

If you decide to engage in a public protest, here are some safety tips to keep in mind before, during and after the protest. We understand the protesting is an active way to bring awareness, education and advocacy and have provided a list of ways to keep you and others safe.

### Pre - Protest:

- Research the protest itself and gauge the potential for violence.
  - Look at the map of the area for the protest and buildings and other resources nearby.
  - If you bring a sign – make sure that you use bold, big and legible letters and phrases.
- Make a plan for how you will get to and from the protest safely.
  - Use the buddy system by asking a friend to go with you.
  - Let someone you trust know where you are going and your plan for the day.
  - Write at least two emergency contacts with telephone numbers directly onto your hand or arm with permanent marker in case you are arrested. Have someone in mind that can post bail and a lawyer if you can.
  - If you are going with others: have a plan if you were to get separated and where to meet up or check-in.
- Protect yourself.
  - Bring multiple bottles of water (sports cap plastic bottles can be useful for eye washing if someone has been pepper sprayed or tear gassed).
  - Bring snacks that are portable and will withstand various temperatures.
  - Bring first aid kits, wet wipes, tissues, hand sanitizer and masks for you and others (you never know when you might need extra masks or sanitizer).
  - Remember that cannabis is still federally illegal, so even if you are in a legal state, the DEA can enforce federal law.
  - Wear glasses/sunglasses/goggles/hat for eye protection. Wear your hair up and out of your face and do not wear contact lenses, eye makeup or jewelry.
  - Wear long sleeves or other layered clothing and comfortable protective shoes (it can be helpful to have extra clothing).
  - Fully charge your phone, and consider bringing an extra battery pack and charger. Enable a passcode on your phone and disable finger print and face ID.
- Consider who is in your household and their health. Do not risk exposing them to SARS-CoV-2, especially if they are at higher risk for COVID-19 complications.
  - There are other ways to do antiracist activism besides protesting in the streets. This may look like educating yourself and the people around you, donating to social justice organizations and/or signing petitions.

### During – Protest:

- Avoid touching your face as much as possible. Use hand sanitizer after touching anything and consider wearing gloves or being mindful of the things you touch.
- Drink water frequently to stay hydrated.
- If you get pepper spray or tear gas in your eyes, mouth, or nose – DO NOT RUB YOUR EYES and spit it out immediately. Blinking your eyes and rinsing it out with cold clean water is the most effective way to treat it. DO NOT use milk because the goal is not to neutralize, but to flush. Try to get away from the area as quickly as possible and hold your breath for as long as possible

(breathing in tear gas causes extreme chest pain, increased mucous production and vomiting). Because of the virus, try coughing into the mask that you're discarding and throw masks away in trash bins or otherwise put them in baggies to wash later.

- Work to reduce droplet transmission. 1. Cough and sneeze into your elbow 2. Avoid sharing food/drinks and any other substances 3. Avoid touching when possible.
- Be careful about what you share and blur out protestors to protect their identities. Do not share any photos of protesters on social media.
- Document injuries caused by police with photos and note the time and location.
- Stay focused, calm and present – there is a lot going on around you and it is important to survey your entire surroundings at all times.
- Don't shake hands, hug, share drinks or engage in long face-to-face conversations and maintain social distance as much as possible.

### Post – Protest:

- Change your clothes ASAP after the protest, shower and disinfect your belongings (phone, keys, anything that was with you).
- Basic Health Maintenance: Drink water, eat, and get rest.
- Mental Health Maintenance: Check in with yourself (particularly POC), get support, make time to debrief and recuperate.
- Self-Care Maintenance: 1. Debrief with someone about the protest (talk, write it down, share on social media, etc.) 2. Focus on caring for your whole body (What does your mind, body and spirit need to heal and re-energize?)
- If possible: Consider a 2-week quarantine and ask allies to do the same. It is possible to have and transmit COVID-19 without showing any symptoms.
- If you can – Self isolate and get tested for COVID-19 if testing is accessible for you, to maintain your health and your community's health and well-being.
- Monitor yourself for COVID-19 symptoms and continue to prioritize your mental, physical and spiritual well-being.
- Do not share any photos of protesters on social media.

### Know Your Rights

- **FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND ASSEMBLY:** Everyone has the right to carry their expression to the streets.
- **RIGHT TO MEDICAL ASSISTANCE:** If you are injured you have the right to medical assistance without delay.
- **PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY:** Law enforcement must facilitate and not restrict a peaceful public assembly.
- **FREEDOM FROM ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION:** If you are arrested you have the right to know why you were arrested and you have the right promptly after you are arrested to have access to a lawyer and to your family.
- Learn more about your rights [here](#).