

Vital Need—

ACLU Info on What To Do If Arrested

The Alaska Civil Liberties Union, as part of an accelerated campaign to increase public awareness of civil liberties, is initiating the distribution of several thousand "What to do if arrested" cards throughout the state.

These cards, which outline in specific detail the rights and obligations of the arrested person, will primarily be distributed to the young and to members of minority groups, that is, those individuals most in need of such information and least likely to have it ahead of time.

In noting the need for the distribution of such information Hippler stated, "There is a clear and continuously demonstrated

need in Alaska to inform arrested persons of their rights. Recent Supreme Court decisions have begun to clarify the rights of persons arrested, but changes in the actual procedures of arrest as well as citizen awareness have lagged sadly behind these decisions."

Chief among these recently clarified rights (which have long been granted by the FBI) are the right to know if you are arrested, and the charges against you as well as the right to counsel and the right to silence, according to the ACLU head.

"Actually," Hippler added, such safeguards also work to the advantage of law enforcement agencies as well by leading to more careful police work resulting in better prepared cases, fewer dismissals and thus an increased morale and pride in professionalism among police."