



## THE METRO-ATLANTA CRIME COMMISSION

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### ***FACT SHEET: POLICE "PROTECT AND SERVE"***

#### ***The Facts About Your Safety Most Citizens Don't Know***

There are many reasons the Metro-Atlanta Crime Commission focuses on crime prevention and putting the "public" back in public safety. Mostly all American citizens are familiar with the phrase "protect and serve" and most expect it from our local police departments. But most citizens (and even many police officers) have no idea that the term "protect and serve" does not mean what you think it does. Protect who or whom? When? Why? Under what conditions or circumstances? To what extent? As determined by whom? What does "protect" mean?

**Self-Defense, Personal & Public Safety are NOT about waiting on the police to protect you!**

What is public safety? What is the legal definition of the "community" that police officers are supposed to protect? What is the duty or responsibility of a local police officer? What if the officer does not protect you as a citizen? Are local police officers responsible for your safety? And who ultimately determines that - either way? All questions that never cross the minds of American citizens. Why not? Because most of us make assumptions about what terms mean and what police duties "obviously are". Unfortunate such perceptions are often inaccurate.

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Legal terms and court decisions often mean something other than what we think or assume they do. And now it's time to look at the facts in order to clear up assumptions and misconceptions. Additionally, the purpose of this information is to open the eyes of citizens everywhere about your personal responsibility for your own safety and the safety of your families, businesses, churches, schools, organizations and community. So we reiterate It's time we put the "public" back in public safety - especially once you understand what that means.

## ***Local Police Officers are Law Enforcement Officers and First Responders, NOT First Preventers Nor Individual Citizen Personal Safety Bodyguards!***

This fact sheet is a summary of what you need to know, what you have been misinformed about and the clearing up of widespread misconceptions. And because it is a short summary, we will provide you with the links and references to the court decisions which have ultimately decided the responsibility of local police officers across America. Keep in mind that the United States Constitution has ultimate authority over any police department, city council, police oaths or police protocol. Also keep in mind that the United States Supreme Court is the highest court in America and its decisions cannot be reversed by any other court, local police department nor federal law enforcement agency.

**According to the United States Supreme Court and several courts below it, local police departments/officers do NOT have the duty nor responsibility to protect private citizens, except under certain conditions such as when you are in their custody.** Local police officer duties often involve assessing threats, patrolling the "community", visual deterrence, conducting arrests and investigations, regulating traffic, enforcing the law, responding to incidents and preserving the peace. But these terms are not defined by law as what you may think or expect. Thus legal definitions are very often different than public perceptions.

The result? **You and your family are ultimately responsible for your safety.** Local police officers "protect and serve" the community but they are not required by the Constitution nor the Supreme Court to protect individuals, even though you may say individuals in groups are the community. Unfortunately most citizens have mistaken local police officers for personal bodyguards or executive protection agents - jobs with very different responsibilities, very different scopes and protocols and very different training.

As for crime prevention training for private citizens, it is critically important that you support the efforts of the Metro-Atlanta Crime Commission by volunteering, donating or scheduling training seminars because local police departments are also NOT required to train private citizens on how to protect themselves. \* So remember, Crime Prevention is not about waiting until you are a victim!

### ***DO POLICE OFFICERS HAVE TO PROTECT YOU?***

Let's look at the facts. "In the 1989 in the landmark case of DeShaney v. Winnebago County Department of Social Services, the Supreme Court ruled that failure by government workers to protect someone from physical violence or harm from another person did not breach any substantive constitutional duty". In 2005 the United States Supreme Court said essentially the same thing.

In 2018 when the school resource officer did not go into Marjorie Stoneman Douglas High School and confront the shooter during the Parkland massacre, a Federal Judge said essentially the same thing as well. In this case the ruling was that the sheriff's office had no constitutional duty to protect the students in the school. And even though a county judge rendered a decision to the contrary regarding the school resource officer, a county judge ruling can neither overrule a federal judge nor the U.S. Supreme Court.

As a proactive citizen, whatever you do, please do 4 things. Read the research in the links for yourself, visit our website ([www.publicsafety411.com](http://www.publicsafety411.com)), schedule or attend a crime prevention training seminar and realize that your safety and the safety of your family is your primary responsibility, not that of the local police. The Metro-Atlanta Crime Commission is a 501(c)3 crime prevention, public safety training agency. We train private citizens, organizations and police officers.



*It's hard to hear the facts when you have assumed otherwise for so long! (2018 FBI Active Shooter Map)*

**More than 1 mass shooting per day! And no police department can protect all citizens.**

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/one-mass-shooting-happens-per-day-u-s-data-shows>

## **POLICE NOT REQUIRED TO PROTECT INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS**

### **NOT IN POLICE CUSTODY:**

(Email us at [publicsafety411@yahoo.com](mailto:publicsafety411@yahoo.com) for the full court cases.)

<https://www.barneslawllp.com/blog/police-not-required-protect>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/06/28/politics/justices-rule-police-do-not-have-a-constitutional-duty-to-protect.html>

<https://blogs.findlaw.com/blotter/2015/05/can-you-sue-the-police-for-not-coming-when-called.html>

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren\\_v.\\_District\\_of\\_Columbia](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_v._District_of_Columbia)

<https://www.quora.com/Is-it-true-The-Supreme-Court-ruled-law-enforcement-agencies-dont-have-a-constitutional-duty-to-protect-citizens>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/18/us/parkland-shooting-lawsuit-ruling-police.html>

Let's remember accountability and responsibility are for all of us, no matter where we live, no matter what we choose as a profession. The Metro-Atlanta Crime Commission supports, thanks and encourages all law-abiding, well-trained police officers and first responders who risk their lives every day. 1/2020

*AS THE #1 CRIME PREVENTION AGENCY,  
The MACC is taking the lead in putting the "public" back in public safety.*



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## **HOW TO GET INVOLVED:**

Access every method of support we offer to prevent crime from our website above. Attend our training events. Spread the word to friends, family and on social media. Schedule or host our crime prevention seminar (see list above). Request a speaker for your business, church, school or organization. Partner with us today. Make a donation to make your community safer. Become a member now! Citizens have to think prevention and that requires training - training the MACC provides. So whatever you do, plug in now before crime finds you!