

ACTIVIST LEGAL SUPPORT TEAM'S HOW TO



This handout includes learnings, work roles and experiences from grassroots legal collectives. Please note neither of these are exhaustive lists, but meant as inspiration and a starting point for further exploration and differ based on the country's legislation and type of activism. Thanks to all the people and collectives who shared their knowledge with us!

The Movement Hub

BEFORE AN ACTION

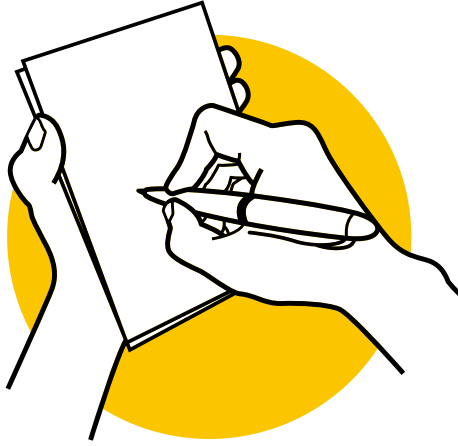
- ✓ **Do an assessment of the action**
 - How many activists, foreigners, minors expected
 - Strategies & tactics, action consensus (including assessment of the legal risks)
- ✓ **Develop a legal strategy**
 - Contact lawyers, consult, agree on rates and ways of working together
- ✓ **Manage logistics, communication and create a shift plan for the team**
- ✓ **Prepare guidelines** with most important information and common questions
 - Host workshops or informative sessions on the legal aspects of an action
- ✓ **Have dedicated and trained people** in de-escalation and peace-making in the action (Optional - get observers)
- ✓ Make sure **your devices and communication channels are safe**
 - Use encryption and other tools to increase security, especially when dealing with people's personal data

DURING AN ACTION



- ✓ **Answer the Legal Team phone**
- ✓ **Stay in contact with lawyers**
- ✓ **Stay in contact with action team & media team**
- ✓ **Coordinate with detention-support teams**
- ✓ **Log the events of the action**
 - Collect information, testimonies that can be later on used in court
- ✓ **Involve lawyers** as soon as pre-trial detention is a threat
- ✓ **Organize solidarity support** for people in detention
 - Wait for people in front of police station with food and warm clothes
 - Organize shuttles back to the camp or city

AFTER AN ACTION



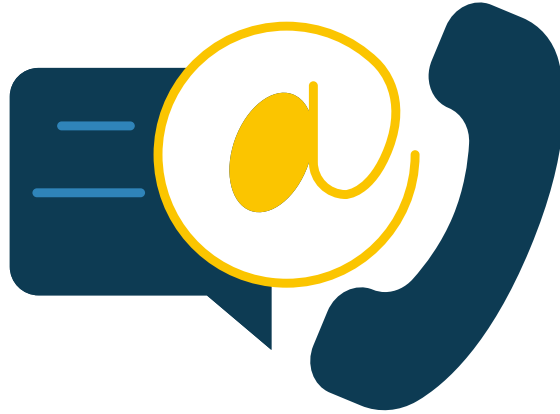
- ✔ **Empower activists to write memory protocols & if necessary get medical testimonies of police violence (It might not be possible if people choose to be anonymous in the action)**
- ✔ **Check if immediate legal measurements need to be taken**
 - Objections against DNA sampling
 - Power of attorney, etc.
- ✔ **Ensure everyone knows what to do if they get a letter from the police**
- ✔ **Make sure there are places to go for psychological support, empower affinity groups to debrief on their own**

AFTER AN ACTION



- ✓ **Have a debriefing of the legal support team and divide tasks for the future:**
 - staying in contact with lawyers
 - define what happens when first letters arrive
- ✓ **Stay in contact with the whole action group** regarding communication & potential solidarity fundraising campaign to cover fines and fees for lawyers
- ✓ **If needed: Organize support structures for people in pre-trial detention**
 - Solidarity demonstrations
 - Writing letters

LEGAL FOLLOW UP



- ✔ **Stay in contact** with activists, action team and lawyers
- ✔ **Inform them about proceedings to come** (E.g. police interviews) and give advice
- ✔ **Prepare court hearings** (Legally & communication-wise)
- ✔ **Estimate the costs** and coordinate with fundraising and media team
- ✔ **Discuss how far the legal case could and should go**

TRIALS



- ✓ **Make a decision:** Public campaign moment or not?
If yes:
 - Coordinate with the media team & maybe action team if there is a mobilization planned, with certain trials a bigger solidarity campaign could be useful
 - Coordinate with the fundraising team (most useful moment!)
- ✓ **Prepare** with lawyers and activists (strategy, briefing)
- ✓ **Discuss what to do** after the verdict, prepare scenarios

Be aware that legal consequences of an action might last years!

LONG TERM ANTI-REPRESSION WORK



- ✓ **Write letters** to those in prison and detention
- ✓ **Visit public trials** to support people
- ✓ **Take part in solidarity demonstrations**
- ✓ **Raise awareness** to further societal pressure to abolish police, prisons and reform the criminal justice system
- ✓ **Develop and sustain awareness work** and out of action, long term emotional support and build resilience of the group

About The Movement Hub

The Movement Hub empowers anyone fighting for that is livable and just for all – by providing a platform for learning and sharing stories, tools and techniques. Whether you're an activist who fought injustice or climate breakdown for decades, a young member of a grassroots group, or even a changemaker working alone – we have something to offer you.

www.themovementhub.org

