

PROTESTING WHILE DISABLED

Oftentimes, direct action culture centers certain bodies, abilities, and ways of showing up. But there are many ways to show up for an action or a movement!

Here are just a few:

- FRONT LINE DIRECT ACTION
- JAIL/BAIL SUPPORT
- LEGAL OBSERVING
- SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING
- MEDICAL SUPPORT
- COMMUNITY CANVASSING
- OFFERING FOOD & SUPPLIES

No role or action is more valuable than another. Disabled people often lead the way in building creative, accessible ways of showing up for a cause.



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PREPARE FOR THE ACTION



- There's safety in numbers! If possible, don't go alone.
- If known, learn the route in advance.
- Write emergency contacts on your arm. (know that your phone may be seized by police if arrested)
- Have essential meds? Try to keep them on you in their pill bottle or bring a printed prescription.
- Sensory sensitivities? Carry ear plugs and sunglasses.
- Know health risks of inhaling gas/pepper spray. Carry inhaler, gas mask and goggles if necessary.
- Assistive devices? Bring backup batteries and/or chargers.
- Other mobility needs? Bring a portable stool.
- Pack food and water. If necessary, bring an umbrella for rain or shade from the sun.



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COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS



- Tell an emergency contact that you plan to protest and make a plan to check in after.
- Tell friends and organizers about your access needs at the event.
- Have a plan for how you and crew will communicate in the event of sound cannons or loud noise, to escape danger, political violence, etc.
- Connect with local harm reduction organizations, and protection and advocacy organizations for additional support



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IF YOU ARE ARRESTED



- Say “I have a disability that requires accommodations under the ADA.”
- Ask for the accommodation you need, understanding that they may not provide it.
- If you have medication on your person, tell them that it is prescribed for your disability.
- If you don’t have your essential medication, let arresting officers and jail staff know and inform jail medical and/or intake of health risks of not taking scheduled medication



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IF YOU ARE IN CUSTODY



- If you aren't provided with essential medications or accommodations after requesting them, request a grievance package and submit a grievance
- If possible contact the sheriff and the jail nurse to inform them of your medical needs if they aren't being met
- If you have a bail hearing while in jail, tell your attorney that you have a disability and whether the jail is providing meds or accommodations.
- Have a plan of who will pick you up when you are released from jail.



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COVID-19 CONSIDERATIONS

- COVID-19 still remains a threat to community safety. Consider the risks prior to attending large crowded events.
- Wear a well-fitting, high filtration mask such as a KN95 or N95 mask
- Sanitize your hands often
- Avoid touching your face
- Maintain physical distancing when possible

