

Clarity on Fourth Amendment

Our View 6:25 p.m. EDT September 19, 2014



(Photo: 3103jp, Getty Images/iStockphoto)

City residents should welcome a new training collaboration between Wilmington police and the Delaware American Civil Liberties Union, considering the daily news of escalating street crime.

This is an appropriate outreach, because too often the ACLU and law enforcement officials are at odds about the legal treatment of suspects and defendants, particularly when it comes to the use of force during arrests. But this time both sides agree – city police can benefit from more professional development in just what the Constitution's Fourth Amendment does and does not permit.

"Ongoing professional development is as important in the law enforcement profession as it is in any other," points out Chief of Police Bobby Cummings.

RELATED: [Delaware's healthy commitment to middle-schoolers \(/story/opinion/editorials/2014/09/19/delawares-healthy-commitment-middle-schoolers/15909497/\)](/story/opinion/editorials/2014/09/19/delawares-healthy-commitment-middle-schoolers/15909497/)

The training will be conducted by two constitutional law professors from Widener Law School – Professor Jules Epstein and Professor Leonard N. Sosnov. Both should clarify what is and is not permissible police behavior during arrests and search and seizures of personal property.

And this is a timely public safety effort given the still ongoing national debate about New York City's "stop-and-frisk" policy.

More locally though, the complaints from defendants with regard to arrests tend to be less about racial profiling than treatment by officers during the procedure. Which is still a sufficient Fourth Amendment concern for the ACLU and city police to collaborate on.

Read or Share this story: <http://delonline.us/1sbfoKR>