

Standouts and De-escalation of Aggressors

Created 6/29/24. These recommendations reflect advice of law enforcement and security professionals and may be modified in the future.

As we begin to be more present at events and standouts, we should all have a common goal of avoiding any confrontation with people wanting to insult or engage us.

Below are some tips going forward.

#1 If the situation feels unsafe, leave and/or call for help.

Note: we may want to share with police when and where we will be holding signs and that we've encountered aggressive actions/comments in the past.

#2 If people are walking or driving by with offensive gestures or comments, do not engage. Stay neutral which can be difficult. Don't over-smile or yell back anything

#3 Do not hesitate to call the police, that's what they are there for.

#4 Beware of your surroundings. Keep an eye out for cars that might be repeatedly driving by or if a group of people are starting to amass in the area.

#5 Smartphone recording. Your safety is the number one priority so use your phone to call or message authorities first, if necessary. Never stick your phone in someone's face and it's usually better to leave the area. If you're a safe distance away and feel it could be valuable, it's your call.

If someone or a group approaches you/us:

- be ready to step back and maintain distance between you and individual/group
- Never crowd or gang up on an aggressor
- Present a non threatening appearance. Even if you don't feel it, try to look calm and self-assured.
- Maintain a neutral facial expression or a positive one, but do not show contempt. Belligerent eye rolling is one of the best nonverbal examples of contempt. Some other nonverbal recommendations include placing your hands in front of your body in an open and relaxed position, not shrugging your shoulders, and not pointing your finger at the other group.
- Don't match their intensity. If you are upset, it's only going to escalate the situation. Try to stay calm to help you navigate the scene safely. Take a deep breath. Use a low, dull tone of voice and don't get defensive, even if the insults are directed at you.

Other signs of aggression or danger:

- Clenched fists or tightened jaw
- Sudden change in body language or conversational tone
- Pacing or fidgeting
- The "Rooster Stance"—chest protruding out more with arms away from the body.