

# Tips for Marches, Protests & Rallies



*Elders Climate Action does not encourage or promote acts of civil disobedience.*

## Before the event:

**Check with organizers for any restrictions for the event.** These may include:

- No handles on signage
- No umbrellas
- Limited bag/purse size

### **Make Signs:**

- You can download printable posters and banners on the [ECA website \(Action Tool kit\)](#)
- If you can, make extra signs to share with others at the event.
- Check with organizers to see if there is any central messaging for the event.
- For homemade signs, use recycled cardboard, poster board or foam board & markers or paint.
- Check with organizers for any sign restrictions.

### **Invite Your Friends and Family**

- Tell others you are attending the event and encourage them to join you.
- Establish a meet up location (and something to identify you).
- If you are part of a chapter, let your chapter know about the event and where to meet you.

**Eat well and hydrate before the event,** get a good night's sleep - you will be walking and standing a lot! If you think you will need assistance contact the organizer of the event. Remember, summer-time can be very hot and it is critical to dress appropriately for the weather and hydrate.

*Leave your jewelry and valuables at home. Don't bring fragile camera equipment. Other than well-trained service animals, leave your pets at home. Crowds, chanting, noise, and congestion can be very stressful for them. Carefully consider whether to bring your children/grandchildren with you.*

## Things to Remember for the Event:

1. **Don't go alone, bring a friend** - make a safety plan in case something happens or you get separated.
2. **Bring Plenty of Water, snacks and any needed medications.**
3. **Wear comfortable shoes & weather appropriate attire.**
4. **Bring sun hat or \*umbrella** (\*check with organizers for restrictions).
5. **Bring a small fold up camping stool** you can sling over your shoulder, if you have difficulty standing for long periods. (\*check with organizers for restrictions).
6. **\*Bring a small bag or backpack for personal belongings** (\*check with organizers for size restrictions).
7. **Carry your identification, credit card, transit passes, medical alert bracelet, cash, and coins to use for pay phones.** (*keep in a front pocket*)
8. **Plan your exit:** (if possible) If you're driving, park at least several blocks away from the event. If you're getting picked up, plan your ride beforehand (and schedule your pick up several blocks from the action)
9. **Tell a friend who isn't going.** Let them know you'll check in with them after (specify a check-in time), and give them an emergency contact number to reach out to if they don't hear from you.
10. **Write an emergency contact number on your body.** This is a smart option for your safety.
11. **Charge your cell phone, and be prepared for it not to work.** If you have one, make sure the battery is full before you head out the door. Depending on the size of the event, cell service might be spotty which can drain your battery faster than usual. You may want to carry a backup charger if you have one. Bring paper and a pen and a list of contact numbers in case you don't have access to your cell phone or the networks are overloaded.
12. **Know the local laws regarding protests** or at least, know them well enough to know if the planned action is fully lawful, iffy, or downright illegal. Check the [ACLU](#). This might require you to reach out to the organizers to ask them what the plan is, which isn't always possible (a lot of "organized" resistance is more resistant and less organized).
13. **Leave No Trace Ethics** Don't contribute to litter. If trash cans are not available or are overflowing, pack out any wrappers, food debris, and signs with you to dispose of them properly. As when hiking, seek to leave the environment in as good or better condition than when you arrived.

## Following the event:

- **Follow-up with the organizers, or other participants, for next steps.** There might be immediate action needed following the event, so check in.
- **Report Concerns:** If you noted problems or unsafe conditions, give your feedback to the organizers after the event so they can have this in mind for future events. Suggest solutions that will enable you to continue expressing your freedom of speech and assembly in safety.
- **Share your experience!** Tell your friends and family about your experience, **write an article for the ECA newsletter**, write a blog post, social media update and share your photos. This will help increase the reach of the event, and maybe inspire others to get involved.
  - Send 150 word max article with photos to [info@eldersclimateaction.org](mailto:info@eldersclimateaction.org)

## Know your rights

- Visit the ACLU website - Know Your Rights for Protestors.  
<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/protesters-rights>

From Amnesty International

- Freedom of Expression and Assembly: Everyone has the right to carry their opinion to the streets.
- Protection of the Right to Freedom of Assembly: Law enforcement must facilitate and not restrict a peaceful public assembly.
- Freedom from excessive use of force: In the policing of non-violent protests, police must avoid the use of force.
- Right to Medical Assistance: If you are injured you have a right to medical assistance without delay.
- Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Detention: If you are arrested you have a right to be told of the reason for your arrest, you also have the right promptly after your arrest to have access to a lawyer and to your family.
- Right to Complain: If your rights have been violated you have a right to file a complaint and to be provided information on how to do so.