



# Jesse White

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## SECRETARY OF STATE

# NEWS

**For Immediate Release:**  
May 9, 2006

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### **Secretary White Announces New Rules of the Road Includes Information For Motorists On Traffic Stops**

Illinois Secretary of State Jesse White announced that his office has unveiled the new *Illinois Rules of the Road* book for 2006. The publication features a section on what police say motorists should and should not do when they get pulled over.

In an effort to educate motorists on traffic stops, White partnered with the Chicago Police department in creating a new section titled "Being Pulled Over by Law Enforcement" on page 86 of the book, containing useful information for those learning and continuing to drive.

The language has been endorsed by the Illinois State Police, the Illinois Chief's of Police and the Illinois Sheriff's Association.

"The *Illinois Rules of the Road* has always helped motorists abide by traffic safety laws," White said. "The new page will help drivers become more informed and aware if a they are ever stopped by law enforcement, creating a safer situation for driver and officer."

The office will be sending the *Illinois Rules of the Road* to all of the driver's education instructors statewide with a special informational letter alerting them to the "Being Pulled Over by Law Enforcement."

Some of the information on the page includes:

- Pull over safely and as soon as possible.
- Stay in the driver's seat with both hands on the steering wheel
- Do not to exit your vehicle unless you are asked to do so. Getting out of the car can be perceived as aggressive behavior.
- Comply with officer's request to see license and insurance card, if they are in the glove compartment or under the seat, inform the officer and follow his/her instructions.
- Drivers should be treated with dignity and respect by the officer.

The Secretary of State publishes one million copies of the *Illinois Rules of the Road*, which is distributed at driver's license facilities, special events, fairs, and schools statewide. The *Illinois Rules of the Road* was created in 1948.

(more)

## **Being Pulled Over by Law Enforcement**

When being stopped by the police, slow down and pull over safely as soon as possible. If the police vehicle is unmarked and you cannot identify the driver as a police officer, drive slowly and carefully below the speed limit to a well-lit, populated spot and pull over, or go to the nearest police station, attempt to attract the attention of a uniformed officer or call 911.

Stay in the driver's seat with both hands clearly in sight on the steering wheel until the officer instructs you otherwise or the traffic stop is complete. Do not exit your car unless asked to do so. Getting out of your car can be perceived as aggressive behavior and a threat to the officer's safety. Turn on your interior light if stopped at night.

Comply with the officer's request to see your driver's license and proof of insurance. If these items are in the glove box or under the seat, inform the officer of that fact and then follow his or her directions before retrieving them.

If you are issued a ticket requiring a signature, sign it. Signing a ticket is not an admission of guilt—only an acknowledgment of receiving the ticket.

If you are suspected of drunk driving, cooperate with the officer(s) on the scene. If you refuse to submit to breath, blood or performance tests, your refusal could result in loss of driving privileges.

Get out of the automobile only if asked to do so.

Be aware that you may have committed some minor traffic violation without realizing it, there may be some problem with your vehicle of which you are unaware, or you might be driving a vehicle that is similar to one used in a serious crime. Many officers will not provide specific reasons for the stop until they have your license and insurance card in hand. Therefore, they will avoid having to debate the reason for the stop before they receive these items from you.

If you wish to offer an explanation of your circumstances when stopped, do so before the officer returns to his vehicle. The officer cannot void the ticket once it has been written. Cooperate during the incident even if you believe you haven't committed an offense. If you believe you have been treated unfairly, present your case in traffic court and not to the officer along the roadway.

You are to be treated with dignity and respect by the officer. If you believe that an officer has acted inappropriately during a traffic stop or other encounter, you should report that conduct as soon as possible to the officer's superiors.

Officers are required to provide their names and badge number upon request.