

Phone Script

Answer the phone by saying “Legal support, this call may be monitored.”

Calls from the Street

Write all this information into the notebook at your call station:

- Date and time
- Name or nickname of caller
- Exact location of caller
- Call back number or other contact info (cell phone as well as email, permanent phone number), especially if witnessing arrests or brutality
- The message
 - If someone calls with random updates or takes a long time, write them down briefly and let them know we need to keep the phone lines open

For calls regarding **police brutality** or **harassment**:

- Briefly, what’s happening?
- Where exactly are you? How close are you to the incident?
- Are any Legal Observers or media seeing it? How many? If not, can you direct their attention to it?
- Are there any medics? Do you need the number for the Medical Team?
- Is the victim(s) detained or arrested? (Held down, behind police lines, handcuffed?)
- How many police are present? (Estimates are ok)
- Can you see the names or badge numbers of police? Have you recorded or can you record this information?
- Can you get the names and contact info of Legal Observers, media, medics, and other witnesses? If you can’t write them down, can you dictate them to me over the phone?
- You can get a Police Misconduct Report from a Legal Observer, or download one from our website and mail it to us.
- *[Tell a core person as soon as you hang up]*

Make a note as to your perceptions of the witness — did they sound upset? scared? angry?

Highlight all entries in your notebook regarding police misconduct or brutality in blue; you can do this right after you've taken the report or can wait until the end of your shift

If police are **arresting** people:

- How many people are being arrested? Count or estimate numbers.
- Are any Legal Observers or media seeing it? How many? If not, can you direct their attention to it?
- Are the police using any force? (shoving, tackling, pain compliance holds)
- Can you find out if the arrestees know the legal hotline number? Do you see it written on their arms or legs? Can you get close enough to tell them the number?
- Can you hear if they are invoking their rights by saying "I am going to remain silent, I want to see a lawyer"? Can you get close enough to suggest that they do this?
- Are any arrestees using non-compliance (going limp, etc)?
- Are there any medics? Do you need the number for the medics?
- Are there buses, vans, or other police vehicles nearby?
- Is the situation escalating?
- *[Fill out Arrestee Intake Forms for **each** individual who gets arrested – even if we only have partial identifying info for them (like just first name)]*
- *[Tell a core person as soon as you hang up]*

Highlight reports of arrests in your notebook in yellow. You can do this right after you've taken the report or at the end of your shift

Overview of the Arrest Process

Step 1: The police stop you. The cops might single you out, or you might be part of a 500 person mass-arrest.

Step 2: The police detain you. You're not allowed to leave. At this point, you still might get released. They may or may not ask you questions.

Step 3: You're put in cuffs and the cops take away your backpack and (often) empty your pockets. At this point, you know you're getting arrested.

Step 4: You're transported to a holding cell. This can happen in the back of a squad car or in a city bus the police commandeered.

Step 5: You're put in a holding cell and wait a long, long time. You're *supposed* to get a phone call at this point. This could be the big detention facility they made, a police station, or a random parking lot they set aside for holding people.

Step 6: You get released (if it's less serious charges) or put into a longer-term holding facility (for more serious charges or if you can't post bond).



Calls from Jail

All information received from people calling from jail for the first time should be recorded on the Arrestee Intake Form. Put this form in the box for Arrestee Intake Forms. This is extremely important for keeping track of arrestees.

- What's your name?
- Are there any medical or other emergencies? *[If yes, tell a core person as soon as you hang up and highlight in pink.]*
- Is this your first call to the legal hotline?
 1. If yes, then continue down this script.
 2. If no, ask if they have any updates on their situation. If they do, then find their arrestee form (if you have time) and take updates on it. If you can't find it, or if the phones are ringing off the hook, write down their updated information on another arrestee intake form and write in big letters at the top of the form, "UPDATED INFORMATION FROM JAIL [date and time]"
- Were you arrested with others or by yourself? Is everyone ok? Does anyone need medical attention? Has anyone been separated from the group?
- How many people are with you? What are their names and booking numbers?
- Do you or anyone else there have a designated legal support person? Who are they and have they been contacted? (Write the answer and contact information under AGSP Contact in the Personal Info section)
- Have you asked to see a lawyer? Who have you asked? What did they say? Do you know the name(s) and badge number(s) of the person(s) whom you asked?
- Have the cops tried to question anyone? Has everyone invoked their rights by saying the Magic Words — "I am going to remain silent. I want a lawyer."?
- Have you discussed with the others what you want to do? (Cite out, stay in jail until arraignments, etc.)
- Do you feel you have been mistreated in any way?
- Do you feel like you are in special circumstances and need to cite out right away?

All calls from jail are recorded. Certain things **should not** be discussed over the phone:

- Immigration status of a particular person
- Individual involvement in event that led to arrest
- Any admission of crime or intent to commit a crime

If someone begins to talk to you about these things, remind them again that the call is probably recorded. Suggest they wait until they see a lawyer to try to explain what's going on or certain problems they may have. Tell them that we will make extra effort to get lawyers in to see people who have special circumstances that may cause them to be targeted.

Don't promise that we can get them a lawyer right away, only that we're doing everything we can. Answer questions, but don't spread rumors. **Again, if anyone needs emergency help, tell a core person as soon as you hang up and highlight in pink.**

When people call for **emotional support:**

- Listen.
- Let them know generally we are doing what we can — sending lawyers to the jails, talking to the prosecutor's office, etc.
- Let them know about other support — people calling the jails, court, mayor, etc. to demand the arrestees' release; jail vigil outside (or jail vigil being organized); press conferences and high media interest.

When people call about **mistreatment in jail:**

- Ask if they need or if they have requested medical attention.
- Ask about identification/badge numbers, names, physical descriptions of police or guards; ask them to pay close attention to these things in the future.
- Take detailed notes on what they're telling you in your log. Make a note next to the person's name on the list of arrestees of time, date and your name.
- Tell them that we will have Police Misconduct Reports available when they get out and that they should fill one out then.
- *[Highlight police brutality in blue.]*

If they are calling with **specific legal questions:**

- Remind them that you are not a lawyer, but that the legal team is working with lawyers.
- Write down the questions and tell them you will get the answer(s) as soon as possible or try to get a lawyer to come and answer the question directly.
- Remind them to ask their lawyers hypothetical questions: “Hypothetically, if we were going to do X, what might the legal consequences be?”

If they are calling with **messages for lawyers:**

- Never give out lawyers' phone numbers.
- If they have **sensitive information** or messages that can only be given to or through lawyers:
 - Write down the message.
 - Ask how how urgent it is, from 1 to 5, (5 being most urgent) and write this down.
- [Relay this information to a core member so they can call the lawyers.]

Calls from Family and Friends

The caller wants to know what the legal hotline is or who you are.

- The legal hotline is staffed by volunteers whose mission is to provide emotional and legal support to activists participating in the demonstrations. Our priority right now is taking calls from people reporting brutality and arrests happening on the streets and for people calling from jail who have been arrested.

Early in the action: The person wants to know if their friend/relative has been arrested.

- *If you believe your (friend/relative) has been arrested, you might want to call back later when we've heard from more arrestees and have better information. It takes a while for police to process people, and arrested activists are sometimes denied their phone call, and we expect the police will continue to make arrests, so no matter when you call, there is a good chance that our list will not be complete. However, you are welcome to call back, and if we aren't too busy, we would be happy to try to answer your questions.*

Later in the action: The caller wants to know if their friend/relative has been arrested.

What is the name of the person you are looking for?

- If the office is not busy and you have time then proceed.
 - *Otherwise, say “Sorry, we can't look this information up right now because we have to keep the phone lines open for people calling from jail. Try calling back later, and in the meantime try to stay by a phone that they can call you from.”*
- Check the list of confirmed arrestees for the name
- If you find the name: *Yes, _____ is in jail. The legal team is working on getting lawyers into the jail as soon as possible. Reassure the caller that the person is ok, that they are with other activists, and that they are taking care of each other (if you know this to be true).*
- If you do not find the name: *“We don't have this person on our list, but that doesn't mean that s/he wasn't arrested. Our list is incomplete - it takes a while for police to process people, arrested activists are sometimes denied their right to a phone call, and not everyone knows the legal hotline number. You can call the jail and see if _____ has been booked. The number for the jail is: (xxx)XXX-XXXX.*
- If you have time, and/or the person is dissatisfied, angry, or upset:
 - *I hear your concern(s), and we are doing all we can to help those who have been/ are being arrested. There is something else you can do – you can call the mayor, the sheriff, the police chief/commissioner, the jails and the media and tell them you are outraged at their disregard for and repression of constitutional rights and the unlawful arrests of people expressing their First Amendment rights.*
 - *You can find their numbers on our website (www._____.____)*
 - *I know this is a stressful time for all of us. We're doing all we can to help those being persecuted for their political activity. Stay strong.*