



Rhodes College
BELONGING

A GUIDE TO ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE

As part of our college's commitment to inclusive excellence and building a culture of belonging, Rhodes seeks to engage the entire community in opportunities to deepen our collective understanding of social justice. We recognize that community members may want to take action and advocate for change in the city in various ways.

GET INVOLVED

Looking to get involved? Below you'll find some local organizations doing work focused on social justice and human rights.

MICAH (Memphis Interfaith Coalition for Action and Hope) is a coalition of community and faith-based organizations joining together to give a more powerful voice for issues of justice in our city.

Decarcerate Memphis is a coalition composed of community leaders, activists, attorneys, strategists, clergy and concerned citizens who believe in a system of justice that is equitable and restorative for all, independent of federal intervention.

Just City has been fighting for meaningful criminal justice for all since 2015. Their work is informed by the core belief that neither race, ethnicity, nor income should affect anyone who encounters the criminal legal system.

Rhodes College Just City Advocates is a cohort of passionate students working to pursue a smaller, fairer, and more humane criminal legal system.

Rhodes College Amnesty International hopes to foster a more tolerant community that works to raise awareness about and advocate against injustices occurring at international and local levels.

The right to protest is fundamental and allows you to elevate your voices and concerns, but participating involves risk. Below are resources to help you safely participate in protest actions.

Tips for Protesting Safely

Prepare before you go:

- Stay hydrated and dress for expected weather.
- Bring any needed medication, water, face masks and supplies.
- Take supplies to protect yourself from and safely remove chemical irritants (face covering, milk of magnesia, towelettes).

- Bring some cash.
- Fully charge your cell phone and bring a battery extender if possible.
- Let at least one emergency contact know your plan and make arrangements to keep them posted on your status and safety both during and after the event. Consider things like:
 - Where will you be?
 - How will you get there?
 - Where do you intend to go in an emergency?
 - What time do you intend to get back?

Have a solid understanding of the environment:

- Know the area. Download a map of the venue and surrounding areas. Remember that in some cases, cell service may be limited.
- Know the multiple routes into and out of the protest area.
- Know where the nearest fire stations and hospital emergency rooms are. Save their addresses and phone numbers in your phone.
- Try to remain with your designated group at all times. Have several rally points where you will meet others in the event of an emergency.

Safety Practices:

- Maintain 360° “situational awareness” at all times. Know what is going on around you, above you and below you.
- Be alert to suspicious persons, packages, activity and vehicles.
- Stay away from unattended bags, backpacks, boxes or other packages.
- Stay away from public containers such as trash cans, dumpsters, mailboxes and newspaper stands.

Know the difference between “cover” and “concealment”:

- Cover: something that will stop a bullet (i.e. heavy concrete wall or flower bed, car or truck, ditch, a building).
- Concealment: something that would prevent an assailant from observing you (i.e. bushes, shrubs, signage, banners, etc.).
- Be prepared to move quickly to “cover” if gunfire erupts.
- Get low – then go to cover. Move at right angles to trajectory if possible.
- If you can’t find cover, move to concealment until you can safely leave.

In the event chemical agents are dispersed:

- Know which way the wind is blowing. If chemical agents are dispersed, quickly move up-wind if possible.
- Cover your face with masks/protective materials.

If an explosion occurs:

- Get out quickly via the safest and fastest route.
- Go to the pre-designated rally point and account for your team.

- Assume that a “secondary” device may have been planted nearby – be alert, move quickly, deliberately, and safely.

Source: <https://www.hrc.org/news/tips-for-protesting-peacefully-and-safely>

For more information about your rights during protests, check out this information from the [ACLU](#).