



LAWFUL CONTACTS



CONSENSUAL ENCOUNTERS

A consensual encounter includes only those situations where the conduct of the police would lead a reasonable person to believe they are free to leave or terminate the encounter. The officer must not restrain or exert any authority over the person.

DETENTIONS

A detention occurs when an officer restrains or asserts authority over an individual to such an extent that the person reasonably feels as though they cannot terminate the contact. An officer may restrain or assert authority over an individual when they have **“reasonable suspicion”** to believe the person has or is about to commit a crime. The officer must possess **specific and articulable facts** that lead an officer to reasonably believe that:

- Unusual activity has occurred, is occurring, or is about to occur;
- The unusual activity is related to a crime;
- The person to be detained is associated with the criminal activity.

The person detained is **not** free to leave during a detention, which may last as long as reasonably necessary to investigate the reason for the detention. Reasonable force can be used to complete the investigation.

LOS ANGELES POLICE PROTECTIVE LEAGUE

PATDOWN/FRISK SEARCHES

A **Patdown/Frisk Search** is not permitted during a lawful detention unless the officer ALSO believes the person may be **Armed or Dangerous**. Generalized “officer safety” concerns are not enough to support routine **Patdown/Frisk Searches** of detained persons.

Officers must be able to articulate specific facts that lead them to believe that this *particular person* may be armed and dangerous. **Patdown/ Frisk Searches are permitted of a person’s outer clothing for Weapons only.**

ARRESTS

A lawful arrest must be based upon **Probable Cause**. PC to arrest is defined as a set of facts that would cause a reasonable person to form an **Honest and Strong Belief** that the person to be arrested has committed a crime. A lawful arrest requires only a **Fair Probability** that the person committed the crime.

Both an arrest and a detention should be evaluated based upon the **Totality of the Circumstance**, including the officer's training and experience.

For more information or for additional cards, please contact the LAPD Legal Training Unit at (310) 342-3075.



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