

TIME TO ACT

ACTION TOOLKIT





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Welcome to the TIME TO ACT Toolkit. Although we are clear on who won the election, the conditions we will soon face still create an abundance of uncertainty. This moment will likely bring many into the streets across the country. We believe that we must confront the threats of fascism, authoritarianism, and political violence so that we can advance a progressive agenda for working class people across the United States, including bringing an end to the genocide in Palestine, protecting and expanding reproductive rights, defending and deepening immigrant rights, taking bold action to overcome the climate crisis and militarism here and abroad, and expanding racial justice, social justice, and gender justice. We must work to secure a real democracy in this country.

It is time to act! We need to be committed in this moment and the many intense moments to come to building community and power, to seeing each other in all our brilliance and anger, and to holding each other in our pain and joy.

This toolkit includes resources for planning what we are calling actions in a can that can mobilize and invigorate our bases, tips for showing up to a mass mobilization, and resources to help you navigate action planning. As we work to advance our issues and mitigate harm to our people, we also recognize that the conditions and incoming Trump administration have only emboldened paramilitary and armed white supremacist actors. **Before taking any action,** we encourage organizers to not only carefully assess their local terrain and protect those most vulnerable within our communities, but to also take seriously the charge of building security to scale. We've got us and we hope these resources prove helpful in the coming days, weeks, and months.

To stay up to date with our calls to action, please **TEXT TIME2ACT TO 44310**



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WHY MOBILIZATIONS AND WHY UNDER THESE CONDITIONS

On Election Night and in the coming days, certain politicians, media figures, or social media platform owners may declare victory prematurely and spread falsehoods to cast doubt on the election results, allowing their preferred candidates to claim power even if they lose.

In uncertain times, fighting for a real democracy means protecting each other. We reject efforts to silence voices, suppress votes, or fuel fear and division. Together, we will ensure that every vote is counted and every voice is honored.

Collectively we reject fear and repression by standing together in the fight for a multi-racial, radical democracy. We must organize, educate, and resist divisive forces. History shows us that united communities are unstoppable.



GENERAL RESOURCES AND SAFETY TOOLKIT

RESISTANCE HOTLINE

The Resistance Hotline is a support line supported by BlackOUT Collective, Ruckus Society, and Beautiful Trouble offering training and nonviolent action planning support to defend the integrity of our elections and build a strong progressive movement.

The Hotline is for anyone seeking support to level up or determine their next action. In the past, we've responded to calls from a wide range of people—some planning their first march, some needing very advanced technical assistance thinking through complex direct actions.

Resistance Hotline: Email: team@resistancehotline.org / IG: [@resistancehotline](https://www.instagram.com/resistancehotline) / FB: <https://www.facebook.com/resistancehotline> / Call us: 1-844-NVDA-NOW

VISION CHANGE WIN RESOURCES

VCW is an experienced social justice consulting group providing support to assist organizations in fully manifesting their missions, visions, and values. We deliver practical and effective solutions to social justice organizations working in policy advocacy, community organizing, art, culture and direct services.

VCW offers free-of-charge virtual rapid response support to social justice movements, organizations, and leaders dealing with urgent community safety incidents. We match organizers and movement groups in need with skilled safety practitioners to support them with their safety needs. All of our practitioners have between 10–40 years of experience. We offer up to three free consultation sessions per request.

Our community safety support covers a variety of community safety topics such as:

- Organizational safety
- Digital security
- Personal/home safety
- Electoral Safety
- Action/event safety

VCW Rapid Response Support: We offer virtual holistic free of charge community safety consultation support to movement groups and leaders with emerging or anticipated community safety incidents

VCW Electoral Safety Toolkit: This toolkit shares electoral safety best practices, templates, and questions to consider before, during, and after a national election in the U.S.

VCW Get In Formation Toolkit: This toolkit includes handouts, tips, and worksheets to support you in growing or building your community safety practices and/or teams.

RUCKUS RESOURCES

Ruckus is an action catalyst with over 20 years of experience in nonviolent direct action strategy, tactical training, and movement building. Ruckus comes when and where we're called. We train humble and fierce leaders and equip our people with the toolboxes they need to win.

[Ruckus Action Strategy Guide](#)

[Creative Direct Action Visuals](#)

GENERAL RESOURCES

[Woman's March distributed action toolkit](#)

A toolkit generated by the Women's March to support the execution of distributed mobilizations across the country.

[Protest Supply Checklists by Protest Ready](#)

Offers downloadable protest supply lists and packing guides.

[Beautiful Trouble's Art & Messaging Tools](#)

Art and storytelling techniques for community engagement.

[Amplifier Foundation's Artwork](#)

Provides free, high-quality protest art and messaging ideas.

[Tools from Training for Change](#)

Resources on forming and managing action teams.

[Mutual Aid Disaster Relief's Safety Guide](#)

Offers protest safety tips and emergency preparedness guides.

[Movement Law Lab](#)

Movement Lawyer Referrals

[Know your rights ACLU](#)

Information on protester rights, legal contacts, and documentation.

[National Lawyers Guild's Protest Tools](#)

Provides legal observers for protests and guidelines on protest rights.

[Access Now Digital Security Hotline](#)

Tips for secure digital communication and privacy.

[Social Movement Technologies](#)

Offers digital training for building and mobilizing action teams.

[Action Network](#)

Free tools for digital organizing, such as email and text alerts.



2024 ACTION IN A CAN

RALLY AND/OR MARCH

This tactic enables you to register your dissent collectively. You can post your protest on the map on the website to share with the broader public.

1. Decide on target, time, and location. Share with organizations locally and as widely as possible to the larger progressive and activist communities near you.
2. Make sure you recruit and assign people to support with roles including chant leaders to keep the energy up, and safety liaisons to help guide folks and mitigate unsafe conditions.
3. Make and bring signs with clear messaging on them, Try to create them in ways that will show the message clearly in photos and videos.
4. Make and bring sounds (bull horns, portable speakers and mics, etc). Laws regarding use of sound systems vary from city to city so you might want to take that into consideration.
5. Leave art or messaging behind (e.g. chalking, sticking signs in a lawn, etc).

CAR CARAVAN AND BLOC

This tactic became quite popular during the coronavirus pandemic . It's a great way to have a “march” of sorts, while maintaining physical distance, and potentially taking up even more space!!

1. Pick a time and location. Share with participants.
2. Make sure that you have clear messaging directed at your target.
3. Day of, have people in their vehicles line up as you “march” in front of your target location (e.g. State Capitol or Governor’s Mansion). People can hold signs out of their windows, attach signs to their car, and/or use bullhorns to amplify messaging.
4. Instruct cars to move slowly (around 20 miles per hour or less) and maintain adequate distancing. It’s best to have a few volunteers who can help direct the flow of traffic throughout the action.

NOISE DEMO

This tactic can be done by a crowd of people, from surrounding buildings, or from vehicles.

1. Decide on target location and amplified sound form (e.g. car horns, noise makers, recordings). You can also make a lot of noise without amplification: whistles, musical instruments, banging pots and pans...be creative.
2. At the chosen time and location, play sounds loudly.

TWITTER STORM

If you need to create an entry point for members/community from home, this is the tactic for you! It consists of crowding the target's "mentions" and potentially getting your messaging to trend.

1. Decide on time/day and messaging.
2. Have participants flood your target's mentions with relevant messaging,
3. Include hashtags. Get people tweeting at your target (@ for public visibility),
4. Respond to your target's tweets (they don't have to be related to your issue!),
5. Have conversations that can include informative information and fun cultural nods, like memes that use the hashtag and mention your target.

PHONE JAM

This tactic involves many people calling a target at once and repeatedly for a specific and strategic time.

1. Decide on time/day and messaging.
2. Develop and share a suggested script for people to support what they say.
3. Call your target (on all the numbers they have) and deliver the messaging.
4. When you get voicemail, leave a message AND continue to call until someone answers the phone.

MORNING / EVENING VIGIL FOR DEMOCRACY

This tactic involves people showing up at points of decision-making, at sites of violence, or other appropriate gathering places,

1. Decide on a target, time, and location. Share.
2. Using visuals such as caskets, signs, flowers, candles, or musical instruments show up while having participants take up space at location.
3. Make and bring sounds (bull horns, portable speakers and mics, etc.). Or make sounds without amplification: whistles, musical instruments, banging pots and pans, or encouraging an atmosphere of silence. Be creative.
4. If desired, encourage participants to leave art or messaging behind (e.g. chalking, sticking signs in a lawn, etc).



TIPS FOR MASS MOBILIZATIONS

BUILD SECURITY TO SCALE

- Integrate security into your initial planning of any mass mobilization
- Skill-up and connect your safety team members with movement-led security trainings
- Assess the numbers, and scale to size:
 - For mobilizations under 300, 1 security team member for every 20 people
 - For mobilizations over 500, 1 security team member for every 50 people

SHOWING UP FOR ACTIONS YOU HAVEN'T PLANNED

- Go with a crew & have a plan with them
- Tell someone you trust where you are and what you plan to do
- Do a risk assessment with your crew - Be clear about the nature and purpose of the event. What it is and what it isn't.
- Decide if there are roles you all will lean into during the action (de-escalation, medic, legal observer, etc)
- Keep an eye out for your folks
- Trust Your Gut
- Suspicious of someone? Ask about them and/or look them up.
- Have an exit plan
- Don't RSVP to rando protests - do your homework around them

SAFETY TIPS

- Create action agreements before you go
- Make a safety plan.
- Avoid bringing any unnecessary tech
- Memorize or write down 1-2 numbers of folks you trust in the event that you are separated from your group (and without your phone) and/or arrested.
- Bring your COVID-19 safety gear.
- Bring a bag with supplies you might need (first aid kit, portable charger, water, gloves, masks, ID, etc)

SAFETY TIPS - COUNTER PROTEST

- Ignoring is possible - Stay on message and on mission
- Know that the police in any space are not on our side.
- Remember action agreements
- If there is a threat or actual violence:

- ID threat; Isolate/move threat from activists and/or
- Move others to safety; in a secure location and support as needed (physical/medical, emotional trauma, etc)
- If you end up in “Fight”:
 - Distract, Disrupt, Disarm
 - DATTS--(Down and To The Side) move ‘off center’ of line of damage/bullet/knife/ the X
 - Improvise defensive materials/disruptive items

PHONES

- Bring a fully charged phone charger and cable if you head out with your phone.
- Use Signal.org’s Private Messenger for organizing purposes. Use a [username instead](#) of a phone number (numbers can be used to doxx folks).
- If you are considering participating in a diversity of tactics or getting arrested, consider leaving your phone at home. YOU ARE BEING GEOTRACKED.
- If you plan to use your phone to document the protest, check out the Witness [guide](#) to safely filming during protests. Consider [blurring faces in photos](#). If you use YouTube, it can be used to upload private videos and [blur faces](#). You can then [download](#) the new “blurred” video.
- DO NOT UPLOAD EASILY IDENTIFIABLE IMAGES TO SOCIAL MEDIA.– Beware of faces and tattoos in particular. Please see [this guide](#) for a checklist of responsible video practices.
- DO NOT POST ILLEGAL ACTIVITY OF YOU OR FELLOW PROTESTORS TO SOCIAL MEDIA. ASK YOUR FRIENDS TO NOT TAG YOU.
- Your phone is most secure when turned off. Practice quickly turning it off. Putting it in [emergency](#) (iOS) or [lockdown mode](#) (android), and we recommend [encrypting your icloud](#). For android, turn on the [lockdown mode \(android\)](#) option.



GENERAL KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

RIGHT TO PROTEST/ORDERS TO DISPERSE

- You have a right to spontaneously demonstrate without a permit depending on the time, place and manner.
- When participating in peaceful assembly on public property, police/law enforcement officials are required by the Constitution:
 - To give orders to disperse
 - orders should be able to be heard – amplified – heard by the entire crowd
 - To give reasonable opportunities to leave

WHERE TO PROTEST

- You generally can protest in public spaces and be protected by the Constitution:
 - sidewalks, parks
- If you block streets
 - that can be violation of the law unless the police allow you to march there
- The more people you have, the safer you will always be and the more space you generally will be given
- If you have a chance, look into permit laws

SIGNS AND AMPLIFICATION

- Check your local laws
- Generally, signs without wood/metal are ok

BEST PRACTICES PREPARING FOR PROTEST

- Contact a local movement lawyer
 - They should know the laws regarding permits and how to access them
 - They are likely to have a sense of how law enforcement will respond and police policies, laws, arrests, charges, court proceedings
 - You can check the most recent protest-related laws in your state here:
<https://www.icnl.org/usprotestlawtracker/>
- It's best to have a lawyer who is on-call (and off-site) to advocate for the release of anyone who is arrested during the action or who is particularly vulnerable
 - May be a trusted public defender
- If possible, it is best to have legal observers:
 - A team that records all police activity and does not intervene in physical or verbal incidents usually wears matching hats or shirts to distinguish it from a protest security team.

JAIL SUPPORT

- You should know what police department people will likely be taken too
- A team who can go to the jail where people are likely to be booked if arrested who can stay as long as possible, hopefully until all are released
- The team would provide food, comfort, and support to people released from jail and ensure folks have a way home after release

VULNERABLE PEOPLE

- If there are vulnerable people in the crowd and there is a possibility of arrest, make sure they are not alone.
 - Trans and gender non-binary folks
 - Undocumented people
 - Pregnant people and children
 - Elders
 - Anyone with health concerns

IF YOU ARE BEING FALSELY ARRESTED

- You have a right to argue with an officer verbally
- **It is illegal to physically resist an arrest** - even when it is a false arrest

IF YOU ARE APPROACHED BY AN OFFICER

- If stopped, ask, **“Am I free to go?”**
- If the answer is yes, walk away

IMMIGRATION STATUS

- If they ask you or others about their immigration status, you do not have to answer.
- Folks who are undocumented must carry proof of their immigration status

STOP AND FRISK

- If they stop you, they only have a right to pat you down outside of your clothes if they think you are armed.
- **Say you do not consent to a search.**

IF ARRESTED

- If you are arrested, it does not mean you are entitled to be read your Miranda rights
- You are only given Miranda rights if they ask about the circumstances leading to your arrest or the demonstration
 - If they ask you what happened or what was the purpose of the demonstration, who organized it, etc. **Do not tell them.**

- **Affirmatively say, “I am going to remain silent. I want to talk to a lawyer.”**
- **DO NOT LIE.** This can lead to more charges
- They are entitled to ask for your name and DOB. They may ask for your I.D.
 - If you do not provide this information, it may delay your getting processed and released
- You can be held for up to 48 hours, sometimes longer if a mass arrest, before being released or going to court.
- You will not have your personal effects with you like your phone (and they may search your belongings – be mindful of what you bring to a protest)
 - Best to turn off fingerprint or face ID on your phone in case they want you to open it
- Best to have:
 - Have a # to a lawyer written on your arm
 - Have a # for jail support # too
- You may not have access to medications, if you need them you need to demand them

VIDEOTAPING

- In many jurisdictions have a right to videotape police encounters and protests
- Consult a lawyer before circulating that video – it could be helpful but also get people in trouble

MORE KNOW YOUR RIGHTS RESOURCES

- KYR for Immigrants who are not undocumented:
<https://www.cunyclear.org/know-your-rights>
- Civil Liberties Defense Center
Know Your Rights for Activists, Immigrants and Youth:
<https://cldc.org/know-your-rights/>
- National Lawyers Guild
<https://www.nlg.org/know-your-rights/>
- Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
https://www.cair.com/know_your_rights/your-rights-while-protesting/