



## Arrestee Support Steps and Structures

Thank you - you have agreed to help with arrestee support, you will go and wait at the station for detainees to be released and then give them some love and snacks when they are! This will not be organised by the coordinator of your team, but by other people managing the arrestee support, who will contact you.

NOTE: This arrestee support structure is aimed at larger events with higher a likelihood of arrests and may have elements that are not appropriate for smaller events.

Affinity groups are encouraged to have their own arrestee support as it is great to really know the person picking you up at the end of the day. For smaller actions that are being done by mostly one or two affinity groups that is likely to be enough. But for larger events it is good to have a separate team that works as a secondary support system to make sure no one is left behind, and to deal with the complexity that larger numbers of arrests can posit. That would be organised at a local or national level depending on the action.

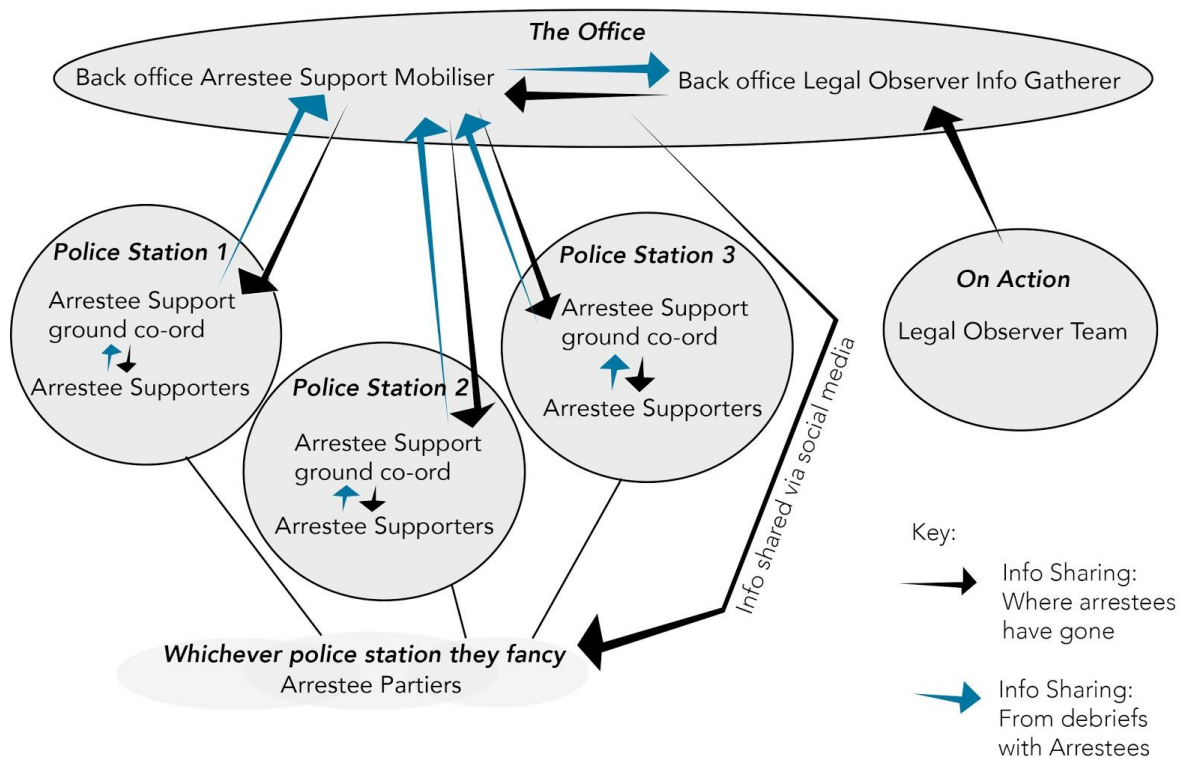
### Roles involved in the process:

- *Legal Observers:* On the ground at an action. Legal observers are trained volunteers who support the legal rights of activists. Legal observers are independent from the protest and do not participate as Rebels. They monitor arrests, including collecting witnesses and helping to connect the arrestee with support in the police station.
- *Back Office from Legal Team:* Answering the action day phone (please don't use personal numbers). Acting as a central point of contact for Rebels, members of public, and arrestees. Collecting and sharing information from Legal Observers, Well Being, Arrestee Support and Solicitors. Please don't give out personal details without permission from the individual. Minimum 2 people in the back office, this can include the Police Station Support co-ordinator. 1 person for roughly 15 arrestees.
- *Optional Back Office Well Being Mobiliser:* Only necessary if there are more than 15 arrests. Using information gathered by the LO gatherer to send people to police stations, co-ordinating shift changes and receiving information from the arrestee support debriefs with arrestees 1 person for roughly less than 40 arrestees.
- *Arrestee Support Ground Co-Ordinator:* Organising in location, doing debriefs, making sure people take breaks, helping maintain a chill happy space. Cannot drink! Must maintain sobriety. 1 person at any one time per police station, may work out at 2-3 per police station with shift changes.

- *Arrestee Supporters*: Doing debriefs, making sure arrestees get transport home and that are comfortable/happy after their stay. Giving massive props/love to the arrestees. Must be sober. 1 person at any one time per police station, may work out at 2-3 per police station with shift changes.
- *Arrestee Partiers*: Giving the arrestees massive props! Building a fun supportive loving environment for people to walk out into. As many people as possible.

Note: there should be at least 2 people at a police station at any given time, buddied up, but only one needs to be a co-ordinator.

Connection between Roles/Info Sharing/Location:



Timeline to organise:

**Week before:**

Spreadsheets spreadsheets spreadsheets! The organisers (who ideally would also be the co-ordinators on the day) need to have people in place and on call before the actions. This is done by sending the word out via a questionnaire, social media or at local group meetings, making sure that affinity groups have a self organised AS person. Anyone on that who has registered for AS can be called read a script. The script should ask:

- If they are willing to keep being contacted
- When their availability is on the night
- If they are willing to be AS ground support co-ord
- Brief explanation about what that entails, details can be sent in pack after.
- If they have a car

Set up social media event for partiers.

### Once you have the sign ups (few days before):

Send your Arrestee Supporters and Co-ords their briefs. Below is an example of the one we used in London.

Update social media event, share again.

### Day of Event:

Have co-ords in place straight from the end of action. If there is time at the end of action and location allows you can do a huddle check in before sending people to the respective police stations.

Invite people from the action to join the partiers, do social media again.

Then enjoy the chats, its real fun.

### After:

Debriefs should be available 1-3 days after to everyone who helped the arrestee support process. These can be done online or in person. There is a debrief best practise doc with guidelines and a template for how these might be run. (will put link when finished)

There should be a hand over from the on the night arrestee support to the long term court support team. Would be great if some the same people did both, but not necessary. Court can be another intimidating and it is great to see friendly faces in there with you.

### Buddying up:

You will have a buddy with you at the police station. You should never be on a shift alone.

### Example Brief:

*"Hello to the amazing arrestee support team,*

*Thanks for joining us!*

*As you may already be aware, being arrested can be unpredictable, stressful and risky. Therefore, we invite you to bring your most flexible, compassionate and courageous selves.*

*On the day we would ask for you to be available and on call between the hours you confirmed with us. Our arrestee support mobiliser will call you with the location of the police station where our dear friends are being held. Head along and hang out.*

*If people are released on your watch:*

- Give them a massive cheer!!! Its really important they are reminded how important what they are doing is and how much we value them.
- Check in with how their time was.
- Make a note of their: Name (if they gave it) and contact details. What they were charged with. Bail conditions and Court date. If there was any misconduct, or wrongful arrest.
- If they are up for it take a photo of them
- Have snacks, chocolate, treats if you fancy to bolster their day
- Help them figure out how to get home
- Send them on their way with with a cheery smile and much much love

*If the police don't know the names of the detainees do not reveal their names, the person being detained may be choosing not to give their name.*

*What to bring:*

- A mobile phone/charger/ battery pack
- Pen & paper
- Food & drink for yourself
- Warm & waterproof clothing (some of the police stations don't have an indoor waiting area)
- A good book/source of entertainment, in case you're waiting a while
- Enough money to pay for a taxi/food/drinks for arrestees (just in case)
- An umbrella
- A spare jacket that could be leant to an arrestee if necessary
- A listening ear, your compassion and your empathy

*THANK YOU! It is massively important - custody can be horrible and having friendly faces there to greet and look after detainees when released can make all the difference."*

### Arrestee debrief, if people are released on your watch:

- Check in with how their time was.
- Make a note of their:
  - Name (if they gave it) and contact details.
  - What they were charged with.
  - Bail conditions and Court date.
  - If there was any misconduct, or wrongful arrest.
  - If they are up for it take a photo of them.

Pass this information back to the Legal Team Information Gatherer.

### Debrief Protocol for the Debrief of the Arrestee Supporters:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10Q1RyJyw82yBZFxHAlmtyjXakMyjZo3nPXEnd8z9HN0/edit?usp=sharing>

### Other Points:

People may have filled In Case of Arrest Forms that may have guidance for what you need to do/who you need to contact. The WB co-ord for the affinity group should be in charge of this but may be useful to liase:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Bn0wEqJkVXtLO85rFBNOHiZhRdWn1Hgi6XMM4v66mU/edit>

It would be good to have the people doing Back Office co-ordination roles doing the integration calls during the week. Helps with connection and clarity on the day if people can put a face to the voice they are talking to.

The office phone should be a burner, it may be good for arrestees to have that number on their arms as well as the solicitor.

If you are taking peoples stuff it should have their names on it. There is no perfect way to organise this part of the role and requires discussion within local and affinity groups.

This system is a work in progress and start up guide. Groups will learn the best systems in their localities. Experience and trial and error are a will be the best way to keep improving support networks.