

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Your rights are strongest in what are known as “traditional public forums,” such as sidewalks, public parks and areas that have traditionally been open to political speech and debate.

The government may not restrict your speech if it is taking place on your own property or with the consent of the property owner.

Protesters and counterprotesters have free speech rights, and police must treat protesters and counterprotesters equally. Police are permitted to keep antagonistic groups separated but should allow them to be within sight and sound of one another.

Usually, you don’t need a permit to protest on sidewalks, as long as marchers don’t obstruct car or pedestrian traffic.

The First Amendment does allow for the government to set reasonable restrictions to the time, place, and manner of protest.

WHAT IF I WANT TO TAKE PHOTOS OR VIDEOS AT THE PROTEST?

When lawfully present in any public space, you have the right to photograph anything in plain view, including government buildings and police. On private property, the property owner may set rules about photography and video.

Police may not confiscate or demand to view photos or video without a warrant, nor may they delete data under any circumstances.

Police may order citizens to cease activities, including recording, that are truly interfering with legitimate law enforcement operations.

WHAT IF POLICE ORDER US TO DISPERSE?

Shutting down a protest through a dispersal order must be the last resort. Police may not break up a gathering unless there is a clear and present danger of a riot, disorder, interference with traffic, or other immediate threat to public safety.

If officers issue a dispersal order, they must provide a reasonable opportunity to comply, including sufficient time and a clear, unobstructed exit path, along with instructions on consequences of failing to disperse before any arrests can be made.

If you want to avoid being arrested, follow directions to disperse or leave the area.

WHAT IF I'M STOPPED BY POLICE?

Ask if you are free to leave. If the officer says yes, calmly walk away.

Unless you are suspected of criminal activity, you do not need to give an officer your name or a form of identification. But do not give false information to law enforcement, as it may be a crime or could affect you later in court.

You never have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings, including bags or your phone. If you do explicitly consent, it can affect you later in court.

Police may “pat down” your clothing if they suspect you have a weapon and may search you after an arrest.

WHAT IF I'M ARRESTED BY POLICE?

If you are under arrest, you have a right to ask why. Otherwise, say you wish to remain silent and ask for a lawyer immediately. Don't say anything or sign anything without a lawyer.

You have the right to make a local phone call, and police are not permitted to listen if you are speaking with your lawyer.

**SEND DOCUMENTATION OF ANY
VIOLENCE OR POLICE MISCONDUCT TO
[BIT.LY/ALPROTEST](https://bit.ly/ALPROTEST)**

IF YOU BELIEVE YOUR RIGHTS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED

When you can, write down as much as you can about the events that occurred, especially regarding violence or law enforcement misconduct. Note any potential violations of your rights, such as if police did not give you a reasonable time to disperse. Try to write down the officers' badge and patrol car numbers and the agency they work for.

Consider telling another person what happened as soon as you can to corroborate your experience. Get contact information for witnesses.

Take photos and/or videos of any violence, police misconduct, and any injuries. Although police officers may not confiscate or view your photos or videos without a warrant, nor may they delete data under any circumstances, you may consider sending photos or videos to a friend.

Once you have all of this information, you can file a written complaint with the agency in question's internal affairs division or civilian complaint board.