Being Stopped by a C-NC Security Officer

At some point in your C-N career, you may be stopped and questioned by a C-N security officer. This could happen for a variety of reasons.

The officer may be investigating a crime or violation of C-N policy and want to know if you are a witness or have information that might be helpful; a crime may have occurred recently and you might resemble the description of the suspect; you may be asked if you have seen a suspect; another citizen may have made a complaint against you and the officer will be trying to determine if the complaint has merit; or the officer may be stopping you for access control reasons. In all cases, if an officer asks you to identify yourself, you are not required by law to do so.

However, you are required by Carson-Newman College policy to present your CN ID Card to any College official including C-N security officers.

You can locate the policy in the Student Handbook under "Identification Card," section 3.

If the officer is investigating a crime or complaint, they may also ask reasonable questions to help them determine whether a crime has occurred or a complaint is valid. Refusal to answer questions may prevent an officer from clearing you of suspicion and can lead to your arrest. If you are stopped by an officer, you should do your best to try to answer the questions the officer poses.

Ordinarily, a security officer may not detain you for more than a reasonable length of time. There are exceptions however, which would occur under very unusual circumstances such as public disorders or other large-scale emergencies.

If local authorities or JCPD officer asks to take you somewhere else, you may ask if you are being placed under arrest. If you are not under arrest, the officer should explain why he or she feels you need to be moved. You may refuse to go, but this may lead to an arrest or an additional charge based on the specific circumstances. If you are placed under arrest the officer must tell you with what crime you are charged.

If during any encounter with a C-N security officer, you feel the officer has acted unprofessionally or treated you rudely, you may file a Service Feedback Form that can be found on this website or in the security office MSAC 1000.

Also, if you have observed an officer act in an exceptionally professional and admirable manner and you would like that officer to receive a public and professional recognition, please fill out a Service Feedback Form.

Service Feedback Forms are used for positive as well as negative feedback.
Note: The contents of this page are intended to provide useful information to the general public. It should not be construed as legal advice or counsel. Given the circumstances of the situation, you may wish to consult an attorney who may advise you of your specific legal rights and options.