



Labor Protest Safety Guidelines

*This information is for general guidance and should not be considered legal advice

With reports that militarized Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents may be deployed to Seattle, immigrant rights organizations and labor unions are calling for a disciplined response that prioritizes the safety of immigrants.

Workplace raids are intentionally designed to sow panic and incite a response. The Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) has been on the ground responding to immigration actions targeting workers for nearly a decade, and has clear guidance for those who want to support our immigrant communities now facing heightened threats.

How to Protest Peacefully and Safely

The Trump Administration seeks to invoke chaos to justify a violent and authoritarian response. It's our duty to exercise our First Amendment right to gather and protest *peacefully* and *safely*. Violence, in any form, creates the potential for further escalation targeting immigrant communities.

It is important to distinguish between a mass mobilization like a protest and a rapid response action at the site of an immigration workplace raid, for example. In the case of workplace raids, **WAISN asks people not to show up at job sites and confront ICE or federal law enforcement if a raid occurs, as this increases the danger for impacted immigrant workers and makes it harder for WAISN to gather information.**

Here are key tips for a disciplined protest.

DO NOT:

- **Trust unknown individuals:** If individuals attempt to instigate conflict or disrupt the action, notify a safety captain or a trusted person. Be aware of intentional agitators.
- **Engage in confrontation:** If altercations arise, do your best to back away or leave.
- **Fall into traps:** Be mindful that some provocations are designed to justify forceful retaliation.

- **Carry items like non-prescription drugs or weapons**
- **Attend unless you are a US citizen:** Non-US citizens, including lawful permanent residents, should avoid attending protests, as they face additional risks. Now is the time for our citizen labor siblings to step up.

DO:

- **Plan ahead:** Know your route, exit points, and emergency contacts.
- **Prepare essentials:** Bring water, snacks, a first-aid kit, and written emergency contact information.
- **Stay alert:** Be vigilant of your surroundings and remain calm when interacting with law enforcement.
- **Keep legal knowledge handy:** Understand your rights and stay informed about local laws.
- **Carry identification:** Carry a government-issued ID
- **Tell a trusted person:** Let someone know your protest plan, including location and expected return time. Consider bringing a protest buddy and setting a rendezvous point if you are separated.
- **Be aware of surveillance:** Data from your phone can be accessed by law enforcement. Depending on the action you are engaged in, leave your phone at home, or, if you need it with you, turn it off while you are at the action. Turning off biometrics like Face ID or fingerprint access on your phone can also protect your privacy.

Know Your Rights

Everyone in the U.S. has constitutional rights, no matter citizenship or immigration status. But there are nuances, important to understand when interacting with federal agents. WAISN has vetted [resources](#) in a dozen languages; study these guides and share them with your coworkers.

- **Protest rights:** The First Amendment protects peaceful assembly, but property destruction is not protected.
- **Photography:** If lawfully present in a public space, you may photograph anything in plain view.
- **Police stops:** Ask, “*Am I free to go?*” If they say yes, calmly walk away. If they say no, say you are exercising your right to stay silent. Do not answer questions. Be aware that it is illegal to lie to law enforcement, even unintentionally.
- **If arrested:** Say nothing, invoke your right to stay silent, and ask for a lawyer immediately. Do not speak to law enforcement, sign, or agree to anything without legal counsel.

Interaction with Law Enforcement

- Do not talk to law enforcement.
- Obey directions given by officers.
- Stay calm and respectful.
- Keep your hands visible and do not argue, resist, or obstruct police, even if you feel your rights are being violated.

What to Wear

- **Clothing:** Wear nondescript, solid-colored, layered clothing. Cover tattoos.
- **Shoes:** Comfortable, closed-toed footwear.
- **Accessories:** Be prepared to be outside with a bandana, hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen

Additional Resources:

- [ACLU Protest Rights and Safety Center](#)
- [Human Rights Campaign: Tips for Peaceful Protesting & Safety](#)
- [WIRED: How to Protest Safely](#): What to Bring, What to Do, and What to Avoid
- **WAISN hotline:** WAISN runs a deportation defense hotline for people who witness ICE activity to call in. They then vet reports and deploy legal assistance and observers as needed. Call or text the hotline at 1-844-724-3737. If a raid is occurring at a union-represented workplace, call and notify the union.
- [AFL-CIO Frontline Solidarity Toolkit](#)