MODULE 8
Direct Action Campaigning for Energy Justice

ACTION TOOLKIT

NAACP
Environmental and Climate Justice Program

JUST ENERGY
Policies and Practices
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Fact Sheet: Direct Action: Communications Strategy

NAACP’s Request for Direct Action/Special Event Application
Module 8:
Direct Action Campaigning for Energy Justice

Your Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Committee or team may decide that along with changing policies or educating utility companies, you would like to engage in direct action. For NAACP units, direct action campaigns are to go through a process of NAACP national’s approval and guidance. These processes have been set up to ensure the protection of the members and units as well as to decrease the likelihood of legal problems that units may come across. We will discuss this process more in depth later.

There are many ways of doing direct action and all are great ways of gaining public attention and making energy justice happen in your community. Your ECJ Committee or team can plan these types of campaigns with any size group of people and the end result can be a powerful tool for change!

Here are Direct Action Campaigns that Require NAACP national’s guidance and approval:
- Sit-ins
- Strikes
- Permitted protests
- Pro-cotts and Boycotts
- Marches or walks
- Rallies

Below we will discuss all the ways your ECJ Committee or team can get organized and obtain NAACP approval and guidance for your direct action campaign. Then, we discuss three types of direct action in more detail: sit-ins, rallies, and marches. Each have their own benefits and each are effective ways of creating energy justice awareness in your community.

Organizing your direct action campaign is the key to success. Careful planning will keep your ECJ Committee or team streamlined while getting your message clearly across. In this module we have created step by step guidance for some of the above direct action campaigns. Use these guides to assist you but also realize that nonviolent campaigns are sometimes so unique to your unit’s just energy campaign that your steps may be different from ours.
When we speak we are afraid our words will not be heard or welcomed. But when we are silent, we are still afraid. So it is better to speak.
~Audre Lorde.
Choosing the Direct Action Campaign that is Right for You

Your ECJ Committee or team should meet to decide which nonviolent direct action campaign is right for your just energy initiatives. Ideally, these campaigns should be figured into your goals and objectives and placed in your strategic planning timelines (for guidance see *Module 1: Getting Organized So You Can Organize!*). If your ECJ Committee has not made these yet, you can still organize a direct action campaign and plan it separate from your other goals.

Here are a few questions to help your ECJ Committee or team plan:

1. **What is the main message you are trying to get across?**
   Think this through and boil your message down to a few short sentences. Keeping things simple helps to keep your campaign memorable and easy to understand.

2. **What change would your direct action campaign make? What is your end goal?**
   If your goal is to get the attention of the public in a big way, hosting a march may be in order. If your goal is to create allies in corporations who are doing well on energy justice, a pro-cott may be the right direction.

3. **How much time does your ECJ Committee have to plan a direct action campaign?**
   If your energy justice initiatives are based around policy and a law is suddenly pushed through, you may not have much time to plan a time-intensive campaign like a large boycott. In this case, a sit-in at the state capital can be done in a shorter amount of time.

4. **Are there people in your committee or volunteers who would not be able to participate in physical activities such as marches or sit-ins?**
   If so and your committee moves forward with a sit-in or other types of physical activities, how can you involve those who cannot participate?

5. **How many people will you need?**
   You may want to keep things small, you may want to make it big! Either way, make sure you have enough people and leaders designated to train and organize both beforehand and onsite the day of the event.

6. **What resources (money, posters, stamps, volunteers, vehicles, etc.) will you need?**
   Your ECJ committee or team will need resources before, during, and after your direct action campaign; everything from scissors and markers to water and sunblock. Make a list ahead of time and if you do not have the
resources, ask for donations or pool resources with partner organizations. Be sure to get as many environmentally friendly resources as possible and make recycling, composting, etc. available.

7. Where will you hold the event? Do you need a permit? Do you need event insurance?
Location, location, location. This is your time to get attention, particularly if your ECJ Committee or team is planning a public demonstration. Will you sit outside a Senator’s office? Will you gather outside the nuclear power plant? Will you occupy a space for an extended period of time? Will your group stop traffic, disrupt a sporting event, stand outside of a fracking drilling site? Depending on where you decide to host your direct action campaign, you may need a permit or risk being arrested should you not have one. Sometimes peaceful arrest is part of the goal of a nonviolent protest and sometimes it is not. We discuss this more below. Either way, researching this ahead of time will be helpful.

8. What safety concerns do you have?
Some organizations who protest are known for climbing on top of buildings, propelling from airplanes, etc. Your direct action campaign may or may not be so daring but you may have to plan for safety in other ways. For example, if you are located in a colder climate and walkways are iced over, bringing eco-friendly rock salt and shovels to move snow may be in order. Generating a basic emergency plan that includes cell phone numbers and emergency contacts helps minimize the confusion should a safety issue arise.

9. Is there a chance people might be arrested? If so, what plans do you have to prepare for this? As we mentioned before, sometimes getting arrested is the goal of a peaceful demonstration and people plan for this ahead of time. Arrests increase your chances of getting your demonstration in the news and getting the attention of the public. Of course, arrests and police attention may not be your goal and in fact, may be the complete opposite of what your goals may be, given police violence against the African American community. Take some time to discuss this ahead of time with your ECJ Committee. Be sure to research what rights you have in case police are called. Knowing your rights ahead of time and training your volunteers and ECJ Committee members or team on these risks is absolutely necessary. If you are unsure of your rights or what to do when/if people are arrested, contact your local ACLU and ask them to speak to your group.
Be prepared: Even if you do not think a police presence is a possibility, problems may arise that are out of your control, such as hecklers or counter-protestors. Each member of your group should bring at least two forms of I.D. with them and have emergency contact numbers written on their arm in ink pen or sharpie. This way if their phones are taken or if they are injured, someone can be notified. Inform people who are undocumented, people who are on parole, or people who have been previously arrested, that there is a risk they might be arrested during your event and discuss this in your training to ECJ Committee members and volunteers. Also, you should instruct members to leave personal property and all items that could be judged as weapons at home (e.g. pocket knives, mace, etc.)

Instruct your ECJ Committee and volunteers to avoid any hecklers or counter-protestors that might come to your event. Specifically, instruct your group to ignore and not get involved in arguments. Stay unified as a group both in your message and during your event. Remember that we live in an online world and pictures/footage are likely to be taken and could be used in a negative light.

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<th>Guiding Questions</th>
<th>Brainstorm</th>
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<td>What is the main message you are trying to get across?</td>
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<td>What change would your direct action campaign make? What is your end goal?</td>
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<td>How much time does your ECJ Committee have to plan a direct action campaign? Are there key dates or events you are planning around?</td>
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<td>Are there people in your committee or volunteers who would not be able to participate in physical activities such as marches or sit-ins? How can you make your direct action more accessible and inclusive?</td>
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<td>How large would you like your direct action to be? How many participants would you like to be involved? How many volunteers will you need? Does your volunteer capacity match your ambitions? Do you have partners or allies you can call on?</td>
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<td>What materials will you need?</td>
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<td>What of these materials do you already have and what will you need to acquire? What funding or other resources are available to you?</td>
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<td>Where do you plan to hold your direct action? Do you need to obtain a permit or follow any other procedures before using the space?</td>
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<td>What are your safety and security concerns? Are you equipped to address these concerns or do you need to find outside support?</td>
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A few legal resources to get you started:
The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has several Know Your Rights resources online, including what your rights are as a demonstrator or protestors. Visit ACLU.org under their “Know Your Rights” section or this link to learn more: www.aclu.org/know-your-rights

The Legal Aid Society has a number of useful resources for understanding arrest and your rights as an organizer of civil disobedience. Visit the Legal-Aid.org under their “I Need Help” section or this link to learn more: www.legal-aid.org/en/ineedhelp/ineedhelp/criminalproblem/faq/whatcaniexpectifiamarrested.aspx

The National Lawyers Guild has several pocket-size Know Your Rights resources online. Visit Nlg.org under “Know Your Rights” or this link to learn more: www.nlg.org/know-your-rights/.
NAACP’s Process of Approval for Direct Action Campaigns

Your Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Committee is a part of your larger NAACP unit and is responsible for the same process of approval from NAACP’s Legal Department for direct actions such as sit-ins, marches, pickets, demonstrations, and rallies. Direct action is an important constitutional right and should be used with very specific goals in mind.

While the NAACP supports the constitutional right of all units to hold direct action campaigns and to protest, we encourage it as a last resort. Before your ECJ Committee or unit gets to the point of having a rally, etc., it is important to try and change legislation, educate the community, etc. For this reason, we’ve put this module as one of the very last in the Just Energy Policies and Practices Action Toolkit.

Steps for Approval

Once your ECJ Committee and NAACP unit agree that direct action should take place, you will need to get your activity approved. The NAACP Legal Department is ready to receive your information and guide you through any questions you may have when getting your direct action campaign reviewed and approved. Feel free to contact us any time with any questions! Contact information is provided below.

Your NAACP unit:

1. Must pass a motion, recorded in the minutes to conduct the event.

2. The NAACP unit must fill out the Request for Direct Action Special Event Application form completely. You may find this form online under “Field Resources” at www.naacp.org or follow this link: www.naacp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Direct_Action_Special_Event_Application.pdf We’ve also provided a blank copy of the form at the end of this module. The Direct Action request must be submitted 10 business days prior to the event; however, we highly recommend getting your application to NAACP Legal Department MONTHS before you begin any serious event planning. You may get feedback that changes the course of your direct action event or that it is not approved. So, getting your paperwork in as soon as possible will help your ECJ Committee and NAACP unit plan accordingly.

3. Submit the form to the field office at the National Headquarters. The VP of Field Operations must recommend approval.
4. If a certificate of insurance is required, the unit must send a check for $125.

5. The request comes to the Legal Department for review and recommendation to the President and CEO.

6. Once a decision is made, the Legal Department will communicate the decision to the Unit President of the National Office.

If you have any questions about this process, you can contact the NAACP Legal Department:

(410) 580-5777
legaldept@naacpnet.org

A Little Planning Goes a Long Way

Once your Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Committee or NAACP unit has considered and discussed the above questions and obtained approval from NAACP, the next step is to select the type of direct action that the ECJ Committee or unit wants to use. This should be a focused effort and the timing of the action should be aligned with key events or days, if possible. The more planned an action is, the better your message to the public will be.

Similar to the goals and objectives processes from Module 1: Getting Organized so You Can Organize!, your ECJ Committee or team can create a plan for before, during, and after your direct action campaign. Include timelines and tasks and assign people to each.

Before your direct action campaign:
1. Work through the questions above and create a plan including timelines, tasks, materials needed, and people assigned to each task.
2. Purchase any materials required or get these items through donations, in-kind gifts, etc.
3. Recruit participants and volunteers.
4. Secure permits, if necessary.
5. Create social media posts, email blasts, letters to the editor, etc. and send them out. See Module 8: Educating and Organizing for Energy Justice for more tips on how to publicize your event in the media and on social media.
6. Create any art needed like posters, print agendas, etc.
7. Host a training for both your ECJ Committee and volunteers. Include in your training:
   a. The purpose of your direction action plan
   b. The plan of action itself
   c. The assignments, tasks, and timelines
   d. Safety concerns, Know Your Rights information, etc.
   e. Follow up process

**During your direct action campaign:**
1. Arrive early and set up any materials, tables, signs, etc. that need set up.
2. Check-in with your volunteers and ECJ Committee members regularly.
3. Provide relief with food, water, etc. as needed.
4. Enjoy your campaign! Participate, commiserate, form relationships with media, etc.!
5. Try to clean up and recycle as you go, it makes things easier afterwards.
6. Pass around a sign-up sheet where people can register for more information.
7. Tweet, post, etc. to social media.

**After your direct action campaign:**
1. Clean up, recycle, compost, etc. any materials leftover.
2. Send thank you notes, either handwritten or email, to each of your ECJ Committee members, volunteers, and media who attended.
3. Create and post follow up social media posts that include numbers and specifics. For example, “We had 200 people present for our rally!” Or, “Thanks to the Unitarian Church Youth Group for providing water at our sit-in today!”
4. Enter the contact information from your sign-up sheets into your email blast listservs, etc. and send an email blast with specifics from the day. Include future calls to action and a specific ask for people to join your effort.
5. Follow up with the media with who attended. Send thank you emails to the media who attended and praise any positive coverage that you received. Follow up with any media who did covered of your direct action campaign in a negative light and offer counter-information to their coverage. Invite all media to follow your work via social media and other avenues and encourage their attendance at your future events.
6. Follow up on your cause. The goal of your direct action campaign should be followed up on after your campaign is over. What change occurred? What changes are left or did not happen that now need a different path of action?
7. Debrief with your ECJ Committee or team. Hold a meeting shortly after your direct action campaign to debrief. Allow a lot of time and space for
open thoughts and suggestions. Ask someone to take notes. Ask what was done well and what your group could change next time. Afterwards, send the notes to the group and set aside time on your next meeting agenda to discuss how your strategic plan and goals may need to change or not change due to the debrief notes.

Sit-ins, Rallies, and Marches

Now that your Environmental and Climate Justice (ECJ) Committee or team has established and received approval, you can begin planning your event! We are going to highlight three types of direct action that will get your energy justice cause a lot of attention. Sit-ins, rallies, and marches are disruptive and powerful, with a long history in the black community. All three are purposeful and all three have benefits and challenges. Below, we offer you guidance on how to get organized for each.

Hosting a Sit-In

First, sit-ins, such as the Greensboro Four, a group of four black men who sat at the “whites only” lunch counter at their local Woolworth in 1960 and thereby sparked a movement across the nation to desegregate lunch counters, have long historical roots in black history. Sit-ins involve a group of people of any size, sitting or sometimes laying down, and occupying a space for a pre-determined period of time. They are non-confrontational, non-violent, and an effective method of social change. They can be entirely silent or loud with speeches and rally cries. And they can occur just about anywhere: inside buildings, on the streets, sidewalks, or other public areas.

Before Your Sit-In:

Meet with your ECJ Committee, unit, or team to determine the following:

1. What will your sit-in theme or topic(s) be?

2. What energy justice goals do you want to achieve by hosting a sit-in? Is your sit-in community led?

3. Determine how many people you will need to have your sit-in and how many volunteers to recruit. Draft emails, letters, etc. to recruit and reach out.
4. Create a timeline that includes enough notice for your planning meetings, inviting other agencies, gathering volunteers, and pushing notices to the public.

5. Speaking of timing – TIMING IS EVERYTHING. A sit-in is most effective when your group is disrupting business hours or otherwise normal day-to-day activities. So, if you are having a sit-in to bring awareness of a bill that is passing, strategically planning your sit-in on the day the energy policy is going to be voted upon may be the right move. When will you get the most attention from the community, the media, the people you are trying to change?

6. Another note on timing – How long will your sit-in last? For an afternoon? For several days? Until some change you are demanding happens? Depending on the length of time, you may need volunteers to come in shifts to relieve each other. You may need food, water, and other supplies.

7. Create a plan of action for the sit-in and a training for your ECJ Committee, NAACP unit, and volunteers on what they should expect on the day. Create back-up plans as well. Include time for making signage and other types of protest materials. Go over every detail, including roles of each member. Leave time for questions and answers and, of course, creative suggestions from your group.

8. Create an online sign-up form (or a printable form that can be affixed to an email or mailed) by using Google forms or another free online platform. Include your tentative agenda, if meals are provided, if childcare is provided, ask if anyone has any dietary needs, etc.

9. Develop a list of demands that you obtain with your community members. What energy justice change do you demand happen? By what time? What will your group do if change is not met by your standards or timelines?

10. Schedule speakers, if necessary, and add them to your plan of action for the day once they confirm. Make sure they are well versed in the topic and engaging.

11. Identify and assign roles to your group members. Ideas are leaders, police spokesperson, media spokesperson, participants, etc.
12. Determine a location. There is a lot to consider when planning a location. First, consider if your location is accessible to people with physical disabilities – consider if there is a ramp outside, parking options, and if the building has an elevator. If your space is not, create an alternative way that people with disabilities can participate. Next, consider the location of the sit-in in relevance to the geographic location of the people you are trying to reach. Are there easy public transportation options? Is there a need for a carpooling option? Consider offering childcare. How visible is your space to the public, to the media, to the people you are trying to get to change? Will their time and attention be disrupted in the space? Once you have chosen your space, if possible, take some time to get to know the space better. Make notes of additional needs you may encounter.

13. Purchase and/or obtain any permits or insurance that you might need. Refer back to the NAACP Direct Action Special Event Application (at the end of this module) for more details on purchasing event insurance.

14. Develop a social media and press plan of action. This step is integral to getting the word out about your sit-in. You may decide that your sit-in is a surprise for everyone and that is ok! You still need a social media plan of action when it comes to the day of your sit-in as well as a press/media plan. See Module 8: Educating and Organizing for Energy Justice for social media and press planning. Don’t forget to ask people their permission before taking their photos and posting them online.

15. Purchase any materials necessary. If purchasing materials is not affordable, schedule time for asking for donations in your timeline. This may mean that ECJ Committee members ask companies for money or that your committee or team coordinates local food and resources in exchange for helping those businesses with other goods and services. Either way, making time to get your materials in order should be factored.

16. Obtain emergency contact information and other types of important information for each person signed up for the sit-in. Print this out for several of your ECJ Committee members as well as the police spokesperson for your group. Having a print copy is very important because your cell phone, laptop, other devices may be broken or confiscated.

17. Create a sign-in sheet and print it off for anyone from the public or building, etc. who joins your sit-in during the event.
During Your Sit-In:

1. Meet at a designated space beforehand and get prepared. Do a headcount of everyone present and ensure you have their emergency contact information available. Practice your agenda and answer last minute questions.

2. Travel to the sit-in location together. This may be altered if your sit-in is occurring in stages with volunteers relieving each other.

3. Conduct your sit-in! Your press person should be posting to social media, documenting the event, photographing, and taking video. And, others should be acting in accordance to the plan. Be prepared for things to change fast. This is where your back-up plans will come in handy. Be on your game and ensure that all of your ECJ Committee members, NAACP unit member, and volunteers are taken care of and accounted for during the entire event. Pass around the sign-in sheet for anyone who joins your sit-in during the event.

4. Your media spokesperson should meet with the press and organize interviews with speakers and organizers and these may happen on the spot as well. Conduct your interviews and provide information on as to what your energy justice initiative is and why the sit-in is important to creating energy justice in the community.

After Your Sit-In:

1. Clean up, recycle, compost, etc. any materials leftover.

2. Send thank you’s, either handwritten or email, to each of your ECJ Committee members, volunteers, and media who attended.

3. Create and post follow up social media posts that include numbers and specifics of the sit-in and that specifically thank the community for coming out and offering their guidance and questions to your ECJ Committee or team.

4. If your event gathered people who were not in your original group, enter their information into your email blast lists and send an email blast with specifics from the day. Include future calls to action and a specific ask for people to join your effort.

5. Follow up with the media who attended. Send thank you emails and praise any positive coverage that you received. Follow up with any media
who covered your sit-in in a negative light and offer counter-information to their coverage. Invite all media to follow your work via social media and other avenues and encourage their attendance at your future events.

6. Follow up on your cause. The goal of your sit-in should be followed up on after your campaign is over. What change occurred? What changes are left or did not happen that now need a different path of action?

7. Debrief with your ECJ Committee or team. Hold a meeting shortly after your sit-in to debrief. Allow a lot of time and space for open thoughts and suggestions. Ask someone to take notes. Ask what was done well and what your group could change next time. Afterwards, send the notes to the group and set aside time on your next meeting agenda to discuss how your strategic plan and goals may need to change or not change due to the debrief notes.

Hosting a Rally
Rallies are a form of direct action where demonstrators gather in a particular place, usually to listen to speeches or to participate in other activities that raise awareness or express support or opposition to an issue. A rally can take place anywhere and take many forms. Rallies are often paired with other forms of direct action, such as a march. Perhaps the most well known rally in United States history took place at the 1963 March on Washington where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Rallies continue to be a common direct action tactic, and are opportunities for powerful expression, to spread your message, and to galvanize support for your energy justice cause.

Before Your Rally:
Meet with your ECJ Committee, unit, or team to determine the following:

1. What will your rally's theme or topic(s) be?

2. What energy justice goals do you want to achieve by hosting a rally? Is your rally community led?

3. Determine how many people you want to attend your rally and how many volunteers to recruit. Draft emails, letters, etc. to recruit and reach out.

4. Consider what kind of event you want your rally to be. Determine who you would like to invite to speak at your rally and designate an emcee to lead the day’s event. Brainstorm a list of potential speakers that is longer...
than you need so that you have back-ups. Try to include a diversity of speakers and don't be afraid to ask people to speak to specific topics. Consider if you want to include other components such as musical performances. Do you want to encourage attendees to take a specific action? Brainstorm what actions participants can take while attending the rally.

5. Determine what opportunities there might be for visual effects at your rally. Creative visual prompts are great ways to spread your message among participants and the media while also drawing attention to your rally. The Ruckus Society has a "Creative Direct Action Visuals Manuel" with several examples. For more information visit the "Resources" section at [www.ruckus.org](http://www.ruckus.org) or go to [ruckus.org/training-manuals/manuals-checklists/creative-direct-action-visuals-manual/](http://ruckus.org/training-manuals/manuals-checklists/creative-direct-action-visuals-manual/).

6. Based on what components you plan to include in your rally, make a list of what supplies you will need. Where will speakers be positioned at the rally? Do you need sound equipment? Are you inviting outside organizations or hosting activities that might require tables? Once you've made a list of needs, make a plan for how you will acquire materials.

7. Create a "Run of Show" document as soon you have a rough list of speakers, rally events, components, etc. Include the order and times of the different components. When this is finalized, you will want to upload it to your webpage and social media as well as print flyers to place around the community.

8. Create a timeline that includes enough notice for your planning meetings, inviting other agencies, gathering volunteers, and pushing notices to the public.

9. Be intentional about planning when the rally will take place. If your rally is in a city, check to see if other large events are happening (inauguration, sporting events, other direct actions, etc.) and consider planning around these events, unless of course, your goal is to disrupt or counter-demonstrate these events. Doing so may bring more attention to your rally, so this is something to consider. When will you get the most attention from the community, the media, and the people you are trying to change?

10. Create a plan of action for the rally and a training for your ECJ Committee, NAACP unit, and volunteers on what they should expect on the day. Create back-up plans as well. Include time and instructions for making
signage and other types of protest materials. Go over every detail, including roles of each member. Leave time for questions and answers and, of course, creative suggestions from your group. If you expect too many people to hold a training, create a webpage on your website and/or an email blast with all the important details your participants will need to know.

11. Create an online sign-up form (or a printable form that can be affixed to an email or mailed) by using Google forms or another free online platform. Include your plan for the rally, any details necessary, etc.

12. Develop a list of demands that you obtain with your community members. What energy justice change do you demand happen? By what time? What will your group do if change is not met by your standards or timelines?

13. Identify and assign roles to your group members. Ideas are leaders, police spokesperson, media spokesperson, participants, people to coordinate the speakers, etc.

14. Determine a location. There is a lot to consider when planning a location. First, consider if your location or rally is accessible to people with physical disabilities – consider if there is a ramp outside, parking options, etc. If your space is not, create an alternative way that people with disabilities can participate. Next, consider the location of the rally in relevance to the geographic location of the people you are trying to reach. Are there easy public transportation options? Is there a need for a carpooling option? Consider offering childcare. How visible is your space to the public, to the media, to the people you are trying to get to change? Once you have chosen your space, if possible, take some time to get to know the space better. Make notes of additional needs you may encounter.

15. Purchase and/or obtain any permits or insurance that you might need. Refer back to the NAACP Direct Action Special Event Application (at the end of this module) for more details on purchasing event insurance.

16. Develop a social media and press plan of action. This step is integral to getting the word out about your march. See Module 8: Educating and Organizing for Energy Justice for social media and press planning. Don’t forget to ask people their permission before taking their photos and posting them online.
17. Purchase any materials necessary. If purchasing materials is not affordable, schedule time for asking for donations in your timeline. This may mean that ECJ Committee members ask companies for money or that your committee or team coordinates local food and resources in exchange for helping those businesses with other goods and services. Either way, making time to get your materials in order should be factored.

18. Scheduling any audio/visual equipment along with stage equipment for your speakers, musicians, etc. Organize volunteers to help set up and break down the stage and other parts of the rally that may need set up.

**During Your Rally:**

1. Meet at a designated space and get prepared. Practice your agenda and answer last minute questions. Test your audio equipment and troubleshoot any problems you encounter. Set up any other equipment you need for your rally. Do a headcount of everyone present, if possible, and circulate a sign-in sheet. Your march may grow to a size that does not lend well to obtaining everyone’s information and that is ok! Tailor this to your needs.

2. Post any signage and set up visual aids you are using (if applicable). Meet with any relevant city or local officials, get the speakers organized, post to social media, etc.

3. Start your rally! Your press person should be posting to social media, documenting the event, photographing, and taking video. And, others should be acting in accordance to the plan. Things may change and this is where your back-up plans will come in handy.

4. Your media spokesperson should meet with the press and organize interviews with speakers and rally organizers and these may happen on the spot as well. Conduct your interviews and provide information on as to what your energy justice initiative is and why the march is important to creating energy justice in the community. Be sure to collect contact information for each of the journalists who attend so that you can follow up afterwards.
**After Your Rally:**

1. Clean up, recycle, compost, etc. any materials leftover.

2. Send thank you notes, either handwritten or email, to each of your ECJ Committee members, volunteers, and media who attended. Again, your rally may get to a place where it is too large to send individual emails to all who attended and that’s a good thing! You can develop an email blast and send to your lists as well as send thank you notes out on social media and your website.

3. Create and post follow up social media posts that include numbers and specifics of the rally and that specifically thank the community for coming out and offering their guidance and questions to your ECJ Committee or team.

4. Follow up with the media who attended. Send thank you emails and praise any positive coverage that you received. Follow up with any media who covered your rally in a negative light and offer counter-information to their coverage. Invite all media to follow your work via social media and other avenues and encourage their attendance at your future events.

5. Follow up on your cause. The goal of your rally should be followed up on after your campaign is over. What change occurred? What changes are left or did not happen that now need a different path of action?

6. Debrief with your ECJ Committee or team. Hold a meeting shortly after your rally to debrief. Allow a lot of time and space for open thoughts and suggestions. Ask someone to take notes. Ask what was done well and what your group could change next time. Afterwards, send the notes to the group and set aside time on your next meeting agenda to discuss how your strategic plan and goals may need to change or not change due to the debrief notes.

**Hosting a March**

Marches have long been a part of the civil rights movement from the Silent Protest Parade in 1917 and the Selma to Montgomery March of 1965 to the 2017 NAACP marches protesting the nomination of Senator Jess Sessions for U.S. Attorney General. Marches and pilgrimages are important ways of showing solidarity for energy justice. Typically organized with larger crowds, marches occur in the public domain and are strategically planned in response to an issue, in memory of an anniversary of an event, etc. Marches, while larger in scale, follow the same basic organizing path as sit-ins and rallies.
Before Your March:

1. Meet with your ECJ Committee, unit, or team to determine the following:
2. What will your march’s theme or topic(s) be?

3. What energy justice goals do you want to achieve by hosting a march? Is your march community led?

4. Determine how many people you will need to have your march and how many volunteers to recruit. Draft emails, letters, etc. to recruit and reach out.

5. Create a timeline that includes enough notice for your planning meetings, inviting other agencies, gathering volunteers, and pushing notices to the public.

6. Since marches are larger in scale, planning when the march will happen involves care. If your march is in a city, check to see if other large events are happening (inauguration, sporting events, other marches, etc.) and consider planning around these events, unless of course, your goal is to disrupt these events. Doing so may bring more attention to your march, so is something to consider. How many days will your march be? If your ECJ Committee or NAACP unit is planning a multi-day march, other factors such as hotel or lodging arrangements will need to be made. When will you get the most attention from the community, the media, and the people you are trying to change?

7. Create a plan of action for the march and a training for your ECJ Committee, NAACP unit, and volunteers on what they should expect on the day. Create back-up plans as well. Include time and instructions for making signage and other types of protest materials. Go over every detail, including roles of each member. Leave time for questions and answers and, of course, creative suggestions from your group. If you expect too many people to hold a training, create a webpage on your website and/or an email blast with all the important details your participants will need to know.

8. Create an online sign-up form (or a printable form that can be affixed to an email or mailed) by using Google forms or another free online platform. Include your plan for the march, any details necessary, etc.

9. Develop a list of demands that you obtain with your community members. What energy justice change do you demand happen? By what time?
What will your group do if change is not met by your standards or timelines?

10. Schedule speakers, if necessary, and add them to your plan of action for the day once they confirm. Make sure they are well versed in the topic and engaging.

11. Identify and assign roles to your group members. Ideas are leaders, police spokesperson, media spokesperson, participants, people to coordinate the speakers, etc.

12. Determine a location. There is a lot to consider when planning a location. First, consider if your location or march is accessible to people with physical disabilities — consider if there is a ramp outside, parking options, etc. If your space is not, create an alternative way that people with disabilities can participate. Next, consider the location of the march in relevance to the geographic location of the people you are trying to reach. Are there easy public transportation options? Is there a need for a carpooling option? Consider offering childcare. How visible is your space to the public, to the media, to the people you are trying to get to change? Once you have chosen your space, if possible, take some time to get to know the space better. Make notes of additional needs you may encounter.

13. Purchase and/or obtain any permits or insurance that you might need. Refer back to the NAACP Direct Action Special Event Application for more details on purchasing event insurance.

14. Develop a social media and press plan of action. This step is integral to getting the word out about your march. See Module 8: Educating and Organizing for Energy Justice for social media and press planning. Don’t forget to ask people their permission before taking their photos and posting them online.

15. Purchase any materials necessary. If purchasing materials is not affordable, schedule time for asking for donations in your timeline. This may mean that ECJ Committee members ask companies for money or that your committee or team coordinates local food and resources in exchange for helping those businesses with other goods and services. Either way, making time to get your materials in order should be factored.

16. Scheduling any audio/visual equipment along with stage equipment for your speakers, musicians, etc. Organize volunteers to help set up and
break down the stage and other parts of the march route that may need set up.

17. Obtain emergency contact information and other types of important information for each person signed up for the sit-in. Print this out for several of your ECJ Committee members as well as the police spokesperson for your group. Having a print copy is very important because your cell phone, laptop, other devices may be broken or confiscated.

18. Create a sign-in sheet and print it off for anyone from the public or building, etc. who joins your sit-in during the event.

During Your March:

1. Meet at a designated space and get prepared. Practice your agenda and answer last minute questions. Do a headcount of everyone present, if possible, and ensure you have their emergency contact information available. Your march may grow to a size that does not lend well to obtaining everyone’s information and that is ok! Tailor this to your needs.

2. Set up for your march by posting signs along the route (if necessary), meeting with any city or local officials, getting the speakers organized, posting to social media, etc.

3. Start your march! Your press person should be posting to social media, documenting the event, photographing, and taking video. And, others should be acting in accordance to the plan. Things may change and this is where your back-up plans will come in handy.

4. Your media spokesperson should meet with the press and organize interviews with speakers and march organizers and these may happen on the spot as well. Conduct your interviews and provide information on as to what your energy justice initiative is and why the march is important to creating energy justice in the community. Be sure to collect contact information for each of the journalists who attend so that you can follow up afterwards.
After Your March:

1. Clean up, recycle, compost, etc. any materials leftover.

2. Send thank you notes, either handwritten or email, to each of your ECJ Committee members, volunteers, and media who attended. Again, your march may get to a place where it is too large to send individual emails to all who attended and that’s a good thing! You can develop an email blast and send to your lists as well as send thank you notes out on social media and your website.

3. Create and post follow up social media posts that include numbers and specifics of the sit-in and that specifically thank the community for coming out and offering their guidance and questions to your ECJ Committee or team.

4. Follow up with the media who attended. Send thank you emails and praise any positive coverage that you received. Follow up with any media who covered your sit-in in a negative light and offer counter-information to their coverage. Invite all media to follow your work via social media and other avenues and encourage their attendance at your future events.

5. Follow up on your cause. The goal of your march should be followed up on after your campaign is over. What change occurred? What changes are left or did not happen that now need a different path of action?

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Conclusion

Direct action campaigns are a flexible and important component your ECJ Committee or team may decide to add to your just energy initiatives. By now you have a few tools to begin your own direct action campaigns and to work with the media. There are many possible ways to participate in civil disobedience so let our instructions and tips help to guide you along your own path for energy justice change.
Resources

**BlackOUT Collective**
The BlackOUT Collective is a full service Black Direct Action Collective, which provides on the ground support, training, and the opportunity for deep space visioning in communities that prioritize the liberation of black people. Their Black Land and Liberation Action Toolkit is designed around facilitating a direct action in conjunction with Juneteenth, but is a useful guide to designing any powerful direct action.
Learn more: [www.blackoutcollective.org](http://www.blackoutcollective.org) (the toolkit is located on the homepage)

**Center for Story Based Strategy**
The Center for Story Based Strategy works with organizations and allies in the climate justice, low-wage worker and other social justice sectors to amplify their organizing, integrate messaging with movement building, and build the movement’s capacity to shift public opinion. They have worksheets that help shape your social media and other types of media messages.
Learn more: [www.storybasedstrategy.org](http://www.storybasedstrategy.org) (Worksheets located under Tools)

**Movement Strategy Center**
Movement Strategy Center supports people, organizations, alliances, and networks to have the leadership, vision and relationships necessary to move from grievance to governance, from incremental change to transformation. They have many, many resources on how to build change through direct action and forming community relationships.
Learn More: [www.movementstrategy.org](http://www.movementstrategy.org) (Information located under Resources)

**National Lawyers Guild**
The mission of the National Lawyers Guild is to use law for the people, uniting lawyers, law students, legal workers, and jailhouse lawyers to function as an effective force in the service of the people by valuing human rights over property interests. The NLG has several resources useful to direct action organizers, including a pocket-sized Know Your Rights Guide.
Learn more: [www.nlg.org](http://www.nlg.org) (Know Your Rights Guide located under Resources)

**Ruckus Action Society**
The Ruckus Society provides environmental, human rights, and social justice organizers with the tools, training, and support needed to achieve their goals through the strategic use of creative, nonviolent direct action. Their toolkit, *Action Strategy: A How To Guide*, goes into great detail on direct action campaigns and tactics.
Learn More: [www.ruckus.org](http://www.ruckus.org) (The toolkit is located under Resources)
Training for Change
Training for Change builds capacity for powerful training and education among activists and organizers. They work with groups taking nonviolent direct action, building strong teams, and working for grassroots social change. Their toolkit, *Direct Action Training Manual*, is less a detailed “how to” and more a big picture approach to direct action. It breaks down some of the myths of nonviolent action and explains the value, power, and rationale for direct action. Learn more: [www.trainingforchange.org](http://www.trainingforchange.org) (The Toolkit is located under Resources)
Direct Action
Communications Strategy

How should be intentional about the way that you communicate the purpose of your direct action to the public. The messaging that you use should convey your goals, but also be simple and easy-to-understand for the average person. When devising a communications strategy for your direct action, keep the following in mind:

Keep it simple and focused
You are not going to be able to communicate all the points, sub-points, nuances, and angles of the issue your direct action is about. Think of your direct action like it's a highway billboard. Your messaging should be clear, to the point, and hammer home the main point.

Consider your tone
What tone are you striking with your direct action? An action's tone heavily influences your messaging strategy, and you want to ensure that the tone of your action is expressed by your messaging. Consider how the tone that your message takes on will be received by your allies, targets, and other key stakeholders.

Choose a strong image that clearly communicates your message
Imagery is a powerful communications tool. Visual images are helpful in communicating your message and in catching people's attention. Get creative and choose strong image(s) that clearly communicate your message. If you are relying on banners or signs to help communicate your message, try to incorporate colorful imagery. Consider what images, icons, or other visuals might help communicate your message. Even simple gestures such as a raised fist can make for strong imagery.

Tell stories
Similarly to visual imagery, storytelling is an effective way to communicate your message. Humans use stories to understand the world and relate to one another. Look for opportunities to use story as a communications tool--but still remember to keep it simple and to the point. Use a "meme" or a contained image or idea to stand in for larger stories. Memes are an effective way to create a common story and spread your message.

To learn more:
The Ruckus Society, Creative Direct Action Visuals Manuel

The Center for Story Based Strategy, Tools and Resources
https://www.storybasedstrategy.org/
NAACP LEGAL DEPARTMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR SUBMITTING REQUESTS FOR
CERTIFICATES OF INSURANCE

1. To obtain insurance certificate for an event, the unit must complete the Special Event Application.

2. The unit must submit the application, along with event contracts and other relevant documents, to the Senior Vice President of Field Operations and Membership or their designee, at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled event. The processing fee of $125.00 per insurance certificate should be mailed to the attention of Lanita Ross in the Legal Department.

3. The Senior Vice President of Field Operations and Membership or their designee will complete and sign the approval/disapproval selection of the application and promptly forward it to the NAACP Legal Department. All inquiries should be faxed to the attention of Shawn Ward at (410) 358-9786 fax. Her telephone number is (410) 580-5635.

4. The NAACP Legal Department will submit the request to the insurance broker, MARSH USA, Inc. The Legal Department will provide the unit a copy of the Certificate of Insurance by fax or email.

5. If you do not receive a prompt response to your request, please contact:

   Lanita Ross  
   NAACP Legal Department  
   4805 Mount Hope Drive  
   Baltimore, MD 21215-3297  
   (410) 580-5795

6. Please be advised that the certificate of insurance only applies to the individual event described therein. However, units may apply for certificates of insurance to cover regular events, such as monthly meetings for a specified period of time.

7. To further protect unit and national assets and to enable the NAACP to fulfill its mission, we strongly encourage all units to obtain and maintain their own individual insurance policies.
# Special Event Application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branch Name:</th>
<th>Branch #:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact person:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City and State:</td>
<td>Zip Code:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone #:</td>
<td>Fax #:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email address:</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

## The Event

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Name</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Dates</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event Times</td>
<td>To</td>
<td>Number of Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage Term</td>
<td>To</td>
<td>Limit Desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coverage Type</td>
<td>☐ Claims made</td>
<td>☐ Occurrence Based</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing Coverage</th>
<th>☐ Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broker:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrier(s):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type(s) of Coverage:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Additional Insurer</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Must provide complete name, address city and state)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Venue/Facility Name</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address and telephone number</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Must provide complete name, address city and state)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Indoor □ Outdoor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Indoor Events</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sidewalks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free of potholes? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free of significant cracks? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free of uneven conditions? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Exit Signs</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are all exits marked and illuminated? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are doors that can be mistaken for an exit marked as “not an exit”? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Exits</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How many exits to the building? ____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where are the exits located: ______________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>___________________ ______________________________________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all exits from the building clear and unobstructed? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Exit Doors</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do the exit doors open outward? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Entry Mat</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there an entry mat? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the mat at least six feet long? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the mat lay flat? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are mats curled at the corners or raveled? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do the doors smoothly pass over the mat or carpet? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Steps</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are the steps into the building in good condition? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there a handrail on at least one side of the steps or stairs? □ yes □ no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Flooring/Carpeting
- If there is carpeting, is it free of ravel, bunching or severe wear? □ yes □ no
- Is the flooring in good condition? □ yes □ no
- Is the floor surface slippery? □ yes □ no

### Tables
- Are the tables in good condition? □ yes □ no

### Chairs
- Are the chairs in good condition? □ yes □ no

### Restrooms
- Are there any plumbing leaks? □ yes □ no
- Any broken toilet seats? □ yes □ no
- Are the grab rails secure? □ yes □ no

### Sidewalks
- Are the sidewalks in good condition? □ yes □ no
  - If not, please provide details: __________________________________________
  - Are the sidewalks properly illuminated at night? □ yes □ no
  - If not, please provide details: __________________________________________

### Admissions and Seating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admissions/Attendance</th>
<th>Admissions Per Day</th>
<th>Total all Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># Tickets Printed</td>
<td># Tickets sold to date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Seating
- □ Permanent
- □ Bleachers
- □ Festival
- □ General Admission
- □ Reserved
- □ Other (Describe)

### Liquor
- Liquor Liability is needed:
  □ Yes □ No  
  If yes, advise type(s): □ Beer □ Wine □ Full Bar

- What are the anticipated Liquor receipts?
  □ Wristbands Used
  □ Local liquor laws governing sales to minors/intoxicated are followed
## Security

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Outside Security Firm:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outside Firm – # of Guards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Police – # of Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venue Employees # of Guards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: Please Explain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Protection

- **First Aid:**
  - City Paramedics
  - Venue Staff
  - None
  - Number

- **Fire Protection:**
  - Extinguishers
  - Municipal
  - Volunteer
  - Fire
  - Emergency lights
  - Fire Sprinklers
  - Alarms

### Parking

- None
- Venue responsible
- Insured is responsible
- Patrolled by security
- Illuminated

Is the parking area in good condition?  
- Yes
- No

If not, please provide details.

Is the parking area properly illuminated at night?  
- Yes
- No

If not, please provide details.

### Vendors/Concessionaires

Attach a list of vendors and/or concessionaire booths along with a sample copy of the contract required by the applicant.

Type(s) of concession(s) sold:

Estimated receipts:  $
**Outdoor Events**

Is facility needed?  □ Yes  □ No  *If yes, describe:*

Does the event end prior to sundown?  □ Yes  □ No

*If no, is there adequate lighting?*  □ Yes  □ No

Are there any swimming pools, lakes or bodies of water?  □ Yes  □ No

Is swimming allowed?  □ Yes  □ No  Life guard on duty?  □ Yes  □ No

Is water hazard fenced?  □ Yes  □ No  Give details

Evacuation/Egris plan arranged with civilian authorities?  □ Yes  □ No

Overnight camping?  □ Yes  □ No  *If yes provide details, layout, security, etc.*

Adequate drinking water & portable toilets?  □ Yes  □ No

---

**Responsibility Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Promoter</th>
<th>Certs. Provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquor</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendors</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concessions</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrotechnics</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rides</td>
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<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Animals</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tents</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bleachers</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
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<tr>
<td>Temporary Stage</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Lighting</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stunts</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Has same event been held before?**  □ Yes  □ No

*If yes, have there been any losses?*  □ Yes  □ No  Attach details.

Name of previous carrier:

---

**Required attachments:**

- □ Copy of “rental agreement or venue contract”
- □ Copy of flyer, press release, advertising
- □ Facility diagram (outdoor events)
☐ Copies of certificates if applicant is responsible for security, transportation, animals or pyrotechnics
☐ List of required additional insured(s)

Signing this application does not bind the applicant to purchase the insurance, but the information contained herein shall be the basis of the contract should a policy be issued. If any of the above questions have been answered fraudulently or in a way as to conceal or misrepresent any material, fact or circumstance concerning this insurance or the subject thereof, the entire policy shall be void.

Contact Name: ___________________________ Title: ___________________________
Signature: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Office Use Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date Received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approved ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Explanation for non approval:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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DIRECT ACTION, DEMONSTRATIONS, PICKETS AND RALLIES

Written approval from General Counsel must be obtained before you can lead, participate, or endorse any form of direct action, including: demonstration, picket, rally, or coalition.

A direct action is a campaign designed to withhold patronization of a business, service or establishment until the business meets the specific demands for which the direct action has been requested. Well organized direct action can be effective tools in pursuing civil rights goals. Direct action should always be a “last resort” tactic, to be used when negotiations have failed. A demonstration is a march, rally, sit-in or a picket. Careful research and a well-planned publicity campaign are essential to a credible, effective direct action.

Bear in mind that any direct action is intended first, to educate the public and second, to advocate change. If your activity maintains an educative and informative tone, and if it is designed to impress upon the public that they can and should use their resources to assure fair play in the marketplace, then the direct action will be a long range success even if it fails to gain all of its immediate objectives. Moreover, any direct action that is seen as an educative initiative is very unlikely to result in a lawsuit. Even the targets of such a direct action will respect us for the way we carried the activity out.

You have a constitutional right to picket, demonstrate or rally against establishments that discriminate. If you lead or participate in a demonstration, picket, or rally; your activity generally is constitutionally protected.

However, in some states, secondary direct action may be unlawful. A secondary direct action occurs when concerted, coercive, pressure is directed toward customers, to cause them to withhold or withdraw their patronage from the establishment. You must check your state's statute.

The following procedures apply to demonstrations pickets and rallies:

1. The unit must obtain a sworn statement of facts from a complainant. This statement shall contain all pertinent facts, including dates, and the nature of the problem. If there is no complainant, i.e., the unit generated the investigation on its own, then an NAACP unit resolution reflecting the facts should be duly passed.

2. The unit, through its legal redress committee, should undertake a thorough investigation of all the facts surrounding the complaint. The unit investigation should reveal each version of the facts as alleged by the complainant and the target of the complaint.

3. The unit must obtain permission from the President & CEO as well as all required permits. All city ordinances and state statutes for the protest must be in compliance.

4. The demonstration protest must be of a nonviolent nature, and any and all signs, if permitted, must carry nonviolent messages. Signs should not call for the termination of an

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employee. The unit should seek an open investigation of the occurrence, demand that disciplinary action commensurate with the seriousness of the offense be imposed, and request that training reforms be implemented to prevent future recurrences.

5. The NAACP must have complete charge and control of the demonstration/protest strategy. In other words, the unit cannot join other coalitions unless it has been approved by the President & CEO and the General Counsel. Also the NAACP is in a position to direct all activities under the supervision of the NAACP.

6. If possible, all demonstration participants should sign a waiver of liability and receive a disclaimer form.

7. The unit must ensure that there is adequate security so that protestors/demonstrators are free from harassment.

It is important that you keep the State/State Area Conference and Regional Director updated on all activities when any considering any form of direct action, per Article II, Section 2(a) of the Bylaws for Units.

Once you have responded in writing addressing each of the aforesaid, the General Counsel may issue authorization to proceed. You must request such permission in writing from the General Counsel.
HOW TO ORGANIZE DEMONSTRATION, PICKET, OR RALLY

DO'S:

1. Each unit must pass a resolution approving involvement in the direct action, demonstration, picket, or rally.

2. Notify the State Conference President. Notify your Regional Director. Request permission and obtain approval from the Office of the General Counsel before using the name of the Association in conducting direct action.

3. Provide station/store watchers, pickets, and legal observers (such as lawyers, law students or paralegals) at sites.

4. Encourage people to join the common cause through public speeches and private solicitations.

5. Provide transportation to alternative businesses providing comparable products, foods, and services.

6. Provide literature that thoroughly explains the direct action.

7. Educate the participants on the laws of the jurisdiction.

8. Make sure that you have proper security, necessary permits, and sufficient insurance if required.

9. Obey orders from law enforcement officials, even if the order is clearly unlawful. Report the matter to the NAACP Legal Department. The matter can be resolved later through a lawsuit or restraining order.

DON'TS:

1. Do not engage in unauthorized demonstrations, pickets, or rallies using the NAACP’s name.

2. Do not use defamatory, demeaning, threatening, or obscene language to or about any person.

3. Do not engage in, or be seen as threatening, physical force or violence against customers, prospective customers, or proprietors.

4. Do not intimidate, threaten, ostracize, or degrade those who may cross the picket line.

5. Do not agree with anyone to use force against any person or property.
6. Do not organize a demonstration, picket, or rally to advance private economic interests.

7. Do not authorize, ratify, or even discuss illegal conduct at meetings or anywhere else.

8. Do not make speeches likely to instigate lawless action.

9. Do not take part in coalitions unless prior approval from the National Office has been obtained.

CIVIL DISTURBANCES

Civil disturbances are violent protests which lack constitutional protection. On the other hand, civil disobedience is nonviolent and rests on the central tenet that members are willing to protest unjust laws and accept the punishment, including jail.

The NAACP does not condone civil disturbances and advises all units that they should not become engaged in such activity. A hallmark of the NAACP has been its effectiveness in using peaceful or civil remedies to right wrongs.

In the event that a peaceful protest turns violent, the following steps should be taken:

1. Immediately notify the Regional Director and seek guidance and support;

2. Provide safe assistance to prevent the loss of life and property;

3. Provide solace, consolation and support to any victims and members of their families;

4. Immediately assist in obtaining legal representation;

5. Publicly issue condemnations of any violations of law, whether committed by police or by citizens;

6. Provide information viable, nonviolent protest alternatives for the community; and

7. Obey the orders of law enforcement personnel.
Checklist

_______ Has the Unit passed a resolution or obtained a sworn statement?

_______ Has the Unit submitted this Request to Take Direct Action to the Director of Field Operations for the recommendation?

_______ Has the Director of Field Operations recommended approval?

_______ Has the Unit obtained all necessary and required permits?

_______ Is the Direct Action in compliance with local and state statutes?

_______ Has the Unit obtained event insurance?

_______ Have the participants received training on NAACP policies and procedures?

_______ Have the guardians/parents received and signed a waiver and disclaimer form for participants under the age of 18 years?

_______ Will individuals “off the street” be able to participate in the direct action?

_______ Does the NACP Unit have complete charge and control of the direct action?

_______ Has a coalition been formed? (Please provide a list of coalition members)

_______ Is the Direct Action of a nonviolent nature?

_______ Will there be any signage? (Please provide the language on the signage)

_______ Will there be chants? (Please provide the language used for the chants)

_______ Will there be speakers? (Please provide a list of the speakers)

_______ Is there adequate security for the Direct Action?

_______ Has law enforcement been notified and will they participate?

_______ Will there be NAACP Marshals?

_______ Have you notified your State Conference President and Director of Field Operations?

_______ Have you provided your Director of Field Operations with an Agenda or Plan of Action, which outlines the planned activities/events of the Direct Action?
Have you provided the General Counsel with an Agenda or Plan of Action which outlines the planned activities/events of the Direct Action?

Have you provided your Director of Field Operations with all documents that support your answers to these questions?

Have you provided the General Counsel with all documents that support answers to these questions?
Just Energy Policies and Practices Action Toolkit
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
Environmental and Climate Justice Program
www.naacp.org/issues/environmental-justice
ecjp@naacpnet.org