

ALL OUT AGAINST THE FASCISTS!

**STAYING SAFE & EFFECTIVE AT THE
"FREEDOM DAY" RALLIES**



**A Guide by Anarchist-Communist
Groups in Australia**

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All Out Against the Fascists!

A Quick Guide for the Freedom Day Rallies.

The following is an adaptation of a zine produced by Anarchist Affinity, Melbourne, in 2015. The original was produced to help antifascists prepare for confronting Reclaim Australia and the subsequent United Patriots Front rallies. The text has been adapted and information updated relevant to the November 20th "Freedom Day" anti-vax rallies.

This pamphlet was written on the lands of the Wurundjeri and Wuthurung peoples of the Kulin Nation. Sovereignty was never ceded.

Get Organised:

If you're not already involved in organising against the far-right and anti-vaccine rallies, there's still time. Search for the counter rally page in your city, read up about what's going on and consider making contact with the rally organisers to answer any questions you might have.

Talk to your friends, your family and anyone else about what you want to do, and get them to come along with you. The more of us there are, the easier this is going to be. Remember we aren't just out there because we hate the far-right. We are showing solidarity with healthcare workers and everyone else who is getting shafted during the pandemic.

Many immunocompromised people can't risk attending a large gathering like a rally, so it's our job to stand in solidarity with them against the selfish demands of the anti-science, anti-vaccine protestors. We hope it goes without saying, but you should only be attending these rallies if you are fully vaccinated and don't have any cold or flu symptoms. Solidarity isn't effective if you increase the risk of putting your comrades in unnecessary danger.

Have a Plan:

1. Check out transport options. Figure out with your friends how you're going to get there on the day and stick to the plan. It's highly recommended to travel together, simply for safety reasons. It's also good for morale and building solidarity. The most important thing is everyone is on the same

page; knows what is expected of them, where to be and when. When it comes to anti-fascism, getting out of bed on time really matters! Also sort out how you are going to get home in advance, and have a back up plan in case of changing circumstances.

2. Know where you're going and what the protest area looks like. Look at a map and try to memorise the layout of the streets and any significant landmarks. Figure out how you will move between transport and the rally area.
3. Dress appropriately! First and foremost; wear a mask! This isn't some edgy left-wing protest thing, it's a matter of safety during the Coronavirus pandemic. Secondly, consider the conditions in your city. Whatever the weather, hats and sunglasses are going to be useful if you're standing outside all day. They can also help protect your identity (if that's something you are concerned about). Also minimising the exposure of your face is good if the cops start using pepper spray. Furthermore it's also a really good idea to stash a change of top, spare sunnies and masks in your backpack, in case you want to change it up on your way home. You don't want to be dressed conspicuously if you're travelling home solo or in a small group.
4. In your backpack bring water, snacks, sunscreen, umbrella/raincoat, a bit of cash, photo ID and any medications you require (in their original packaging). It is best to remove any object that might be considered a 'weapon', such as tools, scissors, nail files, pocket-knives etc. In Melbourne, at times, police will declare an area a "designated area", which gives them the right to search anybody with no justification or reason. Therefore, removing any object that could be deemed a weapon could save you from facing trumped-up weapons charges.

Get informed:

There's plenty of really useful stuff on the internet about preparing for an action like this. At the very least, it would be worth checking out Fitzroy Legal Service's [Activists Rights Handbook](#) for basic stuff about your legal rights when on a political demonstration or action.

The old [Melbourne Street Medic Collective's website](#) has some helpful guides to collectively managing trauma from protest situations. Collective self-care is

essential to a robust movement. There will also be medic teams on the ground this weekend that will provide support and guidance if necessary.

Regularly check in on the event pages of the organisers in your city for any last-minute updates that may impact the day:

- Melbourne - [Campaign Against Racism and Fascism](#)
- Sydney - [Campaign Against Racism and Fascism](#)
- Brisbane - [Campaign Against Racism and Fascism](#)
- Perth - [United Against Bigotry and Racism](#)

Safety & strength in numbers:

This is pretty common sense really but it is worth repeating.

Any time you go to an action, no matter what sort, it's worth buddying up. This will not only help you communicate, co-ordinate and get things done on the day, but it will keep you all safe.

Pick a buddy, stick with them, and coordinate amongst a broader group of people so everyone can check in & be accounted for. There are plenty of apps for your phone that have good group messaging functions; the most secure is Signal for group messages. WhatsApp is owned by Facebook and collects more data, while Telegram groups messages don't offer end-to-end encryption.

Whatever dangers do exist when dealing with the far-right can be effectively minimised on the day provided we stick together & look out for one another.

If you don't have a buddy or a group of contacts to coordinate with, then ensure you get to the event before the scheduled start time, stick with the crowd & try to make some friends.

Remember that solidarity is contagious. If you are feeling nervous, chances are someone else is too. Speak up, reach out & support one another.

A few points about the far-right:

Almost every far-right, white-supremacist & neo-Nazi organisation in the country (including members of the National Socialist Network) is taking advantage of the

anti-Covid movement and will be attending the "Freedom Day" rallies. So it's worth considering the following points:

1. It is important to consider the potential threat posed by not only the fascists, but the loony conspiracy theorists and weird Trump fanboys without overstating it. Though they claim to be peaceful protestors and concerned with "freedom" the movement is, by and large, constituted of violent right-wing groups with various prejudices. What they have in common is that they love to act real tough. But they're rather less impressive in person. Some are individually dangerous but it's easy to avoid this danger with a few simple precautions.
2. Different towns in Australia have different levels of far-right activity, so it really depends where you are as to what flavour of muppet you might be dealing with. Some general rules still apply though: if you're walking down the street and a gang of boofy blokes wearing flag-capes comes towards you, consider walking somewhere else.
3. The far-right will often use their own media propaganda to spread their incoherent messages and lies. If you are approached by someone with a small microphone and camera without a recognisable media organisation logo, it may be the far-right trying to spin their propaganda. Best is to not engage with them and let others know, as they will be expelled from the rally if it is confirmed they are far-right provocateurs. Remember you can't engage with them on a logical basis as they will edit the content to further their beliefs.
4. The rhetoric of the far-right has become increasingly vitriolic over the last few years. Across the globe the majority of terror attacks are carried out by far-right groups and individuals. In Melbourne a bloke with a bow and arrow was arrested outside Parliament while making threats just last week. At the last antivax protest, someone brought a makeshift gallows, complete with nooses. This is also the same crowd that smashed up the CFMEU headquarters and have increasingly escalated anti-left rhetoric. Protests in Auckland have featured brazen swatschitka displays. The fascists are emboldened, meaning we should take security more seriously.
5. It's important to identify the actual nazis on the day, both to keep people safe, but also to try & make "Freedom Day" organisers sod the nazis off. Our resistance is likely to increase fractures amongst the right. And if there's one thing we know, it's that the far-right likes to eat itself. We want to put pressure on the divisions in their movement.

6. This really can be the most important thing you can do. Staying safe is looking out for one another & sticking together. There is no more important time to do this than when the rally breaks up & everyone goes home. Fascists are bullies, but they're also cowards & often hang around in the city looking to pick a fight. We can protect ourselves from this threat by making sure we move in a group (to the station etc), with purpose & with a clear idea of where we're going. Know the location, know the exit routes & stick to your plan. If your rally has marshals, they should have planned for these contingencies and will provide some direction on the day.

Finally, there are people who monitor the far-right in depth. Consider following these people online to keep up to date with what is happening in general, and on the day.

- Andy Flemming / SlackBastard - [Twitter](#) | [Website](#) | [Facebook](#)
- The White Rose Society - [Twitter](#) | [Website](#) |
- Tom Tanuki - [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)
- Campaign Against Racism and Fascism Melbourne - [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)
- Melbourne Antifascist Info - [Facebook](#)

Be careful around the police:

It doesn't matter what you actually think about the police, love 'em or hate 'em, you will definitely have to deal with them on the day. The Activists Rights Handbook is a much more rigorous & comprehensive guide for dealing with the law than we have room for here, but here are a few tips:

1. Don't talk to them unless you are detained or arrested. You don't have to speak to the cops, and no matter how nice they are, the reason they speak to you is to gain information that they may attempt to use against you or someone else. Better to be safe and say nothing at all - you will never be able to talk your way out of trouble, but you very may well talk your way into trouble.
2. Elect a police liaison to negotiate on your group's behalf. Instead of allowing the cops to decide who they want to put pressure on, choose a confident person whose job it is to communicate with the plod if/when it is necessary. If police ask you a question, refer them to the police liaison.

3. Don't waste your time trying to reason with them about why nazis shouldn't get to parade around in public. They either don't care, or it's their job to not care. An organisation as corrupt and institutionally racist as the police force cannot be used as a tool to confront racism.

4. Use your common sense & don't do anything silly. By all means defend yourself & your friends if attacked, but don't initiate anything with the far-right, no matter what they say or do. Collective action is what makes antifascism effective, not individual bravado.

5. When you arrive at the protest, ask the organisers/marshals if there is specific legal support in case of an arrest. If there is, write down that number in the unlikely event you are arrested. If there isn't, consider contacting one of the following if you need legal support, and have the relevant numbers written down.

- Melbourne - [Fitzroy Legal Service](#) (03 9419 3744) | [Stary Norton Halphen](#) (0407 410 821)
- Sydney - [Redfern Legal Centre](#) (02 9698 7277) | [National Justice Project](#) (02 9514 4440)
- Brisbane - [Caxton Legal Centre](#) (07 3214 6333) | [Qld Legal Aid](#) (1300 65 11 88)
- Perth - Contact the organisers of [United Against Bigotry and Racism](#) before the day.

A few easy pointers on health and safety:

1. We already pointed out how important it is to wear a mask. But it's worth repeating. Masks vastly reduce the likelihood of spreading Coronavirus. They also obscure your identity (fascists like to "intelligence gather" and harass people they identify opposing them). Masks also provide a degree of protection from pepper spray. You don't want to inhale that stuff.
2. Furthermore, on pepperspray, oil based sunscreens can trap the chemicals on your skin. It's good to use an alternative.
3. Hand sanitiser and social distancing! As with all public events during a pandemic, try and stick to general public health guidelines. Things like social distancing might prove tricky, but not impossible. Hand sanitiser should be available but it's a good idea to bring your own.

4. Wear runners or steel capped boots. It's super important to have good footwear on the day. You might have to leg it in a hurry, or your toes could risk being stomped in a crowd or by mounted police. Don't wear thongs or heels!
5. Sunnies also help protect your identity and can help (though are far from failsafe) protecting from pepperspray and other debris. It's usually a good idea to buy one or two real cheap pairs. Do NOT wear contact lenses on the day, if pepperspray is deployed, it can get caught behind contact lenses and cause permanent damage.
6. It can't hurt to have a pair of earplugs on hand. Noise disruption can be a tactic of both fash and police. But don't use them if they interfere with your awareness of the situation.
7. Look out for medics! Any well organised rally should have a team of identifiable, properly trained medics on standby. Sometimes the fash like to have a go at medics so keeping an eye out for threats to them is also a good idea.
8. These are very basic points, for more comprehensive information on protesting during Covid see [Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission](#).

Have fun:

For the most part, the kind of muppets who turn out to a rally denouncing vaccines and health mandates are by and large already a long way down the rabbit hole. On any cursory glance at the attendance of the recent anti-vax rallies you will see fascists, conspiracy theorists, “alternative health” cranks, grifters and even evangelicals who believe the virus is some kind of "end of days." These people are so selfish they won't even get a vaccine to help contribute to public health and safety. By and large they are pitiful, pathetic and ridiculous. Make good use of that fact.

It's likely that most of their attendees are so attached to their silly conspiracy theories that they are well beyond rational debate. But they are not beyond ridicule.

Blast them with music, sing them songs, chant them down. Dance your ass off to anti-racist tunes, explain to passers by why they're plonkers, bring along a vuvuzela.. Whatever! Anti-fascism can be a lot of fun too.

The most effective forms of resistance involve everyone participating how they're best able, so bring your skills, creativity and your friends and let's make a go of it!

Stand together, stay safe, no pasaran.

This guide is a publication of the Anarchist-Communist groups in Australia.

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