

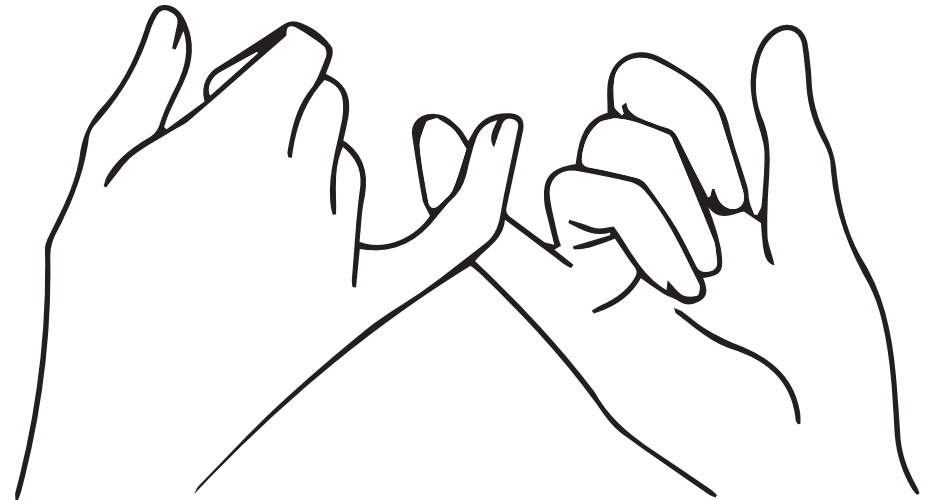


BUILDING COMMUNITY
RESILIENCE TO FIGHT
STATE REPRESSION

"I was born in war times, grew up in war times and was still in war times – trying all along the way to be honorable. If you see wrong, fix it. If wrong oppresses you, resist it until you fix it. The struggle continues, until it kills you or we achieve justice.

How will repression target us? I can't guess. But when it does (and it does all the time), our honest bonds within our communities inside and outside will help us withstand the viruses and plagues they pester us with. We will keep ourselves healthy as we fight off their attempted infections – of our spirit."

— Tom Manning



**WHEN WE ARE CAREFUL WITH EACH OTHER,
WE ARE DANGEROUS TOGETHER.**

The trust, values and skills we rely on when we're in a direct confrontation with the state are part of our lifelong work to develop and deepen our practice and our commitment. Fighting state repression helps us to know ourselves and our work better, to be bold and to take risks that make more space for the possibilities we want to see in the world. Doing legal support or anti-repression education aren't a drag or a waste of time or less interesting than other work unless we treat them that way.

Knowing what it feels like to be defiant and creative and to support others and be supported in the face of the state teaches us what it might feel like to win. Practice makes perfect.

Remember that problematic behaviors, abusive behaviors, toxic dynamics and patterns we are trying to unlearn flare and flourish under extreme stress. Support people who are working to choose better behaviors, keep an eye on your friends, and don't feel or allow anyone to tell you that it's "not the time" to bring up concerns or to tell someone about something that is happening to you. Destigmatize being open about these things so that you can intervene and resource yourself and others and try to avoid these interpersonal dynamics escalating and causing division, suspicion and anger in a targeted community.

WHAT IS STATE REPRESSION?

State repression a term used to describe the many ways that the white supremacist government attacks BIPOC, immigrant, poor, queer and trans, disabled folks, sex workers, and political dissenters through **surveillance, legislation, militarization, policing, and incarceration** in order to:

- maintain power and social control by the state and corporations
- protect the idea that the state is legitimate
- restrict the actions of political dissenters to those that pose no real threat to the power of the state
- to cause trauma, destroy communities, encourage self-policing, and dis-empower dissent

GENERAL SECURITY PRACTICES:

IN PERSON: Always avoid gossip, speculation, and joking about repression and/or anyone's alleged participation in any criminalized activity or space when in public. Think carefully about things you say in public, and always assume that law enforcement or other fascists and hostile actors could be within earshot. Support and remind others in being mindful of these practices.

DIGITALLY: Remember it's about behavior, not expertise.

Ask yourself: *Do I trust the person I'm sending this to, regardless of whether the medium is "secure"? Why? Do I have conversations with people in my life about consent to be connected or have things shared on social media? Is this a good communication for a written form like email or text, or could I better have this conversation in person? Have I reflected recently on how my behavior around my devices or social media have changed and if those changes are intentional? Have I informed myself about the service's origin and policies?*

Keep in mind: Bad habits are easier to overlook in ourselves and others if we feel safer; trusting someone else with the decisions or information about the technology without being informed, putting things in writing that didn't need to be in writing, forgetting about some security issues because others feel covered, specialization and information bottlenecks.



WHAT DOES FEDERAL REPRESSION LOOK LIKE?

Federal law enforcement are already a part of our community's lives, and they are already a part of policing our protests whether we know about it or not. If you don't have experience with federal repression, it can be easy to think of it as too big or too scary or too unlikely. It's actually just another normal part of the criminal legal system, and you can understand and fight it.

Learn about federal agencies and their priorities - unlike most local cops, feds often have more resources and jurisdiction devoted to investigation, and target political movements among other groups. If you learn of questioning, surveillance or other federal activity, share info widely along with legal resources - calmly, clearly and correctly. Learn about and support grand jury resistance, and through that a larger culture of solidarity and silence.

STATE REPRESSION & OUR COMMUNITIES:

Even people with politics that reject the legitimacy of state and the legal system often still have embedded beliefs or narratives about state repression of social movements being outside the law or different from daily systems of governance that should be more neutral. Often this can show up as distinctions between criminalization that happens at things thought of as "political". This is in contrast to criminalization that happens as a function of the so-called "justice" system.

One way we fight repression as a collective process is by ridding our communities of these myths through political education, affinity and solidarity. One practical example is participating in projects that rejects this distinction by offering solidarity and support for those who are criminalized for reasons that are not protest related. The state is often very successful at making sure different targets of state violence are isolated from each other. We can make connections across these divides and work together to learn skills and develop resources that defy the state every day in all of its operations of criminalization and control.

COPING WITH REPRESSION, PERSONALLY & INTERPERSONALLY:

We are never truly alone in our experiences of repression, but sometimes we are, or really feel, that we are alone. Long term stress affects all body systems and impacts our ability to manage other parts of our lives and health. State repression can affect us beyond the investigation, after the case is over, and when things look "ok" to others. It's important to be mindful of the ways that state repression is an attempt to isolate us from one another, and to share coping strategies can increase the stress and vulnerability of an individual, group and community. Harm reduction and non judgmental interventions that we are developing to support our survival in this hellworld are a resource when facing state repression, too. Allow yourself and others to have nuance and contradictions in your emotional experience of political repression.

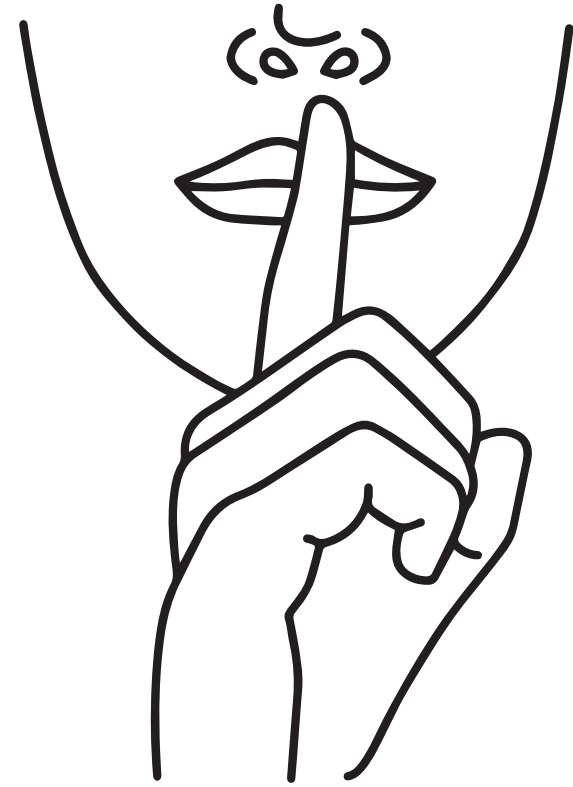
WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER ARREST:

If you are released, you will have a court date for a first appearance. If you are not released, you will appear while in custody for a first appearance and a hearing on your bond. At a first appearance, you answer to the charge(s), and either apply for a public defender or waive this for a private attorney or self representation.

From here, you will have appearances before the court to move forward depending on how your case is handled - you should expect the process to take months and can take up to several years if you go to trial. Your charges can change, you can be charged with new things, new people can be charged and people should consider all cases open investigations.

Monetary need varies by situation - if you need to pay a private attorney, this can become very costly. The NLG attempts to provide pro or "low" bono attorneys to people arrested during protests, and depending on your area there may be local attorneys who offer representation. More serious charges will generally require more resources for legal representation and/or for legal work related to the case. Court costs, restitution, or other associated costs depend on the outcome of a case.

Arrests and court processes are disruptive, and can impact people's employment, health and safety, regardless of the outcome of their case. Spending time incarcerated requires strong community support, including material support, for the person and their close community. Whether or not you believe you or others are facing prison time, it's important to organize around how your community would support each other if people have jail or prison sentences. Supporting people in prison generally and prison organizing should be part of all of our movements. Arrests and criminal charges impact both individuals and their communities, and understanding what your community needs to handle criminal processes while still organizing and supporting each other is an essential part of your work as a group or as part of social movements.



SNITCHES GET STITCHES.

WE KEEP US SAFE.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:

If you are stopped or pulled over by a cop, or being taken into custody, there are three magic phrases:

- 1. Am I free to go? If not, am I being detained or arrested?**
- 2. I do NOT consent to a search.**
- 3. I am going to remain silent. I want a lawyer.**

NEVER SAY ANYTHING BUT THESE WORDS TO A COP!

WHAT TO ANTICIPATE AT A PROTEST:

Everyone in every role at every protest is ultimately vulnerable to arrest, no matter how they behave. Everyone who is targeted by state repression is vulnerable to arrest and police violence at any time, even outside of protests, regardless of how we behave. Police decide when to make arrests and engage in violence: they make the law by enforcing it. It's helpful to be watchful of police at protests and to have an understanding of the patterns of behavior people have observed in the police force(s) you'll be confronted with at a given protest in order to have some idea of how and when they're likely to respond to different individual and collective actions, but we lose the fight against repression when we allow our fear of "provoking" the police or giving them an "excuse" to be violent to dictate our actions. We keep each other safe by encouraging each other to be brave, and supporting each other's bravery by being well prepared, collectively and personally, for arrests and repression.

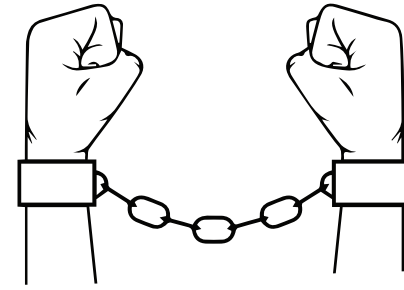
NEVER SAFE, ALWAYS CAREFUL:

Thinking about and preparing for arrest should be an ongoing process personally and between people who go to protests together, and may be different at different times. Arrests can happen during a protest or action, on the way to or from, or after the fact - even years later - through a warrant.

What it looks like to prepare for the possibility of arrest:

PERSONALLY: Being mindful of what you are carrying on you or have in your car and whether any of those things could be used as incriminating evidence, being cognizant of and prepared to meet your health and disability needs, knowing and sharing your triggers related to crowds, police and other forms of violence, making arrangements for communicating with and managing responsibilities like work, children, and pets, and being aware of your own legal history, record, outstanding warrants, etc.

COLLECTIVELY: Having jail support, bail resources, legal hotlines ready; being informed and resourced to support each other emotionally and materially in experiences of police and jail that are differently traumatizing or have different consequences - people have different experiences when they are trans, non-binary, BIPOC, formerly incarcerated and/or on probation or parole, have different legal statuses related to migration, are survivors of different kinds of violence.



WHAT BEING ARRESTED AT A PROTEST IS LIKE:

There is usually physical confrontation and violence from police - this can include pushing, grabbing, tackling, hitting, batons, pepper spray, etc, as well as being physically restrained/put in handcuffs and pat down/searched, sometimes invasively.

Arrestees are often separated from each other.

Shit talking and/or sweet talking: cops will either harass and verbally abuse arrestees in order to get a rise out of them and get them talking, or pretend to be friendly and on the side of arrestees in order to get them to talk.

Arrestees are transported to a police department, jail, hospital, or other location (or a combination of these locations) in a squad car or mass arrest bus. Arrestees are subjected to questioning and/or surveillance of any conversation amongst them (so be mindful of what you say to each other in custody!)

Custody is transferred from the arresting agency to the jail, if arrestees are processed at a jail. Processing includes: taking personal ID, fingerprinting, searching, taking property.

Arrestees go before a magistrate to set the charge(s) and bond.

If not immediately released or awaiting release - arrestees are "dressed out" and moved from the temporary holding area to a cell.

If/when released - being given paperwork on the charge, the court date, and conditions of release.