

BE SAFE: How to Interact With Police While Carrying or Not

2018-04-10 08:00:15 By Carmela Tyrell

Sometimes it seems like a day doesn't go by when we aren't hearing about a school shooting or the police shooting an unarmed person.

While gun rights advocates do attempt to enter discussions about school shootings and disagreeing with gun grabber backed restrictions on the Second Amendment, there is a strange silence when it comes to police shootings.

As we are seeing with new laws being crafted in California, however, our LEOs (the iconic "good guy with a gun") are every bit as much a target of gun grabbers and their socially destructive agenda as every other legal, law abiding citizen of this country. It is my contention that if gun rights advocates do not enter the conversation surrounding police shootings, we will lose the chance to find a constructive answer that enables police to do their job without unnecessarily endangering innocent people.

What Are You Thinking vs What Are They Thinking?

Most people don't walk or drive around thinking that someone is going to call the police and claim they are committing a crime and may be carrying a gun. To the average person's mind, if they haven't committed a crime, they don't see a reason for the police to approach them as if they are a criminal. Nevertheless, every police shooting of an unarmed person starts out with the police actively looking for a criminal that matches the description of the person that was shot.

As simplistic as it sounds, in order to begin restoring common sense to police interactions with citizens, it is important to realize that the parties involved simply aren't on the same page. Here are some possible places where you and the officers responding might be in terms of [situation awareness levels](#):

- **Code White** - If you don't have much situation awareness, you may be thinking more about the text you got a few minutes ago or where you are going to have lunch as opposed to what is going on around you. While personal safety advocates don't recommend being out in public in "Code White", the sad fact is many people are. In this case, if a police officer comes up to you, it is entirely possible that you won't even think that reaching into a pocket could get you shot to death. Needless to say, an officer that is on duty will never be at Code White in terms of situation awareness. If you are in this space, you are automatically not on the same page. While that won't always have lethal consequences, it can most certainly lead to misunderstandings.
- **Code Yellow** - When you are out in public, the optimal situation awareness level is yellow. At this stage you are aware of everything going on around you. There are no adrenaline surges to cloud your mind, but at the same time, it will be very hard to surprise you or cause you to do something you would regret later on. Ideally, when a police officer approaches, you and they should be at this level. In this space, you are both aware that the officer is armed, and this gives you both a chance to act responsibly.
- **Code Orange** - At this situation awareness level, you are aware that something is going on around you, or something is not right. This is the stage where your heart rate may begin to accelerate, and adrenaline will start preparing your body to "flee or fight". To be fair, it is likely

that LEOs spend a good bit of their time in this space simply because it is their job to deal with things that are wrong and potentially life threatening – like armed criminals.

They are also supposed to be trained on how to handle this level and switch quickly down to Code Yellow or up to Code Red based on situation assessment and without making a mistake. You don't have to be a police officer to know this is hard work and that mistakes can happen no matter how good you think you are. If you think it is easy – try some shoot/don't shoot training programs.

Look for programs where they will immerse you using VR or 3D technology sufficient to create an adrenaline surge, and then confront you with the opposite (ie something harmless) of what you believe is going on.

For the moment, let's just say that where you might be expecting an officer to approach you in Code Yellow, he or she may be well into Code Orange without you having any inkling of what is going on. During the encounter itself, the citizen may still be in Code Yellow. They are likely to still trust the officer will not hurt them, because in the citizen's mind they are innocent and, to them, it is obvious they are also unarmed.

At this stage, the citizen does not realize that they are in danger, let alone know what to do about it. Even if an officer approaches you at a Code Orange level, it is, or still should be possible to communicate with them and come to a resolution that doesn't include someone getting shot to death.

- Code Red – When you are in this stage, all the evaluation is done, and you have only to follow through on whatever action you think is best. Typically, in a police and citizen encounter, a citizen will only go to Code Red if they are a criminal or seek to evade the police for some reason. LEOs on the other hand, will enter Code Red for a number of reasons including defense of others, apprehension of someone engaged in a life threatening criminal act, or in self defense.

What Happens When Someone Calls 911?

When a police shooting happens, you will usually hear a blurb about how the police were responding to a 911, or some other emergency call. In these communications, the caller may have indicated they were reporting a person with a gun in the process of committing a crime or fleeing a crime scene.

Regardless of the mindset of the 911 caller, the police will treat the call as a legitimate emergency situation and a plea for help. It is their job to investigate and stop crimes from happening if at all possible.

In my opinion, which is based on observation of current events, when someone calls 911 and says that someone matching your description may be committing a crime with a gun; there is every chance the LEO(s) responding will arrive on the scene at Code Orange and climbing fast to Code Red. It's nothing personal, and it has nothing to do with race or any other factor frequently used as a talking point by activists who blame police solely for these shootings.

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What if You are the Target?

If you are the subject of the call, do not forget that a Code Orange situation awareness level may be aimed at you, and that the officer is entering the situation with potentially wrong, but damaging information that you don't know about. Do not forget they can make mistakes and misread every move you make because of that prior information. You have no choice but to listen and follow what they tell you to do.

- If they tell you to put your hands on your lap, do not move to put them on your head, yell, or ask what it is all about.
- Do not move or speak unless directed to do so; and stay focused on what you are being asked.
- Remember, you are dealing with an armed and trained person that believes they are responding to a crime scene, as opposed to an actual perpetrator intent on doing harm.
- They are, however, stressed and may still be thinking about prior information supplied by the 911 caller. As such, it is best to just let the officer do his or her job and give them time to get their own adrenaline issues under control based on the reality that you pose no threat to them or anyone else.
- If you want to have a cell phone or some other device recording, it will have to be on and recording before the police come up to you. Do not try to start a recording in the middle of the situation because your hands will be moving towards something they may not realize, or may not believe isn't a weapon.

Depending on the nature of the encounter, the officer may stand out of your direct line of sight, so you may not be able to see if he or she has a hand on a weapon. By nature, it is entirely possible you will want to make eye contact or see the officer's face during the conversation. If part of your body is also out of their line of sight, any motion turning or moving towards them, to their mind minds, might also include the presence of a weapon. It is not worth your life to try and turn around or move in

such a way to see their hand is on a gun, about to be drawn, or is already being brandished.

Once the situation is neutralized, and when you are safely away, you can take legal action by filing an excessive brandishing complaint if the officer pulled a weapon on you. If a formal brandishing complaint doesn't produce suitable information about how the situation came about, move on to notifying your political leaders of the situation with that officer. If that doesn't work, contact the media, and make use of social networking.

These steps should trigger a complete investigation of the situation, including an examination of the 911 caller. If you discover the caller was affiliated with or in support of anti Second Amendment or any kind of gun grabber agendas, contact your federal lawmakers and make them aware of the situation and how you plan to vote.

Next, contact every business that appears to be against gun rights and inform them that you will no longer do business with them because you feel their support of the gun grabber agenda put your life in danger. You can find out what [PACs](#) and non-profit organizations businesses give money to at [this link](#). Since some gun grabber non-profit organizations are using various legal loopholes to shield their donors, it is more important than ever to ask for a change in laws to require all businesses and non-profits to disclose all donors and the amounts provided. This is not just about donors from inside the United States, it is the only way to find out about foreign donors and their affiliations.

Now let's have a look at the two possible threat levels in the mind of the 911 caller:

- Code Yellow – Given the possible motivations involved, some would say these people are actually in Code Red. People in this stage might call 911 as a matter of prank, or to set someone up. They may not believe that there is actually something dangerous going on, but they will make something up to meet one agenda or another. The caller may even pretend to have a meltdown or spout all kinds of psychobabble about how they felt threatened just because there is a gun (or something that looks like one) visible or printing.

For a person calling 911 in a Code Yellow condition, the goal is to get the police to do something to someone they would not normally interact with. Even though "[swatting](#)" is a felony crime, it can have lethal consequences, as it did in at least one case in Kansas. Perhaps it is a bitter irony that violent video games also play a role in police shootings just as they do in school shootings. But I digress, seeing as how the video game industry claims there is no connection between the rise in all kinds of shootings and their games.

- Code Orange – to be fair, this is the stage at which most people call for help. They know something is wrong, or that something bad is about to happen. Unfortunately, this is also a stage at which people can make mistakes. Sometimes it is just that – a mistake that has no ulterior motive or preconditioning. This is also a time, however, when people may embellish and say there is a gun because they think it will make the police arrive faster.

In other cases, the mistake can occur because of a psychological phenomena known as cognitive dissonance. Basically, if someone has already learned or "knows" something, it will be harder for them to accept new information that is contrary to the old information. Media shaping (which can create trauma) on one end and stressful events (as in a tangible and relevant experience) on the other end of the spectrum act as a means to generate cognitive dissonance. In this case, the more people see guns as a threat, the more likely they or others are to see guns present and as a threat everywhere they look.

Consider a situation where you are sitting by a window or doorway, and see someone, perhaps slightly out of focus, walking by, and taking something out of their pocket. Prior to all the trauma and drama created by the negative media spin on school shootings, you would probably conclude the person is pulling out something harmless. But what about now? How many times do you have to take a second look to make sure the person is not drawing a gun? How much more aware are you that the person's hand position looks more like they are holding a gun than some other object?

I suppose it isn't fair to say only gun grabbers with a tendency to be disturbed at the sight of guns will be more inclined to mistake a common object for a gun, and then report it as real threat. All I can say about this one is it takes all kinds to make a world, and there are some very traumatized people out there that will call 911 and say they saw a gun, even if there is none present, let alone a threat if one is actually seen. To these people, as long as it looks like a gun, then its a gun. In their minds, appearances are everything.

To those with no tangible experience with guns, but have heard all about "gun violence", the threat is real. These are the people that have been brainwashed into thinking they know what they are talking about by agenda driven profiteers. The profiteers in turn, use and make money on promoting people who have an overwhelming and heartbreaking trauma in their past. These experiences are "shared" along with emotionally reactive, hypnotic content in order to increase targeted beliefs (guns are bad and 2A supporters are murderers) and core ignorance (semi-automatic guns are "military weapons") for the sake of bringing in more cash.

Anytime an organization breeds fear and says more restrictive laws are the answer, you should consider the possible lethal impact of their using the equivalent of human shields made up of an ignorant or traumatized population in police and citizen interactions.

Sadly, people with only media grade "experience" with guns and the Second Amendment aren't likely to be amenable to learning more about guns because of cognitive dissonance. It is also not likely they will overcome the fears that have been planted in them by people with agendas destructive to our nation.

As with drug addiction, phobias, and many other diseases, these people won't get help and won't even know to ask for help until the problem is exposed and dealt with for the illness it truly is. Just as an aside, with all the money now available to study "gun violence", perhaps it would be useful to see if police shootings are more likely to happen after all the publicizing of school shootings, and if media portrayals have a lethal impact on people that aren't even carrying guns, but are being treated as if they are.

While my focus in this article is on police/citizen relations, I gently say that you should be very aware of your body language around other people. Gun grabbers or others with some kind of unhealthy gun obsession or fantasies (distinctly different from healthy interests such as purchasing, cleaning etc) may report you as being armed even if you aren't. From there, the police may treat you as if you are actually armed, dangerous, and in the process of committing a crime.

Pay attention to how you pull your wallet out of your pocket, your cell phone, or anything else that someone suffering from cognitive dissonance might mistake for a gun. Think about how your hand position looks to others and avoid looking like you are holding a gun. This will go, hopefully, a long way towards preventing a situation where the police suddenly appear and draw down on you as if you are armed and ready to commit some kind of crime with a gun.

Because gun grabbers routinely villanize anyone that owns a gun or seeks to uphold the Second Amendment, they can and should be investigated for everything they say and the impact it may be having on the escalation of 911 calls that end in police shootings. They should also be subject to lawsuits and criminal prosecution instead of being allowed to go on inciting undue stress and riots because of the resulting way police are put into a bad light and in the wrong context.

Quite frankly, when people as trained as the police treat and kill unarmed people as if they are armed and committing a crime, it should be a wakeup call that something is seriously wrong in our nation. Today, whether you are a gun owner or not, whether you are carrying or not, you may be identified as armed and dangerous. This, in turn, can lead to a police encounter that will prove fatal if you don't understand what is going on and maintain a degree of composure and act with common sense during and after the encounter.

Beyond that, gun owners and Second Amendment advocates can no longer leave the matter of police shootings in the hands of people with a gun grabber agenda.

It is time for all citizens to enter the conversation and come up with meaningful answers that serve the well being of our nation, protect our citizens, and ensure that our LEOs can do their job.



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