

Do I have to stop at a sobriety checkpoint? You bet you do. What are my rights?

What is the law when it comes to a sobriety checkpoint in Massachusetts? Is it mandatory to stop? Do I **have to** show my ID and/or registration? What happens if I don't? Will I be fined or arrested? What is the purpose of these checkpoints? Is this just the Illuminati, Bilderbergers and police state coming up with excuses to enter me into their database? Should I wear my tinfoil hat? Strap on my Q-36 Space Modulator in case I have to cap some reptilians?

"It's stupid to let everyone know!"

It's not. It's purposely vague. They don't advertise the exact road they will be but the entire county. Do people not realize how massive a county is?

The idea is to make people think twice about getting behind the wheel drunk anywhere in the county (or use a taxi/Uber) because the police could be on the road you're driving drunk on. Maybe when you are getting into your car after guzzling one or ten Margaritas you'll think "Oh, man – there is a sobriety checkpoint tonight I should just call Becky, Uber or a cab."

It's about encouraging people BEFORE they go out to make the right decision because the police are making an extra effort to take drunks off the road which is a good thing. Even if just a few people think that way each checkpoint announcement is worth it.



**"You don't have to stop, it's an infringement on our rights!",
"You don't have to roll down your window, just hold up your
registration." or some other variant.**

Yes, you **must** stop anywhere that the police ask you to stop. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has determined this is not unconstitutional and does not violate anyone's rights in the Commonwealth vs. Shields, 402 Mass. 162 case.

I understand that legalese is not the most enjoyable thing to read so here is the conclusion:

"The United States Supreme Court has found that the state interest in reducing drunk driving outweighs the minor infringement on a driver's constitutional rights. Therefore, the Court has found that sobriety checkpoints can be constitutional if they meet certain requirements."

Whether you agree with it or not, it's the law and you will greatly increase your own suffering – stress, aggravation, anger, being arrested or fined – if you don't. So it's best to comply, and just practical to do so.

Besides, what would actually happen to you if you complied? Within seconds you'll go about your day. Oh, the humanity!

Do people understand that the police are trying to save lives? That there is no conspiracy? Don't make it about you, because it's not about you. You are slowing them down from doing their job.



What rights do I have? What can I refuse, if anything?

You can refuse to have your vehicle searched – you don't have to allow them to do that. Unless, of course, there is something within view that is a red flag. So don't flip your lid when they see a gun, drugs, empty beer can, or a person tied up with duct tape and peeking out from under a blanket and ask to search your car.

Police officers will ask you a few questions to see if there is probable cause to detain you – if he or she smells Bud Light on your breath or you slur and say "Can me helpfg you occifer?" then he has that probable cause, otherwise you cannot be detained.

You also can refuse to do a field sobriety test or blow into a breathalyzer, though doing that can get you arrested **if**, and that is the operative word, if the officer believes you are drunk enough to be a threat to other citizens on the road and has probable cause to support it.

“My brother’s ex-girlfriend’s roommate’s 3rd cousin’s stepdad is a cop/lawyer/expert though!”

This is usually just code for “I saw it on social media in between an ‘Imma let you finish’ meme, funny cat video, and some fake news headlines but I was also Tweeting an image of lunch and texting a friend “LOL” while driving so think I read it correctly.”

Don’t do that. Go to genuine, real experts – see what lawyers say. More importantly, don’t skim, actually read. When you skim you miss important details.

Whether a checkpoint is a minor 30-second inconvenience forgotten about in a day, a 10-minute stressful argument, or an arrest is entirely up to you.

While this is about drunk driving and saving lives, there will always be people who want to make it about themselves. Don’t make it about you, it’s not.