

MRCI Protest Template - Roles and Responsibilities

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland

Below is a list of roles that will need to be assigned for most protests. One person can sometimes play more than one role, but think through the logistics to make sure each job can be effectively performed before doubling up. Migrant workers should be trained and supported to take on roles with increasing responsibility, but be sure to prepare them to be successful with more challenging functions before assigning them.¹

Overall coordination: scout location; determine set up, flow, and agenda for action; prep any speakers; assign roles and ensure people are equipped to fill them; help where needed; general problem solving; any mid-event decisions or changes that may be necessary.

Lead chanter: pre-select chants that are appropriate and relevant; maintain protest energy and protestors' engagement and enthusiasm.

Support chanter(s): the "response" to the lead chanter's "call;" step in for lead chanter when asked.

Point person for police, security, and management of protested establishment: deal with the people who want us to leave; have basic understanding of key issues such as public vs. private property lines and keeping entrance and exits paths clear; de-escalate when necessary. Works best when you're calm, firm, and smiley.

Point person for crazy/angry people: de-escalate tense situations; contain problem people and prevent them from disrupting event or distracting protestors.

Media contact: greet and manage press; acts as gatekeeper between press and spokespeople; distribute press releases; will facilitate their photographing and filming and decide with overall coordinator if changes to the program or flow are necessary to facilitate press; the ONLY person to deal with media other than pre-identified spokespeople.

Spokespeople: the ONLY people other than the media contact to speak to reporters.

Sign in: ensure every single protestor signs in. Giving a sticker or t-shirt to protestors when they sign in can be a useful tactic in helping you catch everyone: if they don't have a sticker or shirt, you know you haven't got them yet.

Ally point person: greet all allies and supporters; help make sure they feel connected and appreciated.

Distribution of action materials: pass around picket signs, noise makers, banners, t-shirts. Make sure everyone has something if possible.

Leafleters (2-5): distribute leaflets; deliver a quick, basic rap on the issue; be prepared to deal with questions or unwelcome comments and direct to the point person for crazy/angry people as relevant.

Marshalls (2-10, depending on size and extent of movement): get picket line or crowd moving as planned; keep it moving smoothly; keep entrance and exit paths of establishment clear and unblocked; as needed, adjust positioning of crowd as numbers change; as relevant, position your body to help manage crowd. For marches: block traffic if relevant; keep protestors moving single file or 2x2 and avoid bunching; coordinate with march leader to adjust pace; manage gaps or interruptions in line.

Banner holders (2)

ⁱ Many thanks to Deirdre Lehn for leaving MRCI with this useful tool which informs all of our public and strategic actions