

# LIVESTREAMING PROTESTS - USA



Filming for human rights can be dangerous. Be Safe. Be Ethical. Be Effective.

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- In the USA it is legal to film police in public as long as you don't interfere and comply if you're told to back up.
- You can film things that are plainly visible from public spaces, but property owners set the rules in private spaces.
- Police can't search your phone without your consent or a warrant. They should never ask you to delete your videos.
- Learn more [bit.ly/ACLU\\_Right2Record](http://bit.ly/ACLU_Right2Record) and [bit.ly/EFF\\_KYR\\_DeviceSearches](http://bit.ly/EFF_KYR_DeviceSearches)

## BE SAFE!

- Having a camera at a protest can make you a target for police. Stay out of arm's reach of the police. Wearing something that identifies you as a livestreamer or media can be helpful.
- Livestreaming can expose people's identities, protesters' tactics and other sensitive information far more easily than recorded video that you can edit. Evaluate the security risks before filming.
- Try anonymizing protesters by filming their feet or backs or capturing very wide shots.
- Consider streaming to only a trusted group of viewers in a more private group or channel.
- Understand what location-details you are sharing with your livestream.



## PREPARE

- Avoid TouchID. Secure your phone with a passcode, police can't force you to give this up without a court order.
- Have a legal support and/or a trusted contact's info stored or handy. Consider writing it on your arm with a marker.
- Charge your batteries and free up storage space.
- Assess your data and internet connection.
- Encrypt or delete sensitive data.

## FILM THE DETAILS

- Get a variety of shots to show the size of the crowd and police formations.
- If safe, film details like police badges, license plates, weapons, signs, police supervisors giving orders, etc.
- Make the video easier to verify by filming street signs, buildings and landmarks.

## NARRATION & ENGAGEMENT



- Think like a radio or sports broadcaster: Describe what's happening and recap what has happened through **factual** and unbiased commentary. Repeat key details for new viewers joining the broadcast.
- Engage viewers by responding to their comments/questions and keep them informed if technical difficulties occur.
- If your objective is awareness and attention, ask viewers to take action, share or assist with needs on the ground.
- If you're documenting for evidence and violence occurs, stay calm and quiet. Lawyers and investigators need to clearly hear and see what's going on.
- Ask a partner to keep an eye on what's happening in the periphery and to monitor viewers' comments and questions.

## PROTECT YOUR MEDIA

Sites like Facebook and Periscope let you save the video on their platform, but others delete the video after a set time period. If you think your video contains evidentiary content, it's always a good practice to download and preserve a copy on your own secure devices.

Learn how: <http://bit.ly/PreservingLiveVideo>



Get more filming tips: [library.witness.org](http://library.witness.org)  
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