

Code G of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984

By McKenzie Sinclair



What is Code G?

- Code G is one of the PACE Codes of Practice. It is about the power of arrest. It tells police officers how to use arrest properly. It then says arrest should not be used unless it is really needed, because arrest takes away a person's freedom (Home Office, 2012, Home Office, 2022).



What law is it linked to?

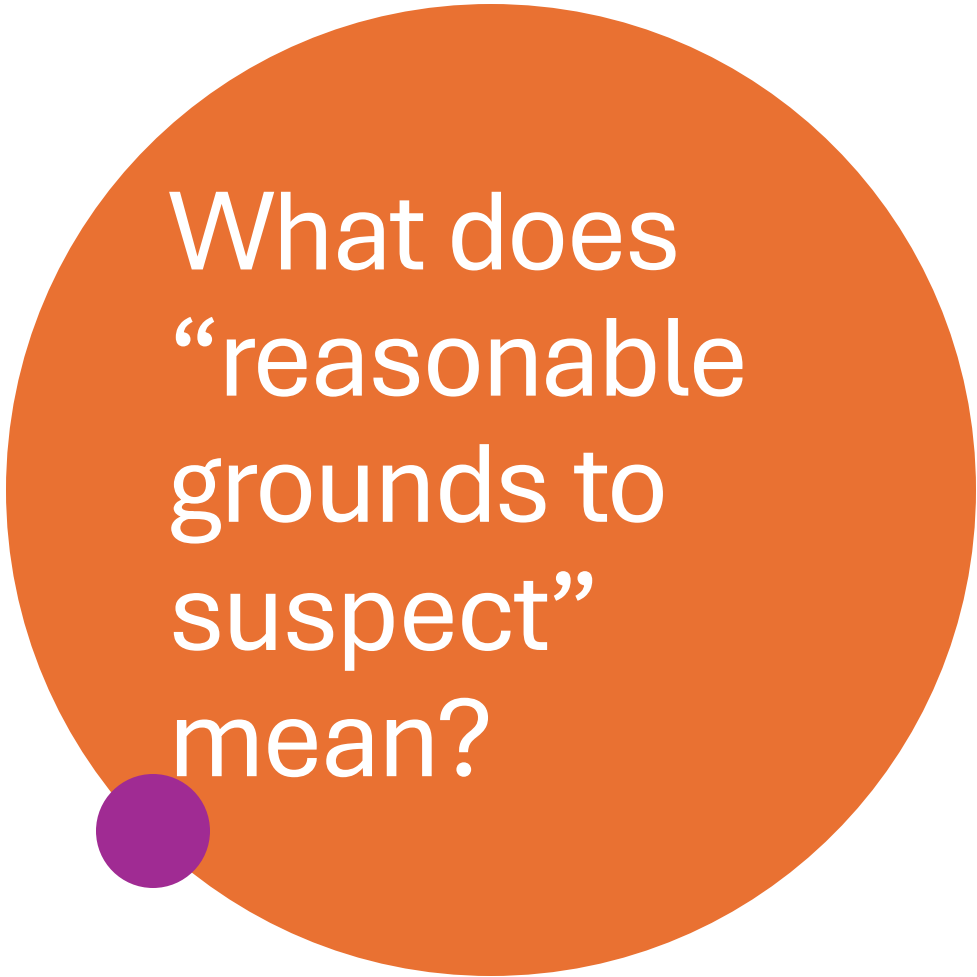
- Code G works with section 24 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 also known as PACE. This law gives police officers the power to arrest without a warrant in some cases. But the officer must still follow Code G and use the power properly (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, Home Office, 2012).
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What makes an arrest lawful?

For an arrest to be lawful, there are two main parts:

The officer must have reasonable grounds to suspect that the person is involved in an offence.

The officer must believe the arrest is necessary (Home Office, 2012, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984).



What does “reasonable grounds to suspect” mean?

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- “Reasonable grounds to suspect” means the officer must have real facts to support their suspicion. It cannot just be a guess, a stereotype, or an opinion. The officer must be able to explain why they suspected the person. (Home Office, 2012, College of Policing, 2013).

What does “necessary” mean?

Even if a police officer suspects a person, they should only arrest if it is necessary. This means arrest must be needed for a proper reason, such as:

- finding out the person's name
- finding out their address
- stopping them from getting hurt
- stopping them from hurting someone else
- stopping damage to property
- stopping them from disappearing
- allowing a prompt and effective investigation
- protecting a child or another vulnerable person (Home Office, 2012, College of Policing, 2013).



Could the police use another option?

- Code G says police should think about whether there is a less powerful way than arrest. Sometimes a person may be asked to come to the police station for a voluntary interview instead. If that would work, arrest may not be needed (Home Office, 2012, NPCC, 2024).
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Why is Code G important?

- Code G is important because it helps protect the public from unfair arrests. It also helps police officers make fair decisions and explain what they have done. This can build trust between the police and the community (GOV.UK, 2025, College of Policing, 2015).





Special care for children and vulnerable people

- Police officers must think carefully when dealing with children or vulnerable people. Code G says arrest may sometimes be needed to protect a child or another person who may be at risk. Other things also shows that children need special consideration in the criminal justice system (Home Office, 2012, CPS, 2023).

Conclusion

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- To conclude, Code G is an important rule about arrest. It says police officers must have reasonable grounds to suspect a person and must also show that arrest is necessary. This helps protect people's rights and makes sure police powers are used properly and fairly (Home Office, 2012, Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, College of Policing, 2013).

Thank you for your time
to listen to my
Presentation have a
good rest of your day.

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