

Civil Unrest Preparedness

1. Overview

Civil unrest can escalate quickly, disrupting safety and essential services. While preparation helps mitigate risks, no solution is foolproof—and isolation can be as dangerous as the threat itself. Your priorities: secure your environment, maintain emergency supplies, and build community connections. Remember: civil unrest is dynamic. What's safe one minute may not be the next. Have a plan—but stay ready to adapt.

2. Preparing Your Home

Home Security

- ☐ Reinforce doors and windows (e.g., sturdy locks, security bars, shutters).
- ☐ Have barricade materials ready if needed.
- ☐ Install or consider a security system (motion detectors, alarms).
- ☐ Keep a well-stocked emergency kit (food, water, first aid, battery radio).
- ☐ Store copies of critical documents in a grab-and-go bag.

Communication Plan

- ☐ Create a physical list of emergency contacts.
- ☐ Establish backup communication channels (satellite phone, radio, Zello, walkie-talkies).

Evacuation Plan

- ☐ Identify multiple escape routes.
- ☐ Set a designated family meeting spot outside your home.

3. Protective Gear for Unexpected Situations

- ☐ Helmet (e.g., skateboard helmet)
- ☐ Protective goggles (Z87+ safety glasses)
- ☐ Dust mask or respirator (CS/OC filters)
- ☐ Water (min. 1 large bottle per person)
- ☐ Compact first-aid kit + personal meds (36+ hours)
- ☐ Power bank, whistle/personal alarm, portable radio
- ☐ Multi-tool or knife, flashlight with backups or hand-crank
- ☐ Hygiene supplies (wet wipes, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, feminine hygiene products in waterproof pouch)
- ☐ Eye flush solution, bandana or extra mask
- ☐ Copies of ID, emergency contact info, medical info, minor cash in waterproof bag

4. First Actions If Civil Unrest Occurs

If Staying Indoors

- ☐ Stay inside; avoid travel.
- ☐ Barricade and secure pets indoors.
- ☐ Monitor reliable news sources.
- ☐ Communicate your safety to loved ones.
- ☐ Follow instructions from authorities.

- ☐ Be ready to evacuate as needed.

If Evacuation Is Required

- ☐ Travel with others.
- ☐ Let someone know your plans.
- ☐ Avoid crowds and protests.
- ☐ Do not intervene in confrontations.
- ☐ Stay alert to surroundings.
- ☐ Avoid traveling at night or through poorly lit areas.

5. Shelter vs. Leaving

Shelter in Place if:

- You're already in a secure location.
- Streets are dangerous (crowds, roadblocks, police presence).
- Curfews or travel restrictions are in effect.
- Nearby areas show signs of vandalism, looting, or violence.

If Sheltering:

- ☐ Lock doors and windows.
- ☐ Close curtains/blinds.
- ☐ Turn off lights if needed.
- ☐ Stay off balconies or porches.
- ☐ Keep a low profile (avoid livestreaming or posting online).

6. Situational Awareness

- ☐ Scan environments when entering spaces—note exits, barriers, crowd behavior.
- ☐ Identify “zones of safety” (quiet side streets, unlocked buildings, vehicle cover).
- ☐ Ask yourself: 'If something happens now, where do I go?'
- ☐ Pay attention to signs: sudden silence, shouting, breaking glass, sirens, changes in body language.
- ☐ Avoid tunnel vision—don't get distracted by your phone.
- ☐ Walk with purpose to blend in.
- ☐ Trust your instincts—move if something feels off.
- ☐ Mentally script reactions (help bypass panic).
- ☐ Know at least two exit routes.
- ☐ Stay flexible with detours.
- ☐ Check news and local feeds before heading into sensitive areas.

7. Social Media & Communication Safety

- ☐ Avoid real-time livestreaming of your location.
- ☐ Use encrypted messaging (Signal, WhatsApp with E2E encryption).
- ☐ Disable location services and geotagging on social apps.
- ☐ Turn off cloud auto-sync if concerned about data exposure.
- ☐ Save screenshots of alerts, road closures, and protest updates.

- ☐ Store emergency numbers both digitally and on paper.
- ☐ Carry backup power sources like batteries or solar chargers.

8. Know Your Legal Rights

You have the right to film public officials, as long as you're not interfering.

You have the right to remain silent (beyond ID, as allowed by your state).

You generally can refuse searches unless there's a warrant or probable cause.

If detained:

- ☐ State: 'I am exercising my right to remain silent. I want to speak to a lawyer.'
- ☐ Do not physically resist arrest.
- ☐ Do not sign anything without counsel present.
- ☐ Keep legal aid contacts (e.g., National Lawyers Guild, ACLU).
- ☐ Identify any protest-area legal support or observers in your region.

9. Review & Learn After an Event

- ☐ Reflect on what worked and what didn't during the event.
- ☐ Update your preparation plan and supplies based on lessons learned.