

# Office Set-up

## Research:

- Information on courts, jails, police stations and bail bondsmen — including phone numbers, addresses, hours/days open, and person to speak to or ask for when calling and if they're friendly or helpful. Also get directions both from public transportation and driving
- Action contact information: Convergence center, medical team, communications team, etc.
- Medical contact information: phone numbers and addresses of local hospitals and free clinics
- Information on what streets will be closed, what detours are available, etc.

## Office Layout:

It's a good idea to think about how you would like the office set up before you do it. Some things to think about:

- Where to put wall charts so that all volunteers answering phones can see them
- How to arrange multiple desks with multiple phone lines that enables all people answering phones to talk without bothering and hear without being bothered
- Finding a quieter space for the computer that's not too removed from the rest of the office

## Wall Charts:

The legal office uses wall charts as part of the information sharing system. The update charts should be on the wall and accessible, so the info coordinator can update them. If your office is doesn't have much wall space, you can make small charts for the contact info and tape them to each desk. Here are the charts you'll need to have before the action starts.

- Street and Jail Update Charts
- Legal Team Update and Legal Observer (LO) Update and LO Dispatch charts (if needed)
- Government contact numbers — phone, fax, addresses, email and websites, if available of jails, courts, judges, mayor, sheriff dept., police precinct, police chief, public defenders office, prominent state and city officials, influential private citizens
- Legal contacts – ACLU, NLG, any other lefty lawyer organizations.
- Legal Team contact numbers (note which numbers should not be given out)
- Action Contact numbers – Convergence, IMC, Security Team, Communications Team, Medical Team
- Medical Contact Information – Local Hospitals, Free Clinics, Street Medic Center
- Fundraising Information - where people can send money for the legal team or for bail money (Western Union locations, etc.)
- Where is everyone? Have a chart of courts and jails and post it with the names of lawyers and legal team members that can be moved to show where they are

## Call Logs:

- Make sure you have lots of notebooks on hand – at least two for each volunteer and legal team member
- On the inside cover, write a sample entry to remind volunteers of the information that is absolutely necessary
- On the back cover, write a key for highlighted categories
- Find a safe place to keep the notebooks

## **Maps:**

- It's helpful to have a very large map on the wall with location of blockades, one way streets, detours, locations of jails and courts, etc. marked clearly
- Have lots of regular street maps (preferably marked as well) to send with legal teams and runners who need to navigate the city

## **Contact Lists:**

There are some contact lists that shouldn't be posted on the wall, but to which members of the legal team should have easy access. The information might be in a database, but it's helpful to have it printed out, too, particularly since whoever needs them will often have to call down the list. These lists include:

- Volunteer contact information
- Lawyer contact information
- Legal observer contact information

## **Office supplies:**

- 20-30 notebooks
- Pens, highlighters, markers
- Butcher paper or 3' X 5' pads
- Printer paper
- File folders
- File cabinet
- Masking tape
- Push pins
- Paper clips/binder clips
- Stapler and staples
- Post-it notes
- Phones
- Clocks

## **Documents:**

All documents should be copied electronically on disk, on the hard drive, and on a zip disk if possible. Hard copies should be produced and copied according to the particular need for each document

- Arrestee intake form (have hundreds available; each desk/phone should have a stack)
- Phone script (depends on number of phones and number of volunteers; each desk/phone should have at least two, and there should be a extras available for volunteers to take home and go over)
- Police Misconduct Reports (have hundreds — at the legal office, at the convergence, at the jail when people are being released)
- Printed reports from databases (each desk should have at least one copy of arrestee database, which will have to be printed each time it is updated; each desk should have at least one copy of the legal support person database; legal team members (but not volunteers) should have at least one copy of lawyer, LO, and volunteer contact easily accessible.)
- Detainee forms/Outtake forms (numbers depend on how many people are arrested; most should be sent with the legal team member going to do outtake at the jail but some should remain at legal office for people who we might miss. This form can be the same form as arrestee intake)
- Boilerplate press release (one or two copies of this will be adequate, one for the flak and other legal team members working on media)

**Database:** MSLC should have a boilerplate database available

- *Database for arrestees:*
  - Name/nickname
  - Affinity group
  - Legal support person with contact info
  - Arrest time
  - Arrest location
  - Where detained
  - Booking number
  - Gender
  - Date and time of first and subsequent contacts with legal team
  - Asked to see legal team/lawyer? How many times? When?
  - Medical info
  - Notes
  
- *Lawyer Database:*
  - Contact numbers for attorneys
  - Each attorney's availability/schedule
  - Time and date dispatched
  - Location dispatched to
  - Activist dispatched with
  
- *Legal Observer Database:*
  - LO name
  - Contact info
  - Availability/Schedule
  
- *Legal Support Person Database:*
  - Affinity Group
  - Legal Support Person name
  - LSP contact number

**Photocopies:**

- Training Materials
- documents

**Volunteer Responsibilities:**

1. Sign a Non Disclosure Agreement
2. Work a \_\_\_ hour shift
3. No Sleeping at the Office (except if you're working a graveyard phone shift)
4. If you're in the office, you are working
5. Know security protocol and follow it
6. Letting people know what you'd like to do, what you don't mind doing, what you need from them
7. Letting people know if you're tired, discouraged, stressed, or burnt-out
8. Letting people know when you need information or help accomplishing a task

**Legal Team Responsibilities to Volunteers:**

1. Maintain a healthy office environment
2. Making sure volunteers aren't stuck doing work they hate
3. Keeping volunteers informed about office procedure and what's happening in the streets
4. Checking in to see how volunteers are feeling and how office procedure can be improved
5. Doing an exit interview when volunteers leave to see how they felt about their experience and what they would change about office procedures