

If you think your rights have been violated, call 213.977.5253 or visit [www.aclu-sc.org/legal/intake](http://www.aclu-sc.org/legal/intake)

**Doing the Rights Thing  
Since 1923**



**Know Your Rights:**

**Cell Phone  
Privacy in Schools**



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## Your Rights

1. The U.S. Constitution protects your privacy. It prohibits “unreasonable searches and seizures.”
2. School officials may search you or your property without a warrant, but must have a reasonable suspicion that you broke the law or a school rule.
3. **Reasonable suspicion** can be based on a lot of different things, like a school official seeing something or receiving a tip from a reliable source. But it cannot be based on a hunch, curiosity or rumor.
4. School officials can only search you or your property to find **evidence of a violation of the law or school rule** you are suspected of breaking. Any search that goes beyond that may be illegal.
5. School officials cannot search your phone just because you used your phone when not allowed
6. You have the right to refuse to agree to a search.
7. If you agree to a search, it becomes legal whether or not school officials had reasonable suspicion.
8. If you refuse to agree to a search, your refusal cannot create reasonable suspicion.

## Protection Tips

1. **Know your district and/or school policy** on cell phones. If you have trouble understanding the policy, **go over it with a parent or guardian**.
2. Even if cell phones are allowed at school, use your cell phone only at recess or lunch.
3. Even if cell phones are allowed at school, **avoid** using or even having your cell phone out or turned on **during class time**.
4. Even if cell phones are allowed at school, keep your cell phone off and in your backpack, especially during quizzes or tests.
5. **Lock and password** protect your cell phone.
6. **Avoid storing** passwords to email and social networking sites like Facebook on your cell phone.

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