



## A Toolkit for Law Enforcement on Protests and First Amendment Issues

With protests and mass demonstrations escalating over local, national, and international issues, this toolkit offers tips, tools, and strategies to address the rights of protesters as well as to protect the public and officers in the process. It represents contributions from the National Public Safety Partnership (PSP), the State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training (SLATT) Program, and the Hate Crimes Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Program.

As law enforcement officers, it is important to keep several key elements in mind in any protest or mass demonstration.

1. If permits are required for protests, carefully create “Freedom of Speech” zones for participants, considering time limits; significant space between opposing groups; sight and sound separation for residents or businesses; traffic flow patterns; and critical infrastructure, such as power substations, hospitals and dialysis centers, for ingress and egress. For the permitting process, permits should be nontransferable; permit holders should show proof of permit and identification; motorized vehicles and bicycles should be prohibited on demonstration routes; all participants should be assembled before step-off time; time limits should be created for the route; and limits should be placed on the materials used to make signs, such as prohibiting poles over 40” or those made of metal.
2. Walk parade routes or zones daily for any hidden caches, such as bricks or rocks.
3. Hold community meetings with protest organizers and those in the area ahead of the event and listen to their concerns.
4. Notify rideshare companies or public transportation of designated areas or routes and modify pickup or drop-off points as necessary.<sup>1</sup>

### National Public Safety Partnership Clearinghouse

The PSP Clearinghouse, and accompanying mobile app, is a public online tool that serves as a one-stop shop for violence reduction and public safety resources from U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) program components and other federal entities.



#### [Rethinking the Police Response to Mass Demonstrations: Nine Recommendations](#)

Police agencies’ management of protests and demonstrations is not a new issue. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) produced major reports on this topic in 2006, 2011, and 2018. And yet the demonstrations of 2020 required PERF to throw out those playbooks and realize that we had to look at demonstrations very differently. Police simply did not expect and were not prepared for the level and extent of violence they encountered. It was unlike anything they had seen in 20 years. Police actually faced three major crises in 2020: the COVID-19 pandemic; thousands of demonstrations following the murder of George Floyd; and a spike in homicides and shootings.

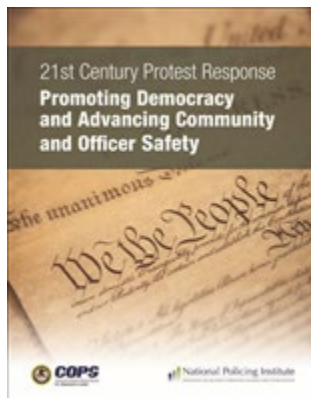
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<sup>1</sup> Formolo, P. (2024). Security briefing to IIR. Presented August 5, 2024, to the Institute for Intergovernmental Research.



### [Report on the 2020 Protests and Civil Unrest](#)

This report examines the 2020 protests and civil unrest that occurred, and it presents a comprehensive perspective on the law enforcement challenges and lessons learned in 68 of the largest cities in the United States and Canada.



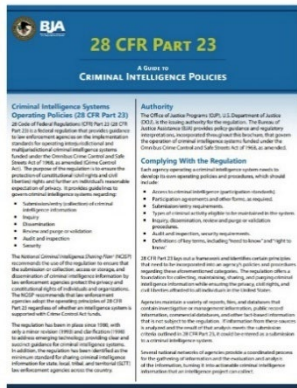
### [21st Century Protest Response: Promoting Democracy and Advancing Community and Officer Safety](#)

Law enforcement agencies play a critical role in preserving the people's fundamental right to peaceably assemble and in facilitating demonstrators' safety and security as they exercise their First Amendment rights. At the same time, they must also identify when law enforcement interventions are necessary in order to maintain safety and public order. Officials must protect the rights of citizens to protest, while simultaneously safeguarding property and preserving officer and community safety.



### [Staying Healthy in the Fray: Family Wellness Guide](#)

The National Policing Institute (the Institute), in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) VALOR Officer Safety and Wellness Program, created this Family Wellness Guide to serve as an additional resource in the Institute's Staying Healthy in the Fray compendium. The Family Wellness Guide was developed to emphasize the priority that family wellness must receive in the overall ethos and culture of law enforcement agencies and provide guidance and resources to agencies, officers, and family members. The guide specifically addresses family wellness issues that may arise related to law enforcement response to protests and civil unrest as well as other difficult assignments, such as working extended shiftwork and overtime.



### [28 CFR Part 23: A Guide to Criminal Intelligence Policies](#)

28 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 23 (28 CFR Part 23) is a federal regulation that provides guidance to law enforcement agencies on the implementation standards for operating interjurisdictional and multijurisdictional criminal intelligence systems funded under the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended (Crime Control Act). The purpose of the regulation is to ensure the protection of constitutional (civil rights and civil liberties) rights and further an individual's reasonable expectation of privacy. It provides guidelines to govern criminal intelligence systems regarding submission/entry (collection) of criminal intelligence information, inquiry, dissemination, review and purge or validation, audit and

inspection, and security.



### [28 CFR Part 23 Online Training](#)

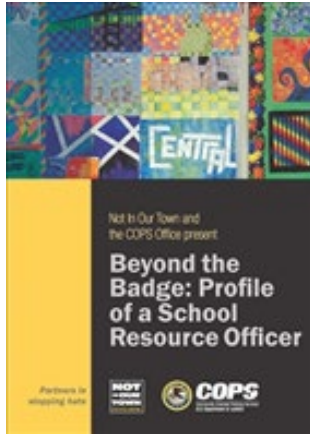
This site is a tool for our nation's law enforcement and homeland security professionals. 28 CFR Part 23 is the guideline for law enforcement agencies that operate federally funded multijurisdictional or interjurisdictional criminal intelligence systems. The guideline specifically provides guidance for the submission, entry, security, inquiry, dissemination, review, and purge of criminal intelligence information. This site includes an introductory-level training on the regulation's core principles and provides an understanding of privacy and civil liberties concerns related to criminal intelligence information sharing. Those agencies that are either supported through funding under the [Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968](#), as amended (Safe Streets Act), or that are held to the requirements of grant special conditions (e.g., [High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas](#), [Homeland Security Grant Program](#)) or state law must comply with the 28 CFR Part 23 regulation. (Sign in on the top left of the linked page to access the training.)



### [Twenty-First Century Protest Response: Promoting Democracy and Advancing Community and Officer Safety](#)

This resource provides a checklist for each phase of a protest response that can be tailored to meet individual community and agency needs and resources. It is based on recommendations from the 2022 report *21st Century Protest Response: Promoting Democracy and Advancing Community and Officer Safety* and augmented by the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators and by university public safety department executives and other experts to ensure recommendations are appropriate for the nonmunicipal agencies that frequently respond to campus protests.





### [Beyond the Badge: Profile of a School Resource Officer DVD](#)

In the midst of turmoil and division between law enforcement and the community of Ferguson, Missouri, St. Louis County School Resource Officer (SRO) Ronald Cockrell works to bridge the gap between students and police officers. This publication follows Officer Cockrell's efforts to build relationships, listen to students address fear of the police in a school town hall, mentor young people on how to deal with conflicts, and work with his colleagues to respond and support a student whose father is murdered. This short film is designed to prompt conversations in law enforcement agencies, schools, and communities about the role SRO can play in improving relationships between students and law enforcement and mentoring and supporting young people as they navigate conflicts and interactions with the justice system.



### [Recommendations for First Amendment-Protected Events for State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies](#)

As agencies respond to First Amendment-protected events, state and local law enforcement leadership should be aware of certain "red flag" issues that may arise as they assess whether the agency and personnel should be involved in these events and, if so, what form that involvement should take.



### [First Amendment Online Training](#)

The Bureau of Justice Assistance, with the support of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative and the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council, developed the *Responding to First Amendment-Protected Events—The Role of State and Local Law Enforcement Officers* videos to assist agency leadership in providing training to officers and agency personnel as they prepare for and respond to a First Amendment-protected event in a manner that diligently protects the privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties of persons and groups.



[The Role of State and Local Law Enforcement at First Amendment Events Reference Card](#)

This reference is designed to serve as a pocket-sized reference card for line officers who are responding to a First Amendment-protected event and provides an overview of their roles and responsibilities, as well as an overview of the rights of the participants of First Amendment-protected events.



[Public Recording of Police](#)

This document provides background information on the public's Fourth Amendment right, key points to remember, the public's right to record, the definition of "public space," and restrictions of public recordings.



## State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training Program

Following the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, in 1995, the U.S. Attorney General asked the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to develop a counter-terrorism training program for law enforcement in the United States. Developed together with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the SLATT Program was designed to provide instruction to enable state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement to recognize the precursor indicators of terrorist activity in order to help prevent acts of terrorism in the United States.

The threat posed by terrorism—both international and domestic—has evolved significantly since 9/11. As the threat to the United States and U.S. interests evolves, we must adapt and confront these challenges by building partnerships that support the detection of and response to threats of terrorism, targeted violence, and hate crimes.

Our nation's law enforcement officers and criminal justice practitioners must have the proper training and resources to effectively address current and emerging threats within the homeland. The SLATT Program utilizes a multidisciplinary approach to deliver timely and relevant training that educates participants; emphasizes community trust; advocates for accountability and transparency; and safeguards the protection of privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

The SLATT Program offers an initial introduction to countering terrorism, targeted violence, and hate crimes for many law enforcement and criminal justice practitioners. The curriculum is designed to enhance their understanding of complex threats and their critical role in enabling community trust and transparency as a core component of our nation's counterterrorism, targeted violence, and hate crime prevention strategies.



[The State and Local Anti-Terrorism Training Program](#) eLearning training courses prepare state, local, tribal, and territorial law enforcement officers to identify, interdict, prevent, and respond to acts of terrorism, targeted violence, and hate crime. By focusing

on the importance of collaboration, community trust, cultural diversity, and law enforcement accountability, SLATT's research- and evidence-based program provides law enforcement personnel and key community partners with an understanding of the threat environment and the available resources required to counter threats within their communities. The SLATT Program supports the state, local, and tribal law enforcement community with a vast array of [resources and includes videos, podcasts, recorded lectures, and on-demand webinars](#) that highlight current research and subject-matter expert perspectives regarding terrorism, targeted violence, and hate-crime prevention. SLATT resources are multiuse and suitable for individual officers during roll call or larger group settings, to include basic academy and in-service training.



## Hate Crimes Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) Program

The Hate Crimes TTA Program is funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. The program provides tailored technical assistance, resources, and project management guidance to Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. and Community-based Hate Crimes Program award recipients, other hate crimes-related award recipients, and the field. Founded in 2021, the Hate Crimes TTA Program supports state, local, and tribal law enforcement, prosecution agencies, and community-based organizations by facilitating training, outreach, and education of practitioners and the public as they develop comprehensive approaches to prevent, investigate, and prosecute hate crimes and assist victims and communities that are facing an increase in hate crimes. Visit [www.hatecrimestta.org](http://www.hatecrimestta.org) for more information.



### [Hate Crimes TTA Program Special Bulletin: Featured Resources and No-Cost Training](#)

Due to recent tragedies and the rising number of hate crimes in the United States, the Hate Crimes TTA Program gathered resources to help you protect your communities in this heightened threat environment. This bulletin is intended to identify resources to assist you and your community with preventing and detecting hate crimes and other criminal acts with preventing, detecting, and prosecuting hate crimes and other criminal acts while ensuring privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

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