



# PLANNING LEGAL SUPPORT FOR BAY AREA DEMONSTRATIONS AND DIRECT ACTION

[NEW legal support request form: bayrequest.protestlaw.org](https://bayrequest.protestlaw.org)

[NEW demo legal hotline \(activated by request\): 510-250-1700](tel:510-250-1700)

Legal support for current Bay Area protests is a collaboration by the following groups:

**Legal Solidarity Bay Area (LSBA)** is a legal worker collective committed to mutual aid, an each-one-teach-one approach to legal support that demystifies the criminal justice system and builds power for our movements in confrontation with the legal system. LSBA runs the legal hotline, taking calls from people in jail, coordinating jail visits when needed, and tracking cases through the early phases of the court system so people can get the support they need and start organizing for legal solidarity.

**The Center for Protest Law & Litigation**, a project of the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund, brings high impact civil rights litigation and does legal, educational and investigative work to fight back against attacks on civil rights and defend the right to protest, resist, organize, and dismantle systems of oppression in partnership with movements and frontline communities. It is coordinating the legal support collaborative and working with the other groups to advise and defend movement activists. <https://www.justiceonline.org/>

**The National Lawyers Guild (NLG)** was founded in 1937 "in the service of the people, to the end that human rights shall be regarded as more sacred than property interests" and the Bay Area Chapter has been supporting protests since the 1960s. Its members now include lawyers, law students, activists, legal workers, and jailhouse lawyers and it is active on many issues. It sends Legal Observers in green hats to monitor law enforcement at demos, mobilizes lawyers to advise and defend protestors, and more. <https://nlgsf.org/>

**The Bay Area Anti-Repression Committee (ARC)** stands against political repression and is in solidarity with all those who challenge the state, capitalism and other forms of systemic oppression and domination. ARC provides support in the form of education, information and referrals, and helps track cases and support arrestees. It also manages an anti-repression bail fund. Bail funds are offered regardless of the nature of charges or actions taken during a protest. ARC is not an organization but an autonomous collective providing anti-repression support.  
<https://antirepressionbayarea.com/>

**Oakland Law Collaborative (Oaklaw)** consists of 5 separate small law firms and 2 organizations who share resources in doing human rights and social justice work. The radical attorneys of Oaklaw can provide protest-related legal consultations and know your rights trainings, including on immigration and employment rights.  
<https://oaklaw.org/>

## **What legal support CAN do, IF volunteers are available**

### ***Before the Demo:***

- Provide Know Your Rights/ anti-repression education and legal briefings;
- Meet with organizers to answer legal questions regarding planned actions, assess legal needs, and discuss planning legal support for your action;
- Train members of your group as NLG Legal Observers;
- Train members of your group to help staff our legal hotline, with sufficient lead time.

### ***During the Demo:***

- Provide Legal Observers to monitor the police, document arrests and police misconduct, and help communicate with off-scene legal support regarding arrests;
- Line up lawyers to deal with arrests, which may include jail visits and jail release procedures when needed, and immediate court hearings. If arrestees are booked in jail, joint coordination from legal and organizers is essential through release and initial court date;
- Provide a legal hotline. The legal hotline must be requested in advance, and volunteers must be available.

### ***After the Demo:***

- We will track any arrestees until everyone is out of custody and will track their cases through the legal system.

- We will try to find lawyers to meet with and defend arrestees on criminal charges. We can often find lawyers willing to work for free, and often work with Public Defenders and court appointed lawyers.
- We may work with activists to follow up on police misconduct issues and/or refer activists to lawyers or other potential legal resources if possible.

### What legal support and legal observers do NOT do

- Communicate with the police on behalf of the demonstrators, except in an emergency or some particular situation where this has been agreed on.
- We do not collect information from action participants prior to arrests.
- We do not handle jail support logistics such as picking people up when they are released, contacting employers etc.
- CPLL, NLG, LSBA and Oaklaw cannot provide bail or bonds, but the Bay Area Anti Repression Committee may be able to in certain cases. See <https://antirepressionbayarea.com/>

### What we expect from YOU

**Request legal support as far in advance as possible by filling out this form:**

<https://bayrequest.protestlaw.org>. This alerts all of the legal support groups. You can indicate on the form that there are secure details you need to share over Signal or in person and someone will get back to you.

Especially if you anticipate arrests, work with us ahead of time to plan for a legal support team.

- Train people considering risking arrest so they know what to expect. We can provide a legal portion to a direct-action training or a stand-alone legal training. Make sure that people who plan to attend the action have reviewed the checklist for action participants (on the next page).
- If arrests occur, it is CRUCIAL that we quickly obtain a complete list of arrestees with complete legal names, contact info, dates of birth, court dates and emails. In the Bay Area *most* demo arrestees are released from custody the same day with a citation, rather than held in jail. This may occur at a temporary processing area (often near the jail) or at a police station. Arrestees can also be cited out from the jail itself. Action organizers should station support people wherever arrestees are being released and collect a list of arrestees with legal names, dates of birth, and court dates. We will provide instructions and a link to a secure online form for arrestee information.

## What is Jail Support?

Jail Support (JS) refers to the solidarity extended to those arrested by showing up at the jail to welcome folks home after release and provide general support and solidarity post arrest. Jail Support can be done by anyone and is autonomously organized for actions.

### Do you need to fill out pre-arrest forms in order to receive legal support from this collaborative?

The simple answer is no, you do not need to pre-fill out arrest forms in order to receive legal support when arrested. Organizers may ask people to pre-fill out JS forms as part of the Jail Support they are offering which is independent of the legal collaborative and support we offer. We do not share your personal and confidential information with Jail Support but Jail Support may assist in providing the legal collaborative with information.

## CHECKLIST FOR ACTION PARTICIPANTS

Whenever you're planning on resisting the state there is always a possibility for arrest even if you are not planning to get arrested. While we do not ask for pre-filled out personal information before an action, we do recommend that anyone attending an action have at least one trusted person (who is not at the action) who knows what to do in case you are arrested. Make sure to have this person's number memorized to provide to hotline workers in case you are arrested. Calls from jail can be infrequent and you may only have a short amount of time to speak.

**Your trusted person should have the following information ready to call into the legal hotline in case they suspect you have been arrested at the action:**

1. The legal hotline number provided for the action you are attending. For most actions in the Bay this is the hotline number for Legal Solidarity Bay Area (510) 250-1700.
2. Your legal identifying information such as name and date of birth as listed on your identification.
3. If you need prescription medications in jail, make sure they know the name of the medication and dosage amounts to communicate to hotline and have access to the medication, and to the prescribing doctor's information to be able to

obtain a copy of the prescription, to provide the jail if needed.

4. Whether or not you consent to be bailed out and when.

- Some people wish to not be bailed out for political reasons. Some choose to remain in jail during the entirety of their case or until arraignment to see if charges are not filed or will be reduced.
- ARC only provides bail with explicit consent directly communicated by the arrestee to the legal hotline or by their identified support person who received this information directly from the arrestee.

5. Who do you consent to be your co-signer for bail, including their name and contact information?

- A cosigner is a person who vouches you will go to all court appearances and is responsible for paying your full bail amount if not.
- Your co-signer will have access to sensitive information about your case such as charges and court dates. ARC needs to know who you consent to sign these legally binding documents about your case before proceeding with bail procedures.

6. Let this person know of any personal needs to attend to and what the specific plans are such as caring for children, pets, communication with employers, transportation from jail, and other logistical needs.

- Consider whether this person needs a key to your house and names and numbers of other friends and family members to communicate to.
- Think through if there is anything you definitely do not want people to do such as posting on social media that you have been arrested.