

Cop Stop FAQs

1. I hosted or helped with a Cop Stop recently and got pulled over by an officer that was in attendance. Can I use Cop Stop to get out of a ticket?

Absolutely not! Please do not mention anything about Cop Stop if you get pulled over by an officer you have served. If we are going to support LEOs, we HAVE to support them when they are also doing their jobs. If anything, Cop Stops should encourage residents to obey the law and not do anything that will make them have to be encountered by an officer. Remember, coordinators work very closely with higher ranked officers and they will know if Cop Stop was used to get out of an infraction and you will no longer be allowed to host or help with future Cop Stops. We have a zero tolerance policy on this!

2. What if we have too much food?

Because of the nature of the officer's job, their attendance is determined based upon how busy they are during their shift. We can never be exactly sure of attendance. If you have any leftovers, please take it to dispatch so dispatchers and the next shift can enjoy a meal.

3. Can we invite Fire and EMS?

Cop Stop was started to serve the Law Enforcement Officers in the community and to build relationships with them. LEOs do not have the same amenities as Fire and EMS. Fire and EMS, generally, have kitchens and a firehouse they are dispatched from. LEOs are constantly patrolling their community and either have to eat in their cars or in restaurants. Also, unfortunately in this day and age, LEOs are the only community servants being vilified in our society. We feel strongly that in order for LEOs to better serve their communities, they need to know the residents support them and have built relationships with them. Cop Stop FULLY supports ALL community servants, including Fire and EMS, but our focus is on communities building relationships with and getting to know the officers who patrol their area. With that said, we have left the determination for Fire and EMS to be included in Cop Stop up to the municipal coordinators.

4. Do we need a sign in the yard?

A sign in your yard is very helpful for officers to be able to easily locate your home, but it is not necessary.

5. Can we post flyers?

You can certainly pass out flyers to your neighbors letting them know you are hosting a Cop Stop and asking them to help you. Please refrain from posting flyers in public places if you are hosting in your home, as opposed to a church or school or other public venue. Every precaution needs to be taken to protect the officers and the hosts.

6. How many can we expect maximum?

The number of maximum attendees varies from agency to agency and shift to shift. Your coordinator will know exactly how many officers are on duty when you are hosting your Cop Stop. Please know that attendance is determined on how busy they are.

7. How do I tell the police department about my Cop Stop?

Coordinators will send the Cop Stop calendar to their contact at the police department monthly. It is the responsibility of the contact at the police department to announce Cop Stops at roll call at the beginning of their shift. As a host, you do not need to contact the police department. Any communication to the police department needs to go through the coordinator.

8. Do we have to use Sign-up Genius or can we do the meal by ourselves?

Sign-up Genius is a wonderful tool to coordinate meals with your neighbors. However, you do not have to use it. You are welcome to do the meal by yourself, but we highly encourage you to get your neighbors involved. This helps out the host greatly and is a wonderful way for you to get to know your neighbors. Also, if your neighbors know you are hosting a Cop Stop, they will not be concerned when they see five officers showing up to your home.

9. What if I have to cancel at the last minute?

If you have to cancel your Cop Stop at the last minute, please let your coordinator know right away! Please do not contact the police department directly.

10. Are off-duty LEOs and their families invited?

Absolutely! If you know officers that are off-duty and would like to invite them and their families, please do. This is a wonderful way for the families to see first-hand that their LEO's community supports them.

11. Are School Resource Officers (SROs) and crossing guards invited?

Yes! If they are able to attend, please invite SROs and crossing guards!

12. How do I start a Cop Stop in my community?

If you would like to start Cop Stop in your community where one hasn't already been started, please request information through our website at www.cop-stop.org

13. Can my church, school or business host?

Yes! Please contact your coordinator if your church, school or business would like to host.

14. Are correctional officers included?

If you know correctional officers and they are able to attend your Cop Stop, please invite them.

15. How do we keep it safe (free of ill-intentioned people) if we don't know all of the people in our community?

In order to keep our officers safe and free of ill-intentioned people, it is very important for you to include the neighbors you know personally. This is also why everything goes through the coordinators and they have been in contact with the hosts personally. This is also why we include the names of hosts and their addresses when we send the calendar to the police department.

16. Can we ask for hosts and/or community volunteers on our personal Facebook pages?

Please refrain from advertising your Cop Stop on your personal Facebook page. However, you can post pictures after the event has ended. The main reason why each municipality has their own Cop Stop page is so that everyone involved in that community's Cop Stop can coordinate together.

17. Can officer's spouses or other community members attend?

Many officers do not get the opportunity to enjoy a meal with their spouse while they are on duty. Cop Stop is a wonderful place for this to happen. And it is also a wonderful way for LEO spouses to see first-hand that their LEO is supported by the community in which they serve.

18. How often do I have to host?

You are free to host as often as you would like. The main reason Cop Stop was started was for residents to get to know the officers who serve in their community and vice versa. We encourage hosts to host as often as they can, or help a host, in order for relationships to be built.

19. Why can't you change the name to include Fire and EMS?

Cop Stop was started as a conversation in the park with a police officer. As time went on and it looked like this was something our family wanted to do often, we asked our children what they wanted to call it and they came up with "Cop Stop"... "because the cops will stop." This is our children's only contribution to our ministry and we want to protect that for them. Also, as stated above, while we FULLY support Fire and EMS, Cop Stop was started as a way to build relationships with and show our LEOs that they are supported, especially with all that is going on in our society today. That is not to say that Fire and EMS are not included in Cop Stops. Some coordinators have worked it out with their local fire department to include Fire and EMS. It is solely at the discretion of those coordinators. However, some Fire and EMS in other communities have communicated that Cop Stops do not best serve them.

20. Can we announce our Cop Stop on social media?

In order to take as many measures as we can to keep LEOs and hosts safe, please do not announce your Cop Stop on any social media. It is up to the coordinator's discretion to post the calendar on their Cop Stop Facebook page.

21. Can officers leave their precinct to attend Cop Stop outside of their jurisdiction?

That is up to the policy of the police department. Generally, municipal officers cannot leave their precinct to attend a Cop Stop in another precinct; however, county officers can. Your coordinator will know what the policy is of your police department.

22. Can we accept donations from local restaurants and businesses to contribute to our Cop Stop?

The idea behind Cop Stop is to provide LEOs with a home-cooked meal. Many local restaurants provide free or discounted meals to LEOs already and we do not want to take away from how those restaurant owners are currently serving. However, if you personally know a restaurant owner and they offer themselves to contribute to your Cop Stop that is perfectly fine. Cop Stop strongly discourages hosts from soliciting donations from local restaurants and businesses where they do not know the owner personally. Cop Stop is not currently set up as a non-profit, so no restaurant or business will receive a tax-free donation letter from Cop Stop for their donation.