

## **What's JAIL SUPPORT & Why is it important?**

Jail Support is both tracking – finding out where people who were arrested were taken, calling to find out their status (when they get charged/see if they need bail) – and being outside the jail/court to provide comfort to friends and community members who have been arrested when they get released. It is a way of showing solidarity & support to people who have been arrested and a way of taking care of friends and community. Jail support is important to decrease the effects of the dehumanization and isolation of jail and reminds people that they are not alone in this struggle. It's important that we help each other navigate the overwhelming process of arrest, jail, legal counsel access, and follow up court hearings. And it's important to come out of those cells to friends, nourishment, and support.

**Things to bring with you:** water, food, snacks, smokes, cameras (to document injuries), caffeine (tea or coffee for people doing night shifts), change/dollars for transportation home, warm things if weather is cold – blankets, scarves, extra hoodies/sweaters, and LOTS of water if the weather is hot.

**Shifts :** going with 1 -2 or more other people and planning to stay for a few hours at a time allows us to make sure there is always a crew of people there when anyone is released but also allows people who have been doing jail support for a long time to take breaks. Go in shifts & set these up as soon as arrests start or before if possible. 3-5 hours per shift/crew or whatever you can do lets other people go get rest, eat some food, take care of their pets, kids, etc. Jail support should be a bonding and motivating experience – not burn us out!

**Jail support can be done by ANYONE!** ... and should be done by EVERYONE if you are physically/mentally able. You don't need a legal degree or legal experience to support people coming out of jail. Jail support is definitely political & personal but it's not the same as the protest/action that brought you there. The way jail support crew behaves and how they interact with law enforcement outside the jails/booking/precincts can affect how long they hold our crew. Don't talk about any actions/events/behaviors leading up to or associated to people's arrests. We don't want to do the state's job for them – anything you say, regardless of context, can be used against you/friends/others.

**When your friends/crew/family get released - YAY!! :** It is always best if partners, family and/or friends can be present when people are getting released. They will know them best, know what foods they like, know the best ways to comfort them, hopefully have an extra set of house keys, etc. If you don't know someone personally try to take cues from them on what kind of support they would like. Coming out of jail can be overwhelming so respect their boundaries when offering support. Not everyone wants a hug, so **ask first**.

Make sure to take care of their basic needs first. Do they need water? Food? A phone to call a loved one? If they were injured, with their consent, have someone take pictures of their injuries & document what happened to them. Once these basic human needs are met help them write down important information for follow up legal/court support:

(1) legal name, (2) charges, (3) court return date, (4) contact info- either phone or email (5) date, time, and location of arrest. Make sure the legal team/NLG/lawyer crew gets all this info for continued follow up court support.

If you are arrested and are not a citizen do not share that information with anyone except your attorney. Strongly urge anyone who has been arrested NOT to talk about the details of what they were or were not doing leading up to the arrest.