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What is the meaning of Search and Seizure?

Search and seizure are well-known procedures used by law enforcement when they suspect that a crime has been committed. The definition of search, that is from the textbook *Constitutional Law and the Criminal Justice System* is “an examination of a person, place, or vehicle for contraband or evidence of a crime”. When a search is conducted it is an intrusion into someone's privacy, so the Fourth Amendment was created to rigidly enforce the act of search and seizure.

The definition of a seizure from the same textbook is “a taking by law enforcement or other government agent of contraband, evidence of a crime, or even a person into custody.” Based on the Fourth Amendment, searches and seizures cannot be unreasonable; there has to be probable cause when a search is made or an arrest warrant is drawn up and executed. Having the Fourth Amendment that protects the citizens from unreasonable searches and seizures. This means that people can drive back and forth to where they

have to go without fearing that they will be pulled over for a discriminatory factor. An example of a discriminatory factor could be if the driver had blonde hair or a presidential bumper sticker. Without the Fourth Amendment in place, a person could be pulled over for any reason by the discretion of the officer. An example of that would be, if the officer didn't like smokers, he could pull over someone that he saw smoking and conduct a search or seizure.

At first when the Fourth Amendment was created it only applied to the federal government, but now it applies to all government agents. This means federal, state, county, municipal all need to adhere to the Fourth Amendment. I did not know this at first, but this regulation even includes public schools and colleges. Searches and seizures are a way for government agents to investigate, if they have probable cause that a crime has been committed, but citizens are protected by the Fourth Amendment from unreasonable searches and seizures.

Work cited: Harr, J. Scott, et al. *Constitutional Law and the Criminal Justice System*. seventh ed., Cengage Learning, 2018.