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"No Kings" protest: What to know about your rights, safely protesting



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President [Trump's law enforcement](#) crackdowns.

The big picture: While most "No Kings" protests in [June were peaceful](#), scattered incidents of violence in Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and Culpeper, Virginia have renewed focus on protest preparation and [demonstrators' rights](#).

Attorneys and protest organizers advised demonstrators take these safety precautions.

Before you go:

Create a plan and several alternatives in the event of an emergency, attorney Naomi Zikmund-Fisher told Axios via email. She is a legal observer and board member of the Detroit and Michigan National Lawyers Guild chapter.

- Study the protest route, and organize transportation to and from the event.
- Stick with a group and set a meet-up location if you get separated.

Pack essential supplies for the day in a suitable bag.

- Water, snacks, ID, medications and cash should be readily available.
- Wear non-distinctive clothing to avoid being easily identified.
- Don't bring anything you wouldn't want on you if you were arrested.

Consider [surveillance precautions](#) and how you want to safeguard your identity.

- If you need to bring your device, keep it powered off throughout the protest.
- Disable biometric features like FaceID to prevent law enforcement from accessing your device.
- Download encrypted communication apps to avoid messages or calls being tracked.

Know your rights to peacefully demonstrate.

- Protesters retain the right to protest in public areas but need to avoid invading private property.
- Extra precautions should be taken around government facilities and protesters should pay attention to warnings from law enforcement officers or government officials, Zikmund-Fisher said.
- She added that protesters need to decide their own risk tolerance for going against orders of law enforcement officials before a protest.
- Write down emergency numbers on your body or a slip of paper in the event you are detained.

Lean on your community for additional information and assistance.

- ACLU Chief Political and Advocacy Officer Deirdre Schifeling shared in a "No Kings" press conference Thursday that the ACLU prepared tens of thousands of protesters for "No Kings" and will have on-site resources accessible.

distribute millions of cards reminding people that the Constitution protects their freedom to protest peacefully," she said.

While protesting

Always be aware of your surroundings.

- Pay attention to suspicious behavior, unusual activity, packages and vehicles, and take note of escape routes.
- "The best practice is "see something, say something," Human Rights Campaign National Press Secretary Brandon Wolf told Axios.
- "Let an emergency contact know where you will be, make a plan to share status updates with them periodically, and alert event staff if any safety issue arises."
- Wolf said protesters should avoid engaging with agitators at all costs and use de-escalation techniques if necessary.

If you're exposed to tear gas or pepper spray:

- Protect your face and reduce exposure by wearing a face mask, goggles or a wet bandana over your nose and mouth.
- Avoid inhaling, and instead rinse your mouth and blow your nose to clear irritants.
- Do not rub your eyes. Flush them with a mix of half liquid antacid (aluminum hydroxide or magnesium hydroxide only) and half water.

- Ask the police if you are free to go. If they say no, don't answer any questions without a lawyer present, except for possibly stating your name and showing your ID, Zikmund-Fisher said.
- She added that whether you are required to show identification to law enforcement varies by state, but not doing so will almost always escalate a situation.
- If you're inclined to record police interactions or arrests, Zikmund-Fisher said to be aware that capturing footage may anger officers, so it's best to do so from a safe distance and immediately back up the recording on another private, password-protected device.

What they're saying: "Having the right to do something does not mean others, including law enforcement and other government agencies, won't try to stop you from doing it," Zikmund-Fisher said.

- "Even if they're doing something they are not supposed to do, they always CAN," Zikmund-Fisher added.

Go deeper: [What to know about Oct. 18 "No Kings" protests](#)



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