

Ready the Ground Training Team Notes for Movement Marshals

<readythegroundnc.org>

Thank you for volunteering! These notes assume you attended a training for marshals; they do not explain how to do this work. They remind you of some of the things covered in a full training.

Role of marshals

We serve the demonstration to help it operate smoothly and achieve its purpose. We maintain situational awareness. We do not act as police or bouncers. We have four jobs to do:

1. **Welcome** people as they arrive. Greet everyone and thank them for coming. Be the 'skin' of a gathering so that the people participating can feel a sense of their own power and voices.
2. Provide good **information**. Help to make a space accessible to all by directing people to needed resources (like medical care, water, language interpretation, contact info. in case of arrest, and legal support). Guide a procession along the correct route. Help participants understand the plan (and any unplanned happenings).
3. Embody the **tone** for the gathering. Events can have many different tones. Use postures, facial expressions, and movements compatible with the chosen tone of the event. Join songs and chants that reinforce the event's message.
4. Intervene in cases of **trouble**. We define trouble as anything that interferes with the smooth operation of our event or interferes with the clarity of our message. If it doesn't do one of those two things, we don't call it trouble.

Look out for the well-being of participants. Work in pairs as part of a team to carefully de-escalate a situation in cases of trouble.

Hecklers (assuming they stay out of our area) usually do not cause trouble. Often they help our cause by providing an ugly contrast to our humane message. So we encourage strengthening that contrast by ignoring hecklers and not acting ugly back at them -or- by engaging in active listening with them.

Marshals always work in pairs. Two people working in a tight team can have a much wider influence on the situation than they would if they spread out. Stick with your buddy and support each other. Use your best judgment. Trust your intuition.

Four steps for handling trouble

1. **Keep the trouble from spreading.** This could look like one marshal facing the site of trouble and using de-escalation techniques. Their marshal partner could face the crowd and provide information, helping redirect our energy to the collective purpose at hand: "It is a _____. Let's keep our event on course.")
2. **Help the situation shift away from being trouble.** Techniques include active listening, distraction, problem-solving, and more.
3. **Keep boundaries clear.** Move trouble outside our event (or back in when no longer trouble). Or move our event away from trouble.
4. **Follow up.** If the incident attracted attention from the crowd, police, or media, it may help to give participants good information. Your coordinator or other marshals might need information. Check in with your buddy on how you each feel. Anything either of you need? Remember to stretch, drink water, and take good care of yourselves.

Six strong positive suggestions (DOs)

1. Marshal partners keep close enough that they can always reach out and touch each other on the shoulder to get their buddy's attention. Always.
2. Smile warmly at participants (if it fits the tone).
3. Greet everybody you come near. Maintain a friendly attitude.
4. Keep yourself alert and upbeat by varying your posture and the way you walk. Stretch. Try walking on tiptoes for a little while.
5. Thank folks for coming and for anything useful you see them do (like picking up trash).
6. Take good care of yourself and of your buddy. Drink water. Eat. Stretch.

Four negative suggestions (DON'Ts)

1. Do not use or threaten violence.
2. Do not run.
3. Do not shout (except when joining chants).
4. Do not leave without checking out with the co-coordinators of today's marshal squad.

Again, use your best judgment. Trust your intuition.