

Action roles should be adapted and used according to your specific group and action context. The following offers one possible outline of tasks and responsibilities for this role.

## ACTION ROLE **POLICE LIAISON**

Your Role: > deal with officers of the law to maximize participant safety and action goals

<p><b>YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate all interactions with the police in advance, during and after the action.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Establish clear lines of communication between you, the police, action coordinators and participants. To be credible, there should be one police liaison.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Speak with police at the action; communicate police messages that bring new information to the other action roles and, when possible, to the entire group.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> You may have to:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ anticipate and defuse misunderstandings,</li> <li>➢ negotiate, try to gain time or create space for demonstrators to accomplish the goals or communicate the message, and</li> <li>➢ “push back” against arbitrary decisions with humor, persistence, and grace.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All potential action scenarios ahead of time, including the “exit” or “out” scenario (the conditions upon which you leave the site of the action; for example, threat of arrest, specific demand met, a meeting being proposed, etc.).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What will and will not be acceptable, based on the action goals and strategy.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The levels of risks agreed to by participants, their level of training and readiness.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local laws and customs regarding demonstrations and gatherings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Local police hierarchy: who you are talking to, and their position in the chain of command.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How police think in terms of planning requirements, safety concerns, and decision-making process (hint: hierarchy).</li> </ul> <p><b>JOB REQUIREMENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If you think cops are all dumb, this is not the job for you.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> This job is best done by people with some experience dealing with the police, who understand both the participants' and the police's “job” and perspectives.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> It is best if you are able to speak the language of the police, and to their concerns (for public safety, for instance).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If you can argue according to how they think, you are more likely to make headway.</li> </ul> <p><b>WHEN POLICE ARE NOT YOUR TARGET</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintain commitment to your target and goals; avoid directing attention to police when it won't support your goals.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not lie to, disrespect, or unnecessarily antagonize them.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In civil disobedience situations, antagonized cops can make the arrest bad for participants.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider your group's long term credibility with local police. What kind of relationship between your group and police will support your goals?</li> </ul>
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*Adapted from handout by Philippe Duhamel and Matt Guynn*