendants (criminal proceedings) (europa.eu) European Justice - An official website of the European Union

What if I did not do anything illegal, must I speak with the police and answer questions?

No, you don't have to. Denmark has a clear right that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

What if they tell me something they are investigating that is wrong? Must I correct them?

No, you don't have to. Denmark has a clear right that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

What if an officer just begins speaking to me but does not order me to do anything?

You don't have to talk to the officer. Denmark has a clear right that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

What is the legal difference between talking to them if they do not tell me I am under arrest, versus after they inform me that I am under arrest?

You don't have to talk to the police either before or after arrest. You can always ask the police if you are under arrest and they must tell you. If you are under arrest, you will not be free to leave, but you still don't need to tell the police anything other than your:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- address; and
- CPR number (personal identity number).

If you do not have a CPR number, you must tell the police your nationality. You may also be required to say when and how you entered Denmark.

You do not need to say anything else; Denmark has a clear right that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

What if I live in the "ghetto"?

Denmark has introduced a controversial "Ghetto Package" or "Ghetto Plan"; measures designed to eliminate all "ghettos" by 2030.

Each year, the Ministry of Transport, Building and Housing publishes a list of "ghettos", being neighborhoods (including a number in Copenhagen) that satisfy certain criteria. One such criteria is that over 50% percentage of residents are non-Western immigrants and their descendants i.e. ethnicity of residents is a key factor as to whether an area is classified as a "ghetto" or not.

One of the measures is tougher penalties for crimes committed in "ghettos" i.e. a tightened penalty zone. For example, crimes such as vandalism or theft will be punished twice as harshly if they occur within "ghetto" boundaries as opposed to outside them. For crimes that already have high penalties, the punishment will be increased by one third. If a crime is normally punished with a fine, imprisonment can be levied if it occurs inside a "ghetto".

The legality of the "Ghetto Package" is being challenged in the Danish courts.

[Ghetto Package \(Danish\)](#)

[United Nations Human Rights](#)

[European Website on Integration](#)

[Time](#)

The difference between police TELLING me what to do and ASKING me to do something.

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

There is no significant difference. You have the right to remain silent at all times. If the police order you to do anything, you should ask if you are under arrest or if they have a warrant. If

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not, you are free to not do the thing they asked. Even if you are under arrest, you still have the right to remain silent.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752.

What is the difference between the police deciding to search me or my belongings (phone, person, backpack) and me agreeing to the search?

The police can search you if you consent to their search, without a warrant. If you do not consent to the search, the police can only search you without a warrant in certain emergency circumstances and with compelling reasons.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice- An official website of the European Union

What if they tell me to give them information versus them asking and me providing answers voluntarily?

You have the right to remain silent at all stages of criminal investigation and proceedings. If you provide anything voluntarily, the information could be used against you.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752.

Do police need a warrant to arrest you?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

- No. Police officers can legally arrest you without a warrant in several circumstances:
 - You can be arrested when the police have reason to suspect that you have committed a criminal offence, if arrest is necessary to prevent you from committing other criminal offences, to ensure your presence or to ensure that you do not speak to others. https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 - An official website of the European Union.

If I did not do anything, can they stop me?

Yes, they can. If the police have probable cause and think you may pose a threat to public order, even if they are wrong.

Police Act (retsinformation.dk) Police Act, Section 5

Can I ask for the reason they stopped me?

Yes, before questioning you, they must expressly tell you the potential charge(s) on you.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 752

Can I advocate for another young person stopped by police if we are stopped together?

It is generally not a good idea if you are not a lawyer. you may say something harmful to you or your friend without realizing it. The best way to advocate for anyone is to ask a lawyer to do this.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

If I think the stop is unjustified, what can I do?

You should not run or resist. You may file a complaint later. See more in the complaint section below.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

Can I get the officer's identifying information for a future complaint?

Yes, you can. The officers are obligated to identify themselves to residents if requested but can opt to give their ID number rather than their name. This is a recent development as in 2016, the Danish National Police (Rigspolitiet) makes it an obligation for the officers to identify themselves.

Danish cops wear ID badges for first time since 1918 (thelocal.dk)

How do you know if you are under arrest?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

- You are under police custody if you do not feel free to leave an officer's presence, or if a reasonable person in your shoes would not feel free to leave.
- If the following happens, you are likely under arrest under the law:
 - an officer handcuffs you;
 - an officer forcibly holds you down;
 - an officer puts you into the back seat of a police car; or
 - an officer warns you about your rights.
 - An officer only has to warn you of your rights before the police question you. This means an officer can arrest you before warning you of your rights.

An arrest without rights warnings is still a valid arrest; it just may mean that evidence collected from it is not admissible in court later.

The police must inform the arrested person of the charge and the time of arrest as soon as possible.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 758

What if I do not know if I am under arrest?

You can always ask the police if you are under arrest. The police must inform the arrested person of the charge and the time of arrest as soon as possible.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 758

What is the difference between detention and arrest?

There is no significant difference between these two in Denmark.

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I am handcuffed, am I arrested?

Likely, but not necessarily. You can always ask the police if you are under arrest. The police must inform the arrested person of the charge and the time of arrest as soon as possible.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 758

If my liberty is restricted, am I under arrest?

Likely, but not necessarily. You can always ask the police if you are under arrest. The police must inform the arrested person of the charge and the time of arrest as soon as possible.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 758

How long can I be held under arrest for?

You must be released as soon as the reason for your arrest no longer applies.

If you have not been released within 24 hours, you must be brought before a court (at a preliminary statutory hearing so that a judge can decide whether you should be released, whether your arrest should be extended (which is possible for up to 3 x 24 hours - 3 days), or whether you should be held in custody.

If the judge who hears the case at the preliminary statutory hearing finds that the evidence produced is inadequate for deciding whether you should be held in custody, your arrest may be extended for 3 x 24 hours (3 days) from the time when the first hearing ended.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 760

What to do after being warned of your rights?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

- You can use your right to remain silent or any of your other rights (e.g., the right to an attorney) by saying that you want to use that right.
- You are also able to waive your rights (that is, not use them) by, for example, saying 'Yes, I understand my rights but I am ready to talk to you.' This is not a good idea without a lawyer present. Make sure you know what you're doing in giving up your rights.
- Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 752

How do things change if I am read my rights by police?

When arrested, the police must inform you of the accusations made against you (i.e. the sections of law that you are alleged to have broken) and the exact time of your arrest.

The police must also inform you of your right to have a lawyer present during questioning, and your right to remain silent. This information is often given orally.

If you are under arrest, obviously you cannot just walk away freely, but you can always remain silent.

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union.

Does it matter where I am when the police read me my rights? (street, station, police car, etc.)

There is no legal difference as to where you are read the rights.

Police questioning you

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

Am I required to make a statement?

You are not required to make a statement, answer police questions or participate in a police investigation, and you never have to go anywhere with the police unless they have arrested you.

If police have arrested you and if you are under the age of 18, police are required to immediately notify your parent, caretaker or legal guardian.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 730

You have the right to speak to a lawyer of your own choice before you decide whether you will agree to a police interview. Helpful links to find a lawyer and/or legal advice:

- Copenhagen Legal Aid <https://www.copenhagenlegalaid.com/front-page>
- Daniel Bar Association and Law Society ('Advokatsamfundet') <https://www.advokatsamfundet.dk/Service/English.aspx>

If you do not know a lawyer, the police will find one for you (a public defender if you are unable to pay for a private lawyer).

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

Must police notify my guardian?

Normally, you will be allowed to inform a member of your family about your arrest. However, if the police think that your family will interfere with their investigation, you will not be allowed to.

If the police have arrested you and you are under the age of 18, the police must immediately notify your parent, caretaker or legal guardian.

If you are not a Danish national, you have the right to contact your embassy or consulate, and to inform them of your arrest. You can ask the police to help you contact the embassy.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 730

https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

The age of criminal responsibility is 15. If you are under the age of 15, you will be dealt with by social welfare authorities. If you are 15 and older, you will be dealt with in regular criminal

courts under the same laws, procedures (with a few exceptions), and circumstances as adults.

If you are between the age of 15-18, the Administration of Justice Act provides for the possibility of withdrawing the charge of a criminal offence.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 821

Must I confess?

No. You are only obliged to tell the police your:

- full name;
- date of birth;
- address; and
- CPR number (personal identity number).

If you do not have a CPR number, you must state your nationality. You may also be required to state when and how you entered Denmark.

You do not need to say anything else; Denmark has a clear right to that you can remain silent, and the police should inform you of that right. The police report must specifically state that you were informed of this right. For example, you are not required to make a statement, answer the police's questions, or participate in a police investigation.

If you have said anything that may harm your case, the police may use the information in their investigations. As a general rule, a police report is not evidence and cannot be used against you at trial on its own. The prosecutor may ask questions about details of the report. Changing your statement may harm your credibility.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 750, 752

What adults can I ask to be with me?

If the police have arrested you and you are under the age of 18, the police must immediately notify your parent, caretaker or legal guardian. And of course, you can always ask your lawyer to be with you.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 730

Who do police have to contact if I am a legal minor?

If the police have arrested you and you are under the age of 18, the police must immediately notify your parent, caretaker or legal guardian.

Code of Civil Procedure (retsinformation.dk) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 730

What other measure may the police take in order to investigate the crime?

The police may be able to use other "intrusive measures". They may decide to:

- take your fingerprints;
- search your outer clothing;
- take a photo of you;
- take a DNA sample;

- take a blood sample;
- search your mobile phone / car; and/or
- search your home.

The police may take your fingerprints, search your outer clothing, and take a photo of you if:

- you are suspected of having committed an offence and it is necessary for the police investigation; and
- the police have good reason to suspect that you have committed an offence for which you may be sentenced to imprisonment for 18 months or more.

The police may take a DNA or blood sample from you if:

- there are reasonable grounds to suspect that you have committed an offence for which you may be sentenced to imprisonment for 18 months or more, and the need for your DNA / Blood sample is considered to be very important to the investigation; and
- a blood sample may be taken if alcohol or drug intake is an element of the crime of which you are suspected.

The police may search your mobile phone (to find your telephone number and the IMEI number of your phone) and search your car if:

- they have good reason to suspect that you have committed a prosecutable offence; and
- the search is assumed to be very important to the investigation.

The police may search your home if:

- they have good reason to suspect that you have committed an offence that can be prosecuted;
- the search is considered to be very important to the investigation;
- the offence may lead to imprisonment; and
- The police [reasonably] believe that they are likely to find evidence relating to the crime or objects that the police should seize for other reasons.

The court decides whether your home may be searched. However, if there is reason to fear that evidence may disappear if the search is not conducted immediately, the police may conduct the search without having obtained a search warrant first. The search must then be brought before the court within 24 hours after it has been conducted.

Source: https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-_169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

What happens to my photo / fingerprints / DNA sample if the case against me is dropped?

If the prosecution drops the case, or if you are found not guilty, the police must destroy their photo of you.

The police may keep your fingerprints and DNA samples but must destroy them after a certain period of time.

Source: https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-_169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

How do I contact a lawyer and when?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

- You should always contact a lawyer before making any statements to anyone in a criminal case or investigation.
- This applies even if you are told that (i) police officers only want to question you and/or (ii) you are only a witness.
- While you do have to wait until you attend court to get a lawyer appointed if you cannot afford your own lawyer, you should still ask for a lawyer as soon as you are questioned or arrested by the police. If you are arrested, you have the right to remain silent and to not speak until your lawyer is present.

Source: https://e-justice.europa.eu/content_rights_of_defendants_in_criminal_proceedings_-_169-DK-en.do?clang=en&idSubpage=2 European Justice - An official website of the European Union

What if I am just a witness?

You should always contact a lawyer before making any statements to anyone in a criminal case or investigation.

This applies even if you are told that (i) police officers only want to question you and/or (ii) you are only a witness.

Do police always have to tell the truth?

Proposed Information

- No. There is no law forcing the police to tell you the truth in Denmark. The police may lie to you during the course of an investigation, including lying about the strength of the case they have against you and particular evidence they have in their possession.
- Sometimes police will lie to try and get you to talk more.

Can the police lie to me?

Yes, the police may lie to you during the course of an investigation, including lying about the strength of the case they have against you and particular evidence they have in their possession. There is no law forcing the police to tell you the truth in Denmark.

Sometimes police will lie to try and get you to talk more.

Do I have to tell the police the truth?

If you decide to talk to the police, you should not lie to the police. That might be seen as an obstruction to justice and is a criminal offense. However, remember that you can always remain silent.

Criminal law (retsinformation.dk) Criminal Code, Section 119

How do I make a complaint if I have questions or feel my rights have been violated?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

Remedies:

- You can make a complaint about the police to the Police Complaints Authority if you feel the police have acted in a bad manner.
- For instance, if you think the police:
 - have spoken rudely or acted inappropriately,
 - were too rough when arresting a suspect,
 - have abused their powers.

Your complaint may concern an incident involving yourself or an incident where you were a bystander. You may also make a complaint on behalf of somebody else.

If you think that the police have committed an offence in the course of their duties, you can report it to the Police Complaints Authority.

The link to file a complaint: How to make a complaint | [politiklagemyndigheden](#)

Code of Civil Procedure ([retsinformation.dk](#)) The Administration of Justice Act, Section 118

What if I feel I was a victim of discrimination or racism?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

Remedies:

- If you believe you are discriminated or treated in a racist way by the police, you can file a complaint.

The link to file a complaint: How to make a complaint | [politiklagemyndigheden](#)

If I'm being harassed by the police, what should I do?

Remedies:

If you are being harassed by the police, carefully write down each time it happens. Record the date, time, location, officer details (names, badge numbers, physical appearance), witnesses, and conversation and actions of all participants, with great detail. Your notes will be used as the basis for any formal complaint you may file later.

If the harassment continues, file a formal complaint at: How to make a complaint | [politiklagemyndigheden](#)

How can I respond to circumstances involving discrimination?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

Remedies:

If you believe you are discriminated or treated in a racist way by the police, you can file a complaint.

The link to file a complaint: How to make a complaint | [politiklagemyndigheden](#)

What can you do if the police perform an improper search? Or I was improperly detained?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

Remedies:

If you want to complain about the investigation carried out by the police, you can file such a complaint.

The link to file a complaint: How to make a complaint | [politiklagemyndigheden](#)

Which court in Copenhagen should they address their complaint to and what are the contact details?

Proposed Information

It is important to follow this advice:

The Danish Independent Police Complaints Authority handles investigation of criminal cases against police officers and considers and decides complaints of police misconduct. Headed by a council and a chief executive, the Police Complaints Authority exercises its functions in complete independence of both police and prosecutors.

Their contact details:

The Independent Police Complaints Authority

Frederiks Plads 42, 8th and 9th floor

8000 Aarhus C

Phone 41 78 35 00

EAN: 5798000066175

CVR: 34 05 07 59

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Law is generally described as of May 2025.

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