

Non-violent Assemblies

The Columbus Division of Police supports the expression of First Amendment rights and is committed to ensuring those rights are safely exercised. The Division seeks to have an open dialogue with event organizers to understand each group's goals and intentions.

Participants of non-violent assemblies are expected to:

1. Remain peaceful
2. Obey the law
3. Refrain from harassing other members of the public
4. Obey lawful orders from law enforcement

The Columbus Division of Police will not use force as a means of dispersing non-violent protestors. Violations of law will be addressed through the issuance of citations and, when appropriate, by arrest. Force may still be used to prevent physical harm, damage to property, and when necessary to overcome resistance to a lawful arrest.

Enforcement action will be taken to halt or prevent participants from:

1. Causing physical harm to a person
2. Causing property damage
3. Looting
4. Entering a restricted building and/or facility
5. Entering a controlled access highway, or other roadway when that action creates a substantial risk of harm
6. Unlawfully restraining another, for example, surrounding a motorist's vehicle preventing them from leaving
7. Interfering with emergency services

Individuals clearly "displaying "press", "media", "reporter", "paramedic", "medic", "legal observer", or similar words" will be permitted to record and will be permitted to assist participants that appear to be injured. They may not interfere with an arrest and may be ordered back to a safe distance (for example out of a crime scene). A "medic" or "paramedic" may be ordered to stand back if a first responder is rendering aid or may be moved to a safer location to render aid (for example out of the roadway).