



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

Guides

Our guides are designed to help support you in dealing with the police.

We are not lawyers. The information in these guides comes from our collective experience in supporting people in protest situations, and is offered in solidarity. It is not formal legal advice, and should not be treated as such. The list also includes links to some guides on external websites from partners including Netpol.

We are in the process of re-formatting existing guides and writing new ones for this website. Keep checking back to see what is new, and [let us know](#) if things don't work as they should.

Supporting Yourself

- [Key Advice When Going on a Protest](#)
- [Know Your Rights](#) booklet
- [2 minute Know Your Rights video](#) (Netpol)
- [Stop and Search](#)
- [Being Trans and Protesting](#)
- [Being Trans and Protesting](#) booklet
- [Looking after your health on actions](#)
- [Trauma and Emotional Support](#)

Arrest & Court

- [What happens if I'm Arrested?](#)
- [I've been Arrested! What Next?](#)
- [Should I ignore Police Bail?](#)
- [The Post-Charge Legal Process](#)

Other Considerations

- [DBS checks and being arrested on protests](#)
- [Demonstrations and International Students](#)
- [Do you have to give your fingerprints to police?](#) (Freedom Press)
- [Info on immigration status and protest](#) (JCWI)
- [Coronavirus and protest](#)
- [Wearing masks on protest](#) (Netpol)
- [Your Rights and Mobile Fingerprinting](#) (Netpol)

Supporting Others

- [How to give Police Station Support](#)
- [My Friend has been Arrested!](#)
- [Support for People going to Court](#)
- [What is a Legal Observer?](#)
- [Witness to an Arrest or Police Violence?](#)
- [Guide to filming the police](#) (Netpol)
- [Downloadable Know Your Rights graphics](#)

Organising an Action



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

- [Planning an Action](#)
- [Preparing for Police Station Support in Advance](#)
- [Protesting on Private Property](#)
- [Guide to Injunctions](#)
- [‘Know Your Rights’ Mic Check](#)

Protest Laws

- [Filming and Photographs at Actions](#)
- [Laws Commonly Used at Protests](#)
- [Obstructing Workplaces: Trade Union Legislation](#)
- [Police Liaison Officers](#)
- [Guide to kettles](#) (Netpol)
- [Guide to the Police Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022](#)
- [Guide to the new Public Order Act 2023](#)

Challenging the Police

- [Holding the Police to Account](#)
- [How do I find out what Information the Police hold on me?](#)
- [Making a Claim Against the Police](#)
- [Making a Complaint Against the Police](#)
- [What is a Judicial Review?](#)

Resources

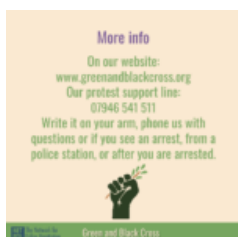
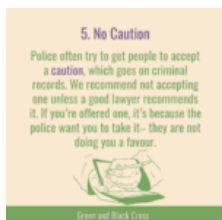
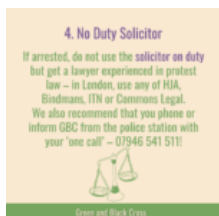
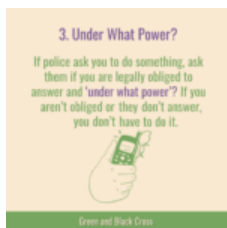
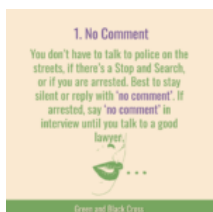
We have a number of **graphics** that are useful for **social media** etc:

[Downloadable ZIP folder of all of our graphics and resources](#)





Guides, Resources & Other Organisations





Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

The above 7 graphics merged into a video can be found [here](#)



Bustcards

We have a page of **BUSTCARDS** for different regions of England

Key contacts for other organisations

- **07946 541 511** – protest support line. *Everyone should also write this on their arm, ideally in marker pen.*
- 07761 911121 – Manchester protest support line
- Need a lawyer for something protest related? Check out [Netpol's Lawyer's list](#)
- Black Protest Legal Support – BlackProtestLegal@protonmail.com
- Legal questions and court support – Activist Court Aid Brigade, courtsupport@protonmail.com
- Contact GBC Resources collective – gbcresources@protonmail.com
- Contact GBC Trainings collective – gbctrainings@protonmail.com
- Legal Observer callouts and coordination – legal-observer-network@protonmail.com
- Y-Stop for non-protest Stop and Searches – <https://y-stop.org/>
- London Campaign Against Police and State Violence – <https://londonagainstopoliceviolence.wordpress.com>

Coronavirus & Protest Law

From Monday 19th July 2021 the Coronavirus ACT, which had implications for protest, is revoked. There are no longer any restrictions on protests.

Some people may still be affected by arrest or fixed penalty notice (FPN) fines from recent protest or actions, which took place before 19th July. If you have been issued a FPN and would like to challenge it, please contact one of our [recommended solicitors](#), or talk through options on the protest support line 07946 541 511



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

The Coronavirus Act had introduced new police powers in England and Wales which had implications for protest. There are also changes to the way police interviews and court hearings are being conducted. (Also see [guide to rules in Scotland](#))

It had been updated several times, most recently March 29th 2021 to start to ease restrictions, including for protest. ([The latest legislation for England](#) and [for Wales](#), can be seen here).

As restrictions begin to ease police have been reverting to using the usual public order offences. For people still caught up in legal procedures, there is a brief history of the legislation below.

June put us into 'step 3' where groups of 50 will be allowed to meet outdoors, but there were **exceptions for protests**. The system of 'tiers' had been dropped. for further details see our page [Coronavirus police powers and their use on protests](#).

Previously we had been seeing [widespread use of Coronavirus powers to disrupt protests and in the community](#), which are disproportionately being used against people of colour, and [may be challengeable](#).

Previous changes to legislation were following lockdown in January 2021, updates at the end of the November 2020 lockdown and the introduction of Tier 4 in December 2020.

For information about the implications of Coronavirus-related legislation for **protesters**:

1. [Health – including face masks](#)
2. [Coronavirus police powers and their use on protests](#)

For a **general guide** to the powers created by the Coronavirus Act in England & Wales, please see these guides from [Bristol Defendant Solidarity](#).

For a guide to the powers created in [Scotland](#) please see [SCALP's guide](#)

Please note that Coronavirus related law is changing rapidly. This guide was last updated on 24th June 2021



Key Advice when Going on a Protest

If you're heading out on a protest, take a read of our key messages and download a copy of our latest [bustcard](#).

We suggest that you take a note of our protest support phone number and of a criminal solicitor with protest experience. Write them down on something the police will struggle to take from you, such as an arm or a leg.

Protest Support Line: 07946 541 511

[Find a Solicitor with protest experience](#)



Key Messages

- [No Comment](#)
- [No Personal Details](#)
- [Under What Power?](#)
- [No Duty Solicitor](#)
- [No Caution](#)

No Comment

You do not need to answer police questions, so don't.

This is for your own protection and for the protection of others.

The police will try to pressure and deceive you into incriminating yourself. Instead of trying to decide when it seems 'safe' to answer, just say "No comment" to all questions – during 'informal chats', in the police van and especially in interview.

If your friend in the next cell knows you aren't going to talk, they will feel better able not to talk themselves. Remember, interviews only help the police – they will not interview you if they already have enough evidence to charge you.

A good solicitor will sometimes suggest that you make a prepared statement in interview. In that case, you or your solicitor will read the statement and you should answer "No comment" to any more questions.

For a longer discussion, the booklet "NO COMMENT" produced by the [Legal Defence and Monitoring Group](#) is excellent (note that it is fairly old and we cannot guarantee that all the content is up-to-date).

[? Key Messages ?](#)

No Personal Details

You do not have to give personal details under ANY stop and search power, so don't.

On protests, the police often use searches as a way of finding out who is present, both for intelligence purposes and to intimidate you.

Police also use arrest as a means of gathering information, particularly when they arrest a large number of people together ("mass arrest").

As a default, you do NOT have to give your personal details to the police at any point during the arrest process.

We recommend not giving personal details to the police for as long as possible – for more information on why, see the page "Do I have to give my details?". If you have been arrested and taken to the police station you may wish to give your name, address and date of birth at the custody desk to speed your release. Police will usually check the address and may visit at a later date.

Once you reach court, you can be required to give your name, address, date of birth and nationality.

There are a few situations in which police may have a power to require personal details: if someone is driving a vehicle (or another licensed activity); if they are being fined under a Fixed Penalty Notice; under a particular anti-social behaviour power (which should not generally be used against protesters); or if there is a particular by-law (for example, in a port or airport).

[? Key Messages ?](#)

Under What Power?

Ask "What power?" to challenge the police to act lawfully

Some police officers rely on you not knowing the law. If you are asked to do something by a police officer, ask them what power (i.e. what law) they are using and why they are using it. Make a note of what was said, by whom (numbers) as soon as possible afterwards.

Don't let them turn this into a situation where they ask you questions though – just walk away once you have your answer, and



remember [No Comment!](#)

[Key Messages](#)

No Duty Solicitor

Use a recommended [solicitor with protest experience](#)

The “duty solicitor” is the solicitor who is present at the police station. They may come from any firm of solicitors, which means they almost certainly know nothing about protest.

Duty solicitors often give bad advice to protesters; we recommend you always use a [good solicitor](#) who knows about protest.

[Key Messages](#)

No Caution

Cautions are an admission of guilt

Offering you a caution is a way the police may ask you to admit guilt for an offence without having to charge you. It is an easy win for the police, as they don't have to provide any evidence or convince a court of your guilt.

At the very least, you should never accept a caution without taking advice from a [good solicitor](#).

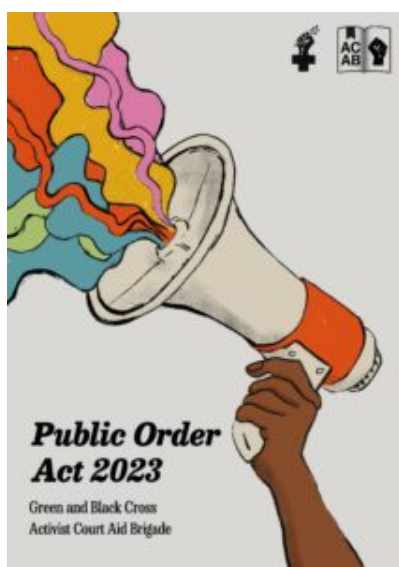
[Key Messages](#)

Guide to the Public Order Act 2023

The Public Order Act 2023 has received a lot of attention for the impact it will have on activists in England and Wales. This guide is designed to help you understand the law as it is written. It is hard to know exactly how the measures will impact protesters until more time has passed. If you are arrested or threatened with arrest under any section covered here, please let us

know by calling the Protest Support Line on **07946 541511** so we can better understand how these changes are being used.

To help you understand the offences and changes to the law, in collaboration with our comrades in the [Activist Court Aid Brigade](#), we've put together a guide (below) with all the key information activists will need





Click above to view the PDF guide

PLEASE NOTE: At the time of writing, a chunk of the Act is not yet in force, meaning it cannot be used unless and until it is 'commenced' in Parliament. We've noted this next to each heading where it applies, and will try to update the guide and this page as this changes. To be sure if this has changed when you're reading this, [see here on the legislation website](#).

'Know Your Rights' Mic Check

'Know Your Rights' Mic Check

(Call each line – the crowd should repeat each one after you. Call 'Mic check!' at the beginning until you get a response and people work out what's going on.)

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Mic check!

Know your rights!

If police talk to you
No matter the question
Protect yourself
Protect other people
Say 'No Comment'
The police officers in blue tabards are also police officers.
Their job is to gain information about protestors.
Say 'No Comment!'
'No Comment!'

If police tell you to do something
Check they're acting lawfully
Ask 'Under What Power?'
'Under What Power?'
'Under What Power?'

If you get stop and searched
Don't give police personal details
This includes your visa status
No personal details!
No personal details!

An exception is
If you get arrested
Many people
Give their name, address and date of birth
At the custody desk.

If you get arrested
Ask for a solicitor



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

On the bustcard
For example
Call ITN
Or call HJA
Or call Bindmans.*

Don't accept a caution
That's saying you're guilty
It's an easy win for the police
You might not get found guilty later
No caution!
No caution!

If you get arrested
Call the Protest Support Line number
It's on the bustcard.
Write this on your arm.

Protect yourself
Protect other people
No comment!
No comment!

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*If you're outside of London look at the bustcard for your region to check what lawyers to recommend. If you're not sure say the ones listed here anyways.

Stop and Search

The police have specific powers that allow them in some circumstances to stop and search you. These powers are used as an intimidation tactic and to exert control on a protest or in a community, especially minority communities. It is also used for intelligence gathering. The best way to protect yourself is to know the law and not to talk.

Stop and Search is applied disproportionately in a **racist manner**. Black men are up to 17 times more likely to be stopped and searched than their white counterparts.

Some forces have been known to abuse stop and search procedure in order to **harass protesters**, and we know that stop and search tactics are used for **intelligence gathering purposes**.

You do not have to give you personal details under any search power.

This guide will cover what those are and offer some advice for when you are stopped by the police.

1. [When can I be stopped?](#)
2. [When can I be searched?](#)
3. [What can I be searched for?](#)
4. [Blanket search powers](#)
5. [What is reasonable suspicion?](#)
6. [What happens when I get searched?](#)
7. [What to look out for when being searched](#)
8. [What happens if they find what they are looking for?](#)
9. [Seizing an item](#)
10. [Getting a receipt](#)



11. [Phones and Cameras](#)
12. [Removing Masks](#)
13. [Challenge Your Search](#)

Bustcard

Bustcards are an essential item to take with you on a protest.

They provide you with our key advice, information on stop and search and arrest, and the names and numbers of solicitors who can help you.

We often hear stories from people who weren't carrying a bustcard as they didn't expect to be arrested. Always write the name of a solicitor and the number for the Protest Support Line (07946 541 511) on your arm. Don't be caught out!

Download a bustcard:

If you notice any problems with any bustcards please email gbcresources@protonmail.com.

For resources for **Scotland** please see [Scottish Activist & Legal Project](#).

English-language bustcards:

All bustcards have the same information on your rights and the names and numbers of local lawyers who are experienced in protest cases.

1. [London](#)
2. [South East & East of England](#)
3. [Bristol](#)
4. [South West](#)
5. [East Midlands](#)
6. [West Midlands](#)
7. [North East](#)
8. [Manchester & North West](#)
9. [Leeds & West Yorkshire](#)
10. [Sheffield & South Yorkshire](#)
11. [York & North Yorkshire](#)
12. [Cymru/Wales](#)
13. [Northern Ireland](#)

Bustcards in other languages:

Please note these have the lawyers from the London bustcard, unless stated. Please get in contact if you need it editing for other regions.

1. **Português** (Portuguese): [1 card to page; 4 cards to page](#)
2. **Español** (Spanish): [1 card to page; 4 cards to page](#)
3. **Cymraeg** (Welsh): [1 card to page; 4 cards to page](#) (Cymru/Wales regional bustcard)
4. **????** (Arabic): [1 card to page; 4 cards to page](#)



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

London

ADVICE ON ARREST

Say **"NO COMMENT"** to all police questions during casual chats, 'booking in' & interviews. At the police station you may wish to give your name, address and date of birth to speed your release. For your protection and that of other people **don't answer further questions**.

Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, instead ask the police to contact one of the following:

ITN (Irvine Thanvi Natas): 020 3909 8100

HJA (Hodge Jones & Allen): 0808 274 8226

Bindmans: 0207 833 4433 / 020 7305 5638 (out of hours)

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email
courtsupport@protonmail.com

All the firms on the London bustcard can provide cover outside of their geographical area, with advance notice.

[Download single London bustcard](#)

[Download 4-per-page London bustcard](#)

South East, Oxfordshire & East of England

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Bristol



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Kelly's: 01273 674 898 / 0800 387 463 (out of hours)
HJA (Hodge Jones & Allen): 0808 274 8226

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that **Bristol Defendant Solidarity** unless otherwise arranged: **07510 283424**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

bristoldefendantsolidarity@riseup.net
07510 283424

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

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bristoldefendantsolidarity@riseup.net

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South West England

ADVICE ON ARREST

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ITN (Irvine Thanvi Natas): 020 3909 8100
HJA (Hodge Jones & Allen): 0808 274 8226
Bindmans: 0207 833 4433 / 020 7305 5638 (out of hours)

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

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[Download single South West bustcard](#)

[Download 4-per-page South West bustcard](#)

Midlands

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact:

ITN (Irvine Thanvi Natas): 020 3909 8100
HJA (Hodge Jones & Allen): 0808 231 5058

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

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North East England

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact:

Singleton Winn Connell (Newcastle upon Tyne): 0191 2658817/ out of hours 07904190124

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email
courtsupport@protonmail.com

[Download single North East bustcard](#)
[Download 4-per-page North East bustcard](#)

Manchester & North West England

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact:

Robert Lizar: 0161 227 7777 / 07900 998 999 (out of hours)
Hodge Jones & Allen (HJA): 0808 231 5058

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07761 911 121 (Manchester) / 07946 541 511**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
Manchester line: 07761 911 121
National 24/7 line: 07946 541 511

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email
courtsupport@protonmail.com

[Download single Manchester & North West bustcard](#)
[Download 4-per-page Manchester & North West bustcard](#)

Leeds & West Yorkshire



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **NOT** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station.

NO DUTY SOLICITOR: Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact one of the following:

Ison Harrison: 0113 200 7400/ 0113 399 6181 (out of hours)

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).

You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.

If you are or appear under 18 an **appropriate adult** should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

If you witness an arrest, want support or have legal questions about protest:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

Legal Observers are independent volunteers who gather evidence on behalf of protesters and act to counter police intimidation and misbehaviour. Read more about your rights and protest legislation:

www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email
courtsupport@protonmail.com

[Download single Leeds & West Yorkshire bustcard](#)
[Download 4-per-page Leeds & West Yorkshire bustcard](#)

Sheffield & South Yorkshire

ADVICE ON ARREST

Say **"NO COMMENT"** to all police questions during casual chats, 'booking in' & interviews. At the police station you may wish to give your name, address and date of birth to speed your release. For your protection and that of other people **don't answer further questions**.

Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station.

Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, instead ask the police to contact:

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York & North Yorkshire

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station.

Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact:

Howard & Byrne (York): 01904 431421

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).

You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.

If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

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07946 541 511

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www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email
courtsupport@protonmail.com



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[Download single York & North Yorkshire bustcard](#)
[Download 4-per-page York & North Yorkshire bustcard](#)

Wales

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact:

Hodge Jones & Allen (HJA): 0808 274 8226 - this firm covers the Wales area when told of a protest in advance

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**). You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language. If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You're not legally required to give your name and address under any stop and search power, see below website for more details. Legally you must be told the reason and the power that you are being searched under.

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www.greenandblackcross.org

After arrest &/or if you have a court date & want advice email **courtsupport@protonmail.com**

[Download single Wales bustcard](#)
[Download 4-per-page Wales bustcard](#)

CYNGOR WRTH GAEL EICH ARESTIO

Atebwrch gyda **"DIM SYLW"** / **"NO COMMENT"** i bob cwestiwn a ofynnir gan yr heddlu yn ystod sgysiau anffurfiol, pan maen nhw'n mynd â chi i'r orsaf heddlu, neu yn ystod cyfweiliad. Yn yr orsaf heddlu gallwch ddewis rhoi eich enw, cyfeiriad a dyddiad geni i'r heddlu er mwyn cyflwynu eich rhyddhad. **Er mwyn gofalu am eich diogelwch chi a phobl eraill, peidiwch ag ateb unrhyw gwestiynau pellach.**

Peidiwch a derbyn **RHYBUDD** heb gyngor cyfreithiwr. Mae rhybudd ffurfiol yn anwydd eich bod chi'n cyfaddell eich bod chi'n euog, ac yn cael ei nodi ar gyfrifiadur cenedlaethol yr heddlu.

Mae hawl **CYNGOR CYFREITHIOL AM DDIM** gyda chi yn yr orsaf heddlu. Fel arfer, dyw'r cyfreithiwr ar ddyletswydd dim yn brofiadol gyda deddfau protest, felly rydyn ni'n eich cynghori i ofyn i'r heddlu gysylltu â:

Hodge Jones & Allen (HJA): 0808 274 8226 - oes ydyn nhw wedi cael eu rhybyddio o flaen llaw, mae'r cwmni hwn yn gweithio yng Nghymru.

Mae hawl rhoi gwybod i rywun eich bod wedi cael eich arestio gyda chi (gallwch y **Protest Support Line** os nad oes gyda chi gynllun yn barod: **07946 541 511**).

Mae hawl cyfeithwr gyda chi, os nad ydych chi'n siarad Saesneg fel iaith gyntaf.

Os ydych chi'n iau nag 18 mlaydd oed, neu os ydych chi'n edrych yn iau nag 18, maen rhaid i'r heddlu gysylltu ag oedolyn addas.

Oes CWESTIYNAU CYFREITHIOL gyda chi am BROTESTIO?

STOPIO A CHWILIO: Does dim pŵer stopio a chwilio sy'n eich gorfodi chi i roi eich enw neu eich cyfeiriad i'r heddlu, ewch i'r wefan isod am fwy o fanylion. Mae rhaid i'r heddlu esbonio iddych chi pam maen nhw yn eich stopio, ac o dan pa bŵer.

Os ydych chi'n gweld rhywun yn cael eu harestio, os oes angen cymorth amych chi, neu os oes gyda chi unrhyw gwestiynau am brotestio, ebostiwrch neu ffoniwch:

courtsupport@protonmail.com
07946 541 511

Gwirfyddolwyr yw Arsylwyr Cyfreithiol sy'n casglu tystiolaeth ar gyfer protestwyr ac yn atal bygythiadau a chamffelfio o'r heddlu. Cewch ddarllen mwy am eich hawliau ac am ddeddfau protest:

www.greenandblackcross.org

Ar ôl cael eich arestio, neu os oes dyddiad llys gyda chi ac rydych chi eisiau cyngor, ebostiwrch **courtsupport@protonmail.com**

[Lawrlwytho cipgerdyn Cymru unigol](#)
[Lawrlwytho 4 cipgerdyn Cymru ar un tudalen](#)

Northern Ireland



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

ADVICE ON ARREST

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Do **not** accept a **CAUTION** without advice from a recommended solicitor. This is an admission of responsibility and goes on the police national computer.

You have the right to **FREE LEGAL ADVICE** at the police station. Duty solicitors don't always have experience with protest law, we recommend asking the police to contact:

KRW (Kevin R. Winters): 028 9024 1888 (Belfast)

You have the right to have someone informed of your arrest (make that the **Protest Support Line** unless otherwise arranged: **07946 541 511**).
You have the right to an interpreter if English is not your first language.
If you are or appear under 18 an appropriate adult should be called.

LEGAL QUESTIONS about PROTEST?

STOP AND SEARCH: You do not have to give your name and address under most stop and search powers. Ask the **reason** for the stop and the **power** that you are being searched under.

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[Download single Northern Ireland bustcard](#)

[Download 4-per-page Northern Ireland bustcard](#)

Your rights and mobile fingerprinting

This page serves as an overview for dealing with requests for fingerprinting from police on the street. This reference was developed by [NETPOL](#).

When can police take fingerprints with a mobile device?

- If you are under arrest and you are taken to a police station, the police have the power to take your fingerprints (by force if necessary).
- The police can take fingerprints away from a police station **ONLY** if they have reason to suspect you have committed an offence **AND** they have reason to doubt that you have provided your real name and address.
- If the police have grounds to take fingerprints, they must first give you an opportunity to give your details. They can fingerprint you only if there are 'reasonable grounds' to doubt you have given your real name and address.
- If you have provided a document showing your name and address, they must tell you why this is not sufficient on its own to prove your identity.
- If you refuse to give your fingerprints (and the police have 'reasonable suspicion'), they have the power to take fingerprints without consent, or to arrest you for the offence you are suspected of, and take you to the police station.

What if I haven't committed an offence?

- To lawfully take your fingerprints the police must suspect that you have committed an offence. They **MUST** tell you what offence you are reasonably suspected of having committed and why you are reasonably suspected of committing it. If the police will not or cannot do this, you **SHOULD NOT** provide your fingerprints (or your name and address).
- If the police allege that you have committed an offence, **MAKE SURE** they explain what offence it is that has been committed, and what reason they have for suspecting you.
- Being stopped and searched, **DOES NOT** by itself give the police powers to take your fingerprints **OR** your name and address.
- Being detained to prevent a breach of the peace, or held in a protest kettle, **DOES NOT** by itself give the police powers to take your fingerprints **OR** your name and address.
- If the police have suspicion that you are breaching bail conditions, they have the power to arrest you. A suspicion that you are breaching bail conditions **DOES NOT** give them the power to take your fingerprints on a mobile scanner, as this is **NOT** an offence.



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What if I am suspected of Anti-social behaviour?

- If the police allege that you have engaged in anti-social behaviour*, INSIST they tell you what they 'reasonably believe' you have done that was likely to caused harassment, alarm and distress.**
- If the police cannot or will not tell you why they believe you were likely to cause harassment alarm or distress,, the police do NOT have powers to take your fingerprints, and you SHOULD NOT give a name and address.
- If the police DO you have reason to believe you have engaged in anti-social behaviour, they DO have the power to demand your name and address. The police WILL then have the power take your fingerprints IF you refuse to provide your name and address, OR they suspect you of providing a false name and address***.

* Anti-social behaviour is any behaviour likely to cause harassment alarm or distress to a member of the public. If what you did was not likely to do that, it was not anti-social behaviour. Non-violent protest is NOT anti-social behaviour, even if it is unlawful.

** Swearing in front of a police officer probably ISNT anti-social behaviour as the law says that police officers are unlikely to be caused 'harassment alarm or distress' by bad language. (This may not be the case if other people could hear.)

***Under s50 Police Reform Act, you commit an offence if you do not provide your name and address when a police officer reasonably believes you have engaged in anti-social behaviour.

What happens if I give my fingerprints?

- The device will scan your fingerprints and check them against the police database. They should return a result within two minutes. The scan taken by the mobile fingerprint device is NOT kept, and DOES NOT stay on the system.
- If your prints are already on record, the police will be able to see your details. These will include your name, last known address, warning markers and whether or not you are wanted for any outstanding offences.
- If the offence you are suspected of committing is a minor one, and you have given your prints, the police SHOULD consider alternatives to arrest eg summons, fixed penalty notice or words of advice.
- If your prints are not already on the database, this will mean that the police cannot verify your details. What the police do then is up to them – depending on the situation they may accept the details you have given as true, or they may arrest you for the offence you are suspected of committing. If you are arrested your prints will be taken in the police station, and these will be retained on the system.

Planning an Action

Planning ahead will help keep you safe and confident on an action. Contact us as early as possible to discuss how we can support you.

Many people are worried about the arrest and police intimidation at actions they are planning. Police repression of protests can be difficult to predict, but the risk is often smaller than you may think. One of the most important things you can do to help counter it is for all participants to be aware of their [key rights](#).

If you have time, it can also be helpful to [attend one of Know Your Rights trainings](#), which will go through these key messages and other useful information to know when protesting.

We can help with briefings, providing legal observers and phone support, and follow-up support if arrests or police brutality occur. We understand that actions aren't always predictable, but the sooner you talk to us, the more we can do!

In this guide:



1. [Support GBC can offer before the action](#)
2. [Should I tell the police about my protest?](#)
3. [Will we be arrested?](#)
4. [Support GBC can offer during the action](#)
5. [Support GBC can offer afterwards](#)

Being Trans and Protesting

You have the right to have your gender recognised. This guide outlines other key rights and advice for trans people attending protests.

Transphobia is rife in society. This can mean that some trans people do not wish to put themselves at risk of having to interact with the state – through having to interact with the police – by going on demonstrations. Fear can therefore keep people off the streets: know your rights so you can understand the risks.

We hope that this guide will support you in knowing your rights, so you can make informed decisions about how and when you take action.

This guide covers:

1. [Your rights under the Equality Act](#)
2. [Our key messages](#)
3. [Being stop & searched](#)
4. [Being arrested](#)

We know that gender and how people are gendered can be complex and contradictory. The following will not be completely comprehensive.

Please email us at gbcresources@protonmail.com with any comments, questions or suggestions.

[Click Here to Download “Being Trans & Protesting” as a PDF](#)





What is a Legal Observer?

Legal observers are trained volunteers who support the legal rights of activists. They provide basic legal guidance and are independent witnesses of police behaviour at protests.

Legal observers are independent from the protest and do not participate as activists. They support protestors by:

- Distributing bust cards and briefing activists about their rights.
- Keeping notes about the actions of the police on protests, which may be later used to challenge the police on their behaviour.
- Monitoring arrests, including collecting witnesses and helping to connect the arrestee with support in the police station.

Legal observers can be identified on actions by their orange hi-viz vests that say "Legal Observer".

Legal observers have no official legal status or privilege, but the police are often aware of the role, and legal observers may act as a deterrent to police wrongdoing.

Legal observers are not:

- Lawyers
- Medics
- Media spokespeople
- Stewards or police liaison: legal observers may occasionally speak to the police to find out information, but will **not** pass messages between police and activists.

[Contact the Independent Legal Observer Network](#) if your group is planning an action that may need legal observers – please try to give as much notice as possible, preferably at least two weeks.

If you are interested in being trained as a legal observer, you can see future training dates and sign up [here](#).

Laws Commonly Used at Protests

Having a basic knowledge of the laws the police most commonly use to disrupt protests can increase your confidence on actions and help you stand up to repressive police tactics.

This guide may be useful for people who are aware of their [key rights](#), and would like to learn a bit more detail, or for [legal observers](#) to print off and refer to. It would also be useful to read our guide on [Stop & Search](#) powers.

We think that knowledge of the law can help your confidence in planning actions and standing up to police, but unfortunately it will not necessarily protect you from arrest. The police frequently arrest first, and then work out if there is anything they can charge you for later. At most types of actions though, the **risk of actually being arrested is low**. The risk of being convicted is even lower, and first time offenders would be **very unlikely** to receive the maximum penalties.

If asked to do something by a police officer, we recommend that – if safe to do so – you ask "[What Power](#)" to challenge whether they are acting lawfully. If you get an answer, please note it down, and let us know what powers are being used (or tell a [legal observer](#) if they are present).

1. [Obstruction of a Police Officer](#)
2. [Assaulting a Police Constable or emergency worker](#)
3. [Conditions on a protest – inc. Section 12/14 of the Public Order Act](#)
4. [Obstruction of the Highway](#)
5. [Breach of the Peace](#)
6. [Trespass/Aggravated Trespass](#)



7. [Criminal Damage & Theft](#)
8. [Violent Disorder and Affray](#)
9. [“Anti-Social Behaviour” – Section 50 of Police Reform Act](#)
10. [Public Nuisance](#)
11. [Dispersal Order – Section 35](#)
12. [Obstructing Workplaces: Trade Union Law](#)
13. [Injunctions](#)

Injunctions

Dealing with injunctions – a protesters’ guide

Injunctions are basically a way that companies can buy themselves personalised laws. As such they are complicated and vary quite widely. [Not1More](#) has produced an excellent guide to help you understand and navigate injunctions.

[View the Protest Injunctions Toolkit here!](#)

You can find out more about this work and download a version of the guide to print at home [on Not1More's website](#).

If you’ve received or otherwise been affected by an injunction, here are 3 things you should do:

- Don’t talk about it publicly until you’ve received advice.
- Read the guide linked above!
- Ring us as soon as possible so we can help you go through the details and plan the best course of action.

Demonstrations and International Students

This briefing deals with the risks to someone’s immigration status if they get into trouble at a demonstration.

First, it is important to remember that most mainstream protest in the UK is fairly predictable, no one gets arrested and everyone is happy. However, there is always the risk that the police will decide to arrest people even if they personally are not involved in anything arrestable.

Before you go to a demo, you should think about the risks you are able and willing to take. This is important for people who do not have British citizenship, because the Home Office can be very draconian and has the power to revoke visas/deport people even for minor things. Challenging these government actions can be very time-consuming and costly.

We’re currently in the process of updating our guidance for those without British Citizenship. [The Informed Dissent website has useful guidance on the impacts of arrest on immigration status.](#)

What happens if I'm Arrested?

Don’t panic! Just remember our [key advice](#):

Make “NO COMMENT” to all questions. There is no such thing as a friendly chat with a police officer. Everything you say can



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and will likely be used as evidence. If they interview you, give a “No Comment” interview, unless under explicit advice from a [good solicitor](#) to make a written statement.

Don't use the 'duty solicitor' (the one available at the police station). They often give bad advice to protesters. Use a solicitor recommended on the bust card instead.

Do not accept a caution! This is an easy win for the police. It is an admission of guilt and goes on your permanent record.

This guide goes into the arrest process and your rights in more detail.

1. [Should I give the police my details?](#)
2. [What happens when I get arrested?](#)
3. [Rights in police custody](#)
4. [Psychological prep](#)
5. [What happens in an interview?](#)
6. [Cautions](#)
7. [Getting released](#)
8. [What happens next?](#)

Looking after your health on actions

On an action/demo you are likely to be outside for long periods, probably without access to amenities, so you need to be prepared to look after yourself and your mates for quite a while.

Going to an action with a friend or an affinity group of friends is always safer. Try to get extra (or at least a reasonable amount of) sleep before the event and plan on needing some recovery time afterwards.

This guide is sourced from the Action Medics' guide to preparing for protests, which is no longer available online. [This Zine](#) from the Black Cross Health Collective also includes useful information on looking after your health on actions. [QueerCare](#) can offer first aid and care, as well as trainings, for your action.

1. [What to wear](#)
2. [Water and Food](#)
3. [Medical Issues](#)
4. [Offensive weapons and sprays](#)
5. [Calling backup help](#)

You might also want to read our guide on after-action [Emotional and Trauma Support](#)

Police Liaison Officers

Just say no!

Police Liaison Officers (PLOs) are police officers sent to gather intelligence and spread unhelpful messages on protests. They are sometimes tasked with telling protesters information that can later be used to prosecute them. PLOs usually wear baby-blue, and are chatty and smiley. A senior PLO has stated in court that their role is to gather information on protestors, and to encourage “self-policing” – that is, to get you to undermine your own protest. There is **no legal requirement** to listen to them. We recommend people ignore them, walk away if approached and never take pieces of paper from PLOs.

PLOs are still normal police officers, who have powers of arrest and who will testify against you in court.



Trauma and Emotional Support

We believe in the importance of mutual support in enabling sustainable activism. It's easy to go from action to action without taking time to reflect – here are some sources of support.

Working hard on projects we care deeply about has the risk of exhaustion and burn out. Once police violence, arrest, and going through the court system are added into the mix, it is no wonder that trauma and stress are a huge problem. We all need to take a step back sometimes, to talk to each other, and to feel comfortable to seek further support early.

This guide lists some suggested sources of support.

1. [Activist support](#) – sources of support specifically for people involved in protest
2. [Other sources of support](#) – more general sources of emotional support, and advice on mental health issues

DBS checks & being arrested on protests

The disclosure and barring service (DBS) is primarily used by employers to check whether potential employees have criminal convictions. Some jobs can request that you have a DBS check, mainly those working with children and vulnerable adults.

We are often asked whether arrests, charges and convictions related to protest activities will show up on a DBS check and whether this will affect people's employment prospects.

In short: Expect convictions and cautions to show up on your DBS check. Arrests or charges may show up on Enhanced DBS checks, at the police's discretion. Your potential employer may ask you to explain what shows up, but having convictions etc doesn't automatically mean you can't get the job and won't necessarily count against you.

- DBS checks are only allowed for some roles, largely those working with children, in healthcare or personal care, or in some professions. Some jobs are eligible for Standard DBS, and some are eligible for Enhanced DBS, including most jobs working directly with children. You can check whether a job is eligible for a DBS check at this [gov.uk](#) site.
- What will show up on a Standard/Enhanced DBS: spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings that are held on the Police National Computer.
- Additional for an Enhanced DBS: anything that the Chief Officer of a police force thinks is relevant. This can include arrests. We find it unlikely that anything related to protest activity would show up here, but it could include arrests that don't result in conviction. If you have to go through an enhanced DBS check and information related to protest activity is included, the [Network for Police Monitoring](#) would be interested to know as this could be a method of intimidating people out of protest.
- There is something called "filtering" where some convictions don't show up after 11 years have passed (5 ½ years for convictions imposed when you were aged under 18), but only if you have been convicted of a single offence and got a non-custodial sentence, and the offence is not included on the list of offences that will never be filtered.

Will an arrest that doesn't lead to a charge show up on a DBS check?

It may show up on an Enhanced DBS check, at the discretion of the Chief Officer of the relevant police force.

If I am arrested, tried and acquitted, will this show up on a DBS check?

It may show up on an Enhanced DBS check, at the discretion of the Chief Officer of the relevant police force.

Filming and Photographs at Actions



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You do not have to comply with police filming unless you have been arrested for an offence. They have no more rights than you to take a photo.

You are allowed to walk away or hide your face if they are filming or photographing.

You can quite happily film them. If you are filming, be careful not to capture or upload footage affecting personal privacy to the internet (there have been incidents where participants in demonstrations have been identified after videos were uploaded to sites like YouTube).

The police have no power to delete any of your images or videos, and can only view it in very limited circumstances.

Beware that the police may be hoping to arrest you if you have sensitive footage. Resist and report attempts to inspect, confiscate or delete material, taking police shoulder numbers and senior officers' details.

The police cannot legally confiscate your camera without arresting you, and for that they must have a reasonable suspicion that you have committed a crime.

Protesting on Private Property

This guide goes through the main things to be aware of if you are planning a protest on private property.

The police have the power to arrest people for criminal offences. Remember though that, even if convicted, first time offenders would be **very unlikely** to receive the maximum penalties.

If you are planning a long-term occupation then it's good to be prepared for being faced with a Possession Order and an Injunction.

1. [Civil Law](#) (including Possession Orders and Injunctions)
2. [Criminal Offences](#)
3. [Private Security](#)

For a more detailed guide, see Netpol's [Guides on Policing and the Law for Campaigners Against Fracking](#)

Witness to an Arrest or Police Violence?

Please write a witness statement as soon as possible after the event.

If you're a witness to something that's happening right now, please stop reading this page and give us a call right away on 07946541511.

If you have seen

- an arrest
- an injury
- police brutality
- abuse of police powers

You may be a useful witness if a criminal or civil case goes ahead. **Please get in touch with us as soon as possible at courtsupport@protonmail.com, or 07946 541511.** You can check out our [Witness Appeal](#) page for our current call-outs, but please do write a statement even if what you saw happened at a different action.



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Please include as many details as you can remember, at least the following:

- **Who** was involved
- **When** it happened
- **Where** it happened
- **Where** you were standing in relation to the incident
- **What** happened, in full

The purpose of writing it is just so that you can remember what happened, and the sooner it's written the better. A solicitor may later want to discuss what you saw, so it's good to keep your memory fresh. Sometimes cases hinge on small details that are easily forgotten. Make sure to send a copy to courtsupport@protonmail.com so the Activist Court Aid Brigade can keep it safe for future.

Be aware that having written a witness statement does not automatically mean you will end up being a witness in court. The incident you have witnessed may not end in a court case or there may be other witnesses who have seen more than you. But please do write a statement anyway!

I've been Arrested! What Next?

NOTE: we are only able to help with arrests following protest or actions. For any other reason please contact a [solicitor](#) directly.

It might have been unexpected, or you might have gone in knowing that the only way out was in handcuffs. Either way, an arrest can be a worrying time and information can be hard to come by.

You might have been:

- charged with an offence
- bailed to return to a police station
- released under investigation
- released without charge or bail
- released having accepted a caution

Your priorities now are to contact us, contact a solicitor, and write a statement of what happened. This guide runs you through those steps, and answers common questions on what happens next.

1. [How we can help](#)
2. [Solicitors](#)
3. [Writing statements and gathering evidence](#)
4. [Social media](#)
5. [Bail](#)
6. [Personal belongings](#)
7. [Defendants meetings](#)
8. [Media](#)
9. [Police complaints](#)
10. [Emotional support](#)

My Friend has been Arrested!



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

NOTE: we are only able to help with arrests following protest or actions. For any other reason please contact a [solicitor](#) directly.

Hearing that a friend has been arrested can be a scary experience. It is disempowering being unsure of what is going on, but there are things you can do to plan ahead and help your friend get better support.

If the arrest happened at a **protest or during an action, or is protest related**, then we can offer support.

If you have just witnessed the arrest, and it was protest related, please [call us now](#) so that we can help support you and advise on the next steps. You should also write a [witness statement](#) as soon as possible.

If your friend was at a protest, you can't get in touch with them and you are worried they may have been arrested, you can call us and we may be able to help you find out.

1. [What will happen to my friend in custody?](#)
2. [How can I get more information about my friend's arrest?](#)
3. [What should I do if I receive a call from custody?](#)
4. [Supporting friends after release](#)

Police Station Support Guide

Being arrested and held in police custody is unpleasant. People often appreciate being met by a friendly face when they are released. This is a guide to doing effective police station support.

If you're [organising a protest](#), it is really helpful to prepare for Police Station Support in advance, even if you think the risk of arrest is low. We can never predict what the police will do. It's always better to be prepared.

The information you record outside the police station will help Activist Court Aid Brigade (ACAB) support the arrestee, and can make the difference between a conviction and an acquittal.

This guide contains information about how to prepare for police station support; what to do at the police station; tips on liaising with lawyers and appropriate adults; what information to collect for follow-up support and a guide to some basic First Aid and acute mental health support.

1. [Preparing for Police Station Support in advance](#)
2. [Your role](#)
3. [Why you might end up doing police station support](#)
4. [What to take with you](#)
5. [What we will need to support you](#)
6. [What to do at the police station](#)
7. [Liaising with the solicitor\(s\)](#)
8. [Liaising with appropriate adults](#)
9. [Meeting arrestees on their release](#)
10. [Collecting information for ongoing support](#)
11. [Once everyone is released or when you're leaving](#)
12. [Appendix 1: First Aid Kit](#)
13. [Appendix 2: Mental Health Support](#)
14. [Appendix 3: Basic First Aid](#)

You don't need to go to the police station right away after someone's been arrested – it usually takes at least an hour for them to be taken to the station and be booked in, before being held, interviewed and released. It's a good idea to make sure you're ready and have everything, including people who can take over support during the night or



later on, before heading to a station.

If you're not sure where an arrestee has been taken, ask a Legal Observer if they know and phone the Protest Legal Support Helpline / Legal Back Office for the action, as they may have more information.

This guide is an updated version of the Activist's Legal Project guide to arrestee support, created collectively by [GBC Resources](#), [Activist Court Aid Brigade \(ACAB\)](#) and [Queercare](#).

What is bail and should I ignore police bail?

Our phonenumber can only answer questions about bail where it regards to a protest context. Please do NOT call us for other questions about bail conditions. Go straight to a solicitor!

Bail is one of several actions that the police can take after arresting you. It involves release from police custody to await a later appearance at court or a police station. Your case can be dropped while you're on bail.

If you are bailed without charge, called '**pre-charge bail**' this means that you will have to appear at a police station at a later date. This is so that the police can look over the evidence and decide whether or not to charge you.

Being bailed and charged, called '**post-charge bail**' is where you have been charged and you must appear in court at a later date.

Both types can come with conditions attached which are things you must not do, for example: "You must not return to the borough of Newham", "You must not go within 1km of an airport" or "You must not associate with [a particular person]".

1. [Why the police use bail](#)
2. [What should I do if I've been bailed?](#)
3. [What happens if I break bail conditions?](#)
4. [Resisting victimisation of protesters.](#)

'What's next?' - A Guide to the Post-Charge Legal Process

So you were arrested for protesting and the authorities have decided to charge you with an offence: what happens next?

Being prosecuted can be a confusing and intimidating experience. This guide sets out what you can expect at each stage in this process and how you can put yourself in the strongest possible position as a (potential) defendant.

We will cover:

1. [Legal Representation and Self Representation](#)
2. [The Prosecution Process](#)
3. [Possible Outcomes](#)
4. [Potential Sentences](#)
5. [FAQs](#)

Support for People going to Court



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

If someone has been arrested they may be released on [police bail](#) or they may have been charged with an offence and have to appear at a court.

How do you know if you've been charged? You will have been given a document giving a date to appear at court, the details of the court and details of which offence you've been charged with.

If you are released on police bail you may either be charged at a later date, or be told there is no further action (NFA) to be taken against you, which is the end of the matter.

If you have been charged with an offence this means that you are to go on trial for the offence – but it still may not come to this².

It is invaluable to have support during the whole court process, this brief guide will explain what happens when one goes to court to enable you to support any one you know who has been charged, and also to understand the process if you yourself have been charged. If you would like a much more detailed description you could read '[How to Defend Yourself in Court](#)'

The [Activist Court Aid Brigade](#) (ACAB) have volunteers who support people who are going to court. If you or a friend have been called to court after attending an action, please send an [email to ACAB](#) who will offer you support. [Find out more about court monitoring.](#)

1. [What to do if you have been charged](#)
2. [Going to court as a supporter](#)
3. [What to do in court](#)
4. [A word about courts and judges](#)
5. [The court process](#)
6. [Representation in court](#)
7. [Dropped charges and other endings](#)
8. [Becoming a court monitor](#)

Holding the Police to Account

We are a voluntary group set up to support people who take part in protest. **Please do not phone us if your query does not arise from taking part in protest. We will not be able to assist you.**

Have you been a victim of police misconduct or violence and want to know what you can do about it?

This guide should give you an idea of whether you can take the matter further and the types of action you can take against the police.

1. [Take action against the police](#)
2. [Case studies and success stories](#)

Making a Complaint Against the Police



Guides, Resources & Other Organisations

We are a voluntary group set up to support people who take part in protest. The process outlined below is the same regardless of the nature of your complaint. However, if your claim / complaint is not protest-related then further advice should be sought through a [solicitor](#). **Please do not phone us if your claim does not arise from taking part in protest. We will not be able to assist you.**

Have you been a victim of police misconduct and want to know if you can do anything about it?

This guide will take you through the complaints process.

We recommend that as well as making a complaint against the police that **you also make a civil claim** to [sue them for compensation](#) through the courts. Although the complaint system and a civil claim are separate processes, they both have the same aim: holding the police to account.

1. [What can I make a complaint for?](#)
2. [Making a complaint against the police](#)
3. [Outcomes](#)

Making a Claim Against the Police

We are a voluntary group set up to support people who take part in protest. The process outlined below is the same regardless of the nature of your complaint. However, if your claim / complaint is not protest-related then further advice should be sought through a [solicitor](#). **Please do not phone us if your claim does not arise from taking part in protest. We will not be able to assist you.**

Have you been a victim of police misconduct or violence and want to know if you can take them to court?

This guide will take you through the civil claims process, giving you an understanding of how to sue the police in the courts.

Please note: This is not intended to be exhaustive and you should always speak to a [solicitor](#) when considering legal action against the police.

1. [What can I make a claim for?](#)
2. [What kind of court case will it be?](#)
3. [What could I get if I win?](#)
4. [What are the costs?](#)
5. [How long have I got to start a case?](#)
6. [What should I do next?](#)

What is a Judicial Review?

A Judicial Review, or JR, is another method of holding the police to account.

This is different to a civil claim where you are suing for the actions of an individual officer. Judicial review allows the Courts to scrutinise a decision made by the police (or any other public body) and would look at a policy decision or a command and control decision. For example: a decision to ban a march or to conduct a certain type of operation like kettling or blanket stop and search.



You should always seek the advice of a very experienced solicitor before taking a judicial review, since a negative outcome has the ability to create 'bad law' that affects everyone.

If you are applying for 'judicial review' you should start your case, as soon as possible and in any event within three months of when you first knew about the decision.

How do I find out what information the police hold on me?

The police record a variety of information, or 'intelligence' on people attending protests. This information is retained on databases and shared with other police forces, government institutions and, in some cases, private companies.

You do not need to have committed an offence to become a target for intelligence gathering, and by merely attending a demonstration your presence might be logged. Legal safeguards that limit who and what the police can record are virtually non-existent.

There is a mechanism in place that you can use to obtain information about yourself that the police hold in certain databases. This is known as a **Subject Access Request**.

This guide will help you make a Subject Access Request by telling you who to contact and what information to request.

1. [Why might I want to make a Subject Access Request?](#)
2. [What information might be stored on me, and by who?](#)
3. [Making a Subject Access Request](#)

Mini briefing on common policing powers used on a demo

Stop and Search

- **Section 1** of PACE. The police have to give reasonable grounds to suspect YOU of carrying articles for use for burglary/theft, stolen goods, offensive weapons, bladed articles, items that may be used for criminal damage, or category 4 fireworks.
- **Section 60** Criminal Justice Act. This is a blanket search power. If a section 60 is in place they can search anyone, but only for weapons or blades

You NEVER have to give any PERSONAL DETAILS when being searched.

The police have to tell you what legal power they're using and what they're looking for. The search should be tailored to reflect this.

Say 'no comment' to any other questions.

Section 60AA is a separate power. If a Section 60AA is in place, the police can require you to remove a mask. They can arrest you if you refuse. They can also confiscate the item.

Conditions on a protest

Section 12 and 14 of the Public Order Act. The police can impose conditions which restrict the place, duration, and the number of people allowed on a static demo, or any reasonable conditions on a procession.

In order to be convicted of an offence under Section 12 or 14, it must be proved that you were aware of the conditions and then chose to break them. A senior officer may make an announcement, or sometimes visual displays or leaflets are used. Don't accept or



pass on leaflets, make announcements, or tweet about condition under Section 12 or 14, as it is also an offence to organise or incite people to break the conditions and your actions may be misinterpreted as obstructing the police.

Section 35 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime, and Policing Act. This allows officers to force individuals to leave an area for up to 48 hours.

Section 35 has also been used to try and gather peoples details. We know of several instances where refusal of details under Section 35 resulted in arrest. However in the only instance we know of where people continued withholding information (after over 24 hours on remand) this resulted in a court ruling that those involved were entitled to withhold their information.

Section 50 of the Police Reform Act

If you are suspected of anti-social behaviour, the police can demand your details under Section 50. Refusing to give your details is a criminal offence, and you can be arrested.

This should not be used on protests, according to the police's own guidance, and we encourage people to resist the use of Section 50 on protests by refusing to give their names.

If you are arrested

- **NO COMMENT!** We recommend that you don't talk to the police at all if possible. No friendly chats, on the ground or in a police van, and "No comment" to all questions if you are interviewed after arrest. Talking to the police only helps them to gather information about you and others.
- Don't use the duty solicitor (the one available at the police station). They often give bad advice to protesters. Use one recommended on the bustcard.
- Don't accept a caution. The police may offer you a caution if they arrest you. This is an admission of guilt and goes on your permanent record. It's an easy win for the police.

If you have a particular concern that you want to discuss please phone the protest support line on 07946 541 511