



the Resident Action Project



Toolkit for ORGANIZING



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first edition

The Resident Action Project Toolkit for Organizing

Produced in 2017 with contributions from Katy Heins and Kristina Nielander.

We encourage people to copy pages of this toolkit and use them for organizing.

The Resident Action Project is a project of the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance, Washington Housing Alliance Action Fund, and the Center for Community Change's Housing Trust Fund Project.

The Washington Low Income Housing Alliance is a 501(c)3 nonprofit member organization that does policy advocacy, education, and community organizing to advance our mission to lead the movement to ensure that all of our residents thrive in safe, healthy, affordable homes.

To learn more, visit: www.wliha.org

The Washington Housing Alliance Action Fund is the sister organization of the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance. It is a 501(c)4 nonprofit that educates voters, promotes smart public policy, and supports candidates who share our vision that all Washington residents should have the opportunity to live in safe, healthy, affordable homes, in thriving communities.

To learn more, visit: www.housingactionfund.org

The Center for Community Change is a national organization that aims to build social movements through community organizing. The Center's mission is to build the power and capacity of low-income people, especially low-income people of color, to change their communities and public policies for the better.

To learn more, visit: www.communitychange.org

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Toolkit for Organizing About the Toolkit



If you are reading this, we'd like to start by saying **Welcome!** We're so glad that this toolkit has found its way into your hands.

The Resident Action Project aims to form a statewide network of people who are ready to fight for policy change at the state level to address the housing affordability and homelessness crisis. We are following the leadership of people who are directly impacted by these issues in our organizing. We are working with several nonprofit partners to do outreach and organizing to grow in communities all around Washington.

This toolkit is for anyone who is interested in forming a RAP chapter in your community. Wherever you are in Washington, we value your leadership and knowledge of your community to expand the network around our state.

Here's how we are hoping you will read this organizing toolkit:

1. **Get a few folks together who are also interested in bringing about change and ask them if they will join you to read it.** Organizing is all about building relationships, and it's best to do it in community. **You don't need to read this toolkit cover-to-cover.** The first page of each section gives an overview. Glance at those overview pages, and pick one or two sections to work through together. You can always reach out to RAP staff to get an idea of where to start!

2. **As a group, think through the following questions:**

- What housing issues are important in your community?
- How might RAP help to address the issues in your community?
 - Where do you start? Are there groups of people interested in this?
 - What resources do you have access to?
- What tools might be the most helpful?

3. Reach out to a Resident Action Project staff member to talk about RAP and what support you may need. **We are a resource for you.** We can help you as you use the tools in the toolkit. We can help you to think through questions you have about organizing in your community. We're excited to hear from you!

Toolkit for Organizing About Us



The Resident Action Project is organizing a powerful network of people who live in or need affordable homes - many of whom have experienced oppression - and front line staff to demand changes in Washington state. We are building a force to demand that our state invest in communities that have been historically pushed aside and silenced for too long. **The state must invest in affordable homes and a housing system that does not leave anyone out.** We will fight for the state to pass policies that are equitable and protect people from systemic injustice in housing and beyond.

It is a fact - we are in a housing crisis. Across the state of Washington, people are struggling to find a home. Rents are too high and wages are too low. Thousands of kids don't have a home to go back to after school. Many of our cities allow gentrification that pushes people of color and people who have low incomes out of their communities. If evicted, people are stuck with a record that makes it even more difficult to find a home -- many facing homelessness. These are not the only challenges people face: transportation, healthy food, healthcare, and other necessities are expensive and often inaccessible. Interacting with the criminal justice system creates even more barriers to accessing a home.

While the crisis we are living in may seem new to some, many people have been facing these realities for years, their whole lives, even generations. People's struggles have not happened by accident. **Our problems cannot be explained by "individual fault." Our struggle is created by a system rooted in oppression - racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, ableism, and others -- and reinforced by years of policy decisions that favor the wealth, health, and happiness of a few at the cost of the livelihood, health, and happiness of the majority.**

Mostly, the people benefiting from our current system are those who make or influence policy decisions. Many of them rarely reach out to people directly impacted by systemic oppression - to hear about our lives, and the implications of the votes they cast. **We have to go to them to demand a change.**

At the Resident Action Project, we are coming together to build power, to build community, and to push for change. We live in affordable homes, work with people in affordable homes, currently (or are presently) experiencing homelessness, and have low-incomes. **We welcome all who share our values and are ready to fight for change to join us.**

Toolkit for Organizing • About Us

our values

We are fighting for housing justice because we believe that having a home is a human right. Currently, access to housing is left up to a volatile and unregulated market. The market does not adjust for the realities that people are experiencing because it doesn't have to. That means that there are people are - and who have been for generations - systematically denied access to housing, and this is an injustice.

We hold values of anti-oppression and anti-racism. We will not ignore the way the system disproportionately impacts people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ+, single parent families, immigrants, people with disabilities, and people who are older. We will work to make policy we advocate for oppression-free, and we will work to make our group representative of the communities who are most impacted.

We will be intentional about undoing oppressions in our organizing spaces. We will educate ourselves, listen with empathy to each other's experiences, hold each other accountable for our actions and words, and dismantle professionalized culture that upholds white supremacy and patriarchy. We will hold each other accountable with compassion.

We value community, justice, and fairness, and these values inform how we work together. Building strong relationships is fundamental to effective organizing. This work is hard, and it is personal. As we fight for wins, we need to support each other to make our organizing sustainable so people don't burn out.

We believe in organizing that is more transformational than transactional. We want to create the opportunity to build skills and leadership and to provide input on our work. We will not simply tell people what to do. We will work together and be transformed by each other's leadership.

Finally, **we want to form a culture of appreciation and accountability.** We are not going to be perfect. We are going to have to remind ourselves and each other of our values, and we are going to have to have hard conversations sometimes. And that's okay. That means that we're committed to doing justice for ourselves and each other in this work.

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where we've been

Since early 2016, RAP has been working to grow, build leadership, and strengthen our sense of community. We've held gatherings and trainings, and several committees made up of community leaders and nonprofit staff have met to support our work. Here's a brief snapshot of where we've made through May 2017.

- Solidified a structure for RAP including resident leadership in the forefront
- Seated RAP's first statewide steering committee
- Held quarterly leadership trainings
- Voter registration and Get Out the Vote opportunities
- Opportunities to advocate on state policies
- Outreach across the state at the Conference on Ending Homelessness



Pictured Above: Matthew Anderson and Violet Lavatai at the Conference on Ending Homelessness in 2016

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why we are a part of the solution

We are here to build our collective power, raise our voice, and demand a change. As we have seen from history, there has been an intentional effort to stifle the voices of people directly impacted by this crisis. If enough of us come together to build power and bring a unified message to the state legislature, we could make a huge impact. Not only do we have stories to tell about what the problems really look like in our communities, but we also have strength in numbers. To lawmakers, that means votes. If we let them know that we are not only a force - but a voting force - they could be more inclined to listen to us.

What's more, people who are living the crisis are the experts on it. We deal with it every day, and we know things that our lawmakers likely do not. Community organizing is fundamental to democracy, but that's not something that we're taught in school. Part of community organizing is education -- educating each other based on our own experiences and educating lawmakers.

For any movement to be authentic, we have to be led by people who are directly impacted. Paulo Freire wrote that "freedom from oppression cannot be gifted." That means that for true, just, authentic change to happen, the solution has to come from the community. By following the leadership of community leaders in our work, we hope to create an organizing space that is community driven. We've seen this work with the civil rights movement, women's suffrage, immigration rights, and more. It's time for a movement around housing.

We know that our vision is huge, and it could take a long time to achieve it. We will always be working on pieces of that solution. As we get wins on some of these smaller pieces, we will continue to grow in our numbers, knowledge, and power. As we grow, we can push for bigger and bigger changes.



A Brief Housing History

We could write hundreds of pages on the history of how we found ourselves in the crisis that we see today. In this section, we highlight some key events that illustrate the systemic nature of the problem and how systems of oppression can be built into laws and policies. We focus generally on how urban areas have been impacted by the crisis. There are many other stories that can be told about how housing oppression has played out in rural areas, for people with different identities and experiences, and in different cities. We encourage readers to continue to explore the complex history of homelessness, especially as it relates to systems of oppression.

the crisis today

Our government has left access to housing - which we assert is a human right - up to a volatile and unregulated market within a system that has a history of structural racism and other structural oppressions that have not yet been undone.

Depending on your identities, you are constantly fighting an uphill battle against discrimination.

- People of color, veterans, seniors, and people living with disabilities disproportionately experience housing instability, poverty, and homelessness, despite Fair Housing laws deeming these groups as protected classes. People who identify as LGBTQ+, immigrants, refugees, and women are not protected by fair housing laws and many experience discrimination in housing and beyond.
- The structural oppression built into housing policy has not been addressed, and the history of oppression and its lasting impacts are often denied by those with power.
- Gentrification continues to displace communities that are not wealthy and white from their neighborhoods.

It's hard to find a home that is affordable if you have a low income.

- Wages are not keeping up with rising housing costs.
- Waitlists to get into public housing or private affordable housing are years long.
- Waitlists to get a Section 8 Voucher are years long, and once you get one it is incredibly difficult to find a place that will accept your voucher because landlords often discriminate against people who use vouchers. Sometimes landlords will even evict people with Section 8 vouchers because they no longer want to participate in the program.
- There are not enough affordable and available homes per family that needs them. In Washington state, there are only 30 affordable and available homes for every 100 are that needed. [1]

[1] Out of Reach Report, 2017. National Low Income Housing Coalition.

Toolkit for Organizing • Housing History

the crisis today

It is hard to find a home once you become homeless.

- If you get evicted - no matter whether it is legitimate - it is hard to find a landlord who will rent to you with an eviction on your record.
- Services for people experiencing homelessness are massively underfunded. There were 20,844 people experiencing homelessness in Washington state in 2016 [2] and 39,671 schoolchildren in the 2015-16 school year [3].

People become homeless for so many reasons, and yet there is still a stigma that blames people experiencing homelessness for their struggle.

- Many women become homeless because they are fleeing domestic violence.
- African American women are unfairly and disproportionately targeted with evictions, and African American men are unfairly and disproportionately targeted by the criminal justice system. The combination of eviction and criminal records reinforce housing oppression.
- It is extremely difficult to find work and housing once you have a criminal record. Many people exit prison into homelessness. Also, many people have to pay off legal financial obligations, which further squeezes their resources and ability to find stability in the transition.
- People with mental health needs who have low-incomes are often not able to access treatment, and there is not nearly enough supportive housing to meet the need.
- There are not enough programs to support youth and young adults who experience homelessness.
- People with disabilities often do not have enough support to keep their housing.
- People with substance use disorders are stigmatized and face barriers to accessing housing that requires them to be sober, even though they are often not able to access healthcare for their substance use disorder.
- The lack of opportunity makes class mobility difficult. Higher education is expensive. Good-paying jobs are scarce.
- Lack of affordable healthcare leads many people to accrue huge medical debt.
- Predatory payday lenders take advantage of people who are struggling by charging huge interest rates.

[2] 2016 Annual Point in Time Count. Washington State Department of Commerce. <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/hau-pit-final-v2-summary-2016.pdf>

[3] Education of Homeless Children and Youth Data Collection and Reports, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. <http://www.k12.wa.us/HomelessEd/Data.aspx>.

Toolkit for Organizing • Housing History

Housing policy didn't happen in a bubble. Purposeful decisions were made throughout history by rich white men that impacted millions of people's lives. Other decisions could have been made. While you're reading this section, reflect on: **Who had/has the power to make decisions that led to/reinforce the crisis we see today?**

a snapshot of power in housing

The 1930s - the Federal Government and Redlining

- The Federal Government saw home ownership as a major way to build strength in the middle class. The Roosevelt Administration began to back loans where potential homeowners only had to put 20% down on homes.
- The problem is - this wasn't for everyone. Banks and neighborhood organizations drew lines - called redlining - around certain neighborhoods where they refused to give out loans based on race. This reinforced the segregation of neighborhoods and invested in the wealth of white families over black families.
- In addition, neighborhood associations released racial covenants for buying and selling property that restricted families of color from moving into their communities.
- An example of a racial covenant from Capitol Hill in Seattle: "No part of said premises shall ever be used or occupied by or sold, conveyed, leased, rented, or given to negroes or any person or persons of negro blood." [4]

Between 1934 and 1964, 98% of home loans insured by the federal government went to white people building up the white middle class through homeownership. [5] The suburbs began to grow after World War II. The GI Bill allowed white veterans to get loans from banks for homes in the suburbs. African American veterans also had access to the GI bill, but banks refused to give home loans in African American neighborhoods. The banks and the real estate industry were practicing redlining. This effectively subsidized the long-term wealth of white communities and denied the opportunity to accumulate wealth in African American communities. This is an example of how policy decisions contributed to **structural racism** and of how racism in neighborhood associations further reinforced that oppression. This was common in the 1930s and 40s, and the effects are still present today.

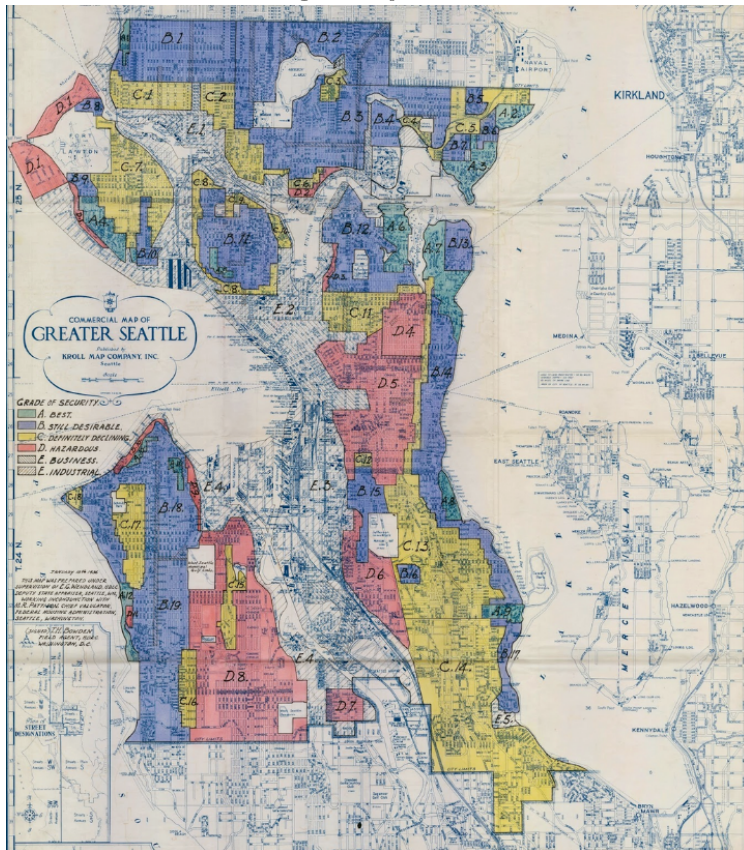
[4] *Racial Restrictive Covenants*. Seattle Civil Rights and Labor History Project. <http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/covenants.htm>

[5] *Race: The Power of Illusion*, PBS, 2003

Toolkit for Organizing • Housing History

redlining

1936 Redlining Map

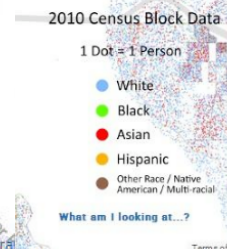


2010 Census Map



These maps demonstrate the historical consequences of redlining. In the map from 1936, the neighborhoods that were deemed "Hazardous" or "Definitely Declining" (aka, neighborhoods where people of color lived and were denied homeownership loans) are still where many of the people of color who are still in the city live.

Throughout history and today, these neighborhoods have not had equitable development or access to opportunity: many neighborhoods lack grocery stores, good schools, well-paying jobs, access to transit, and community centers. Many of these areas have a historical stigma of being "dangerous" - where white people would not choose to live. However, you may notice that the maps do not overlay perfectly. **Recent gentrification and redevelopment is another force shaping our cities that impacts who is able to live where.**



Top Image: "Segregation by Design?," Seattle Met, July 20th, 2015.

Bottom Image: UW Departments Web Server.
<http://depts.washington.edu/civilr/images/maps/Cooper/>

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a snapshot of power in housing

The 1950s - "Urban Renewal"

- Housing discrimination based on race continued into the 1950s through "Urban Renewal," which African American novelist James Baldwin referred to as "Negro Removal" in the 1960s.
- "Urban Renewal" did two things: reinstated public housing and began the process of "slum clearance." The government took homes and business through eminent domain in neighborhoods predominantly owned by people of color and "redeveloped" them in the name of slum clearance. Redevelopment involved selling areas to private investors who were interested in making a profit.
- These areas became expensive to live in following redevelopment. Because of redlining, unfair loaning practices, and racism within the job market, communities of color had little access to opportunity or decently paying jobs. Thus, the "redevelopment" effectively dismantled community centers that communities of color had built. Many people were forced out of their neighborhoods. Over one million households were relocated and displaced from their neighborhoods between 1960 and 1980 [6].
- Displaced from their neighborhoods, many people went to live in the public housing projects that were being built by the federal government. The problem was that the federal government had actually destroyed more homes than it built. With few options, many people from communities of color began living in public housing. With little access to opportunity, poverty became concentrated in those neighborhoods. This created and reinforced de facto segregation.

1950s - 70s - Freeway Expansion

- In addition to "Urban Renewal" efforts, the federal government passed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 or the National Interstate and Defense Highway Act.
- They authorized \$25 billion dollars for the construction of 41,000 miles of highway as part of a defense strategy in case of need to transport materials in war. Many of the highways went through low-income neighborhoods.
- "White flight" and urban sprawl continued. White people fled the cities where people of color lived to the areas that we know as suburbs today. This further displaced and divided residents and communities of color.

[6] In Defense of Housing, David Madden and Peter Marcuse, 2016. p 133.

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gentrification and displacement

Gentrification is a force that is a threat to housing justice all over the country. Earlier in the the toolkit, we highlighted racist redlining and neighborhoods that were considered "dangerous" and therefore were not invested in. Though these neighborhoods were not supported or invested in by their local governments or other investors, they are still communities with community centers and support systems that people developed.

The problem of gentrification happens when developers and city planners choose to "redevelop" neighborhoods that are historically home to communities of color and people who have low-incomes without being intentional about maintaining affordability and community centers for the people who already live there. Often times, these decisions are made without engaging with people who already live in these neighborhoods about the redevelopment.

Instead, decisions are handed down. Many times city planners and council members give incentives to "redevelop" a community through tax abatements, provision of city services, and zoning and land variances, making gentrification not "market" driven but policy driven.

As the redevelopment occurs, rents rise, cost of living rises, and the current community is priced out as privileged people - often middle class white people - move into these "new, hip" neighborhoods. People who have lived in that community for decades and who have built a community for themselves are divided and displaced.

Gentrification is a racial, economic, and housing justice issue. Communities do not have a say in the forces of gentrification, just as they didn't have a say in freeway expansion, redlining, and "Urban Renewal" of the past.

Toolkit for Organizing • Housing History

a snapshot of power in housing

1950s - 70s - Freeway Expansion continued

- The racism built into these policies was effective and impactful. Federal policy, with help from the private sector, created segregated neighborhoods.

The bottom line: you were stuck (geographically and socioeconomically) if you were not white. And it was a result of structural racism built into policies by the Federal Government.

The 1970s - The War on Drugs

- In 1971, President Nixon declared the War on Drugs. The policies and practices in the War on Drugs predominantly targeted poor black communities that were segregated through "Urban Renewal," which led to the beginning of the mass imprisonment of African American men. Now, on top of segregation via policy, disinvestment and lack of opportunities, these communities were over-policed.
- African American women were left to care for families, and it became even more difficult to escape the cycle of poverty.

The 1980s - The Reagan Administration

- The Reagan Administration cut funding for social services and public housing.
- In 1983, the federal government defunded public housing by 77% compared to 1978, and mental hospitals were deinstitutionalized without a plan for local communities to support the people who were leaving hospitals and other facilities. This led to a wave of mass homelessness across the country. [7]
- Because such a high percentage of people who were living in public housing at the time were people of color, given the history of what they had been through, homelessness disproportionately impacted people of color. This is still the case today.

[7] Without Housing. Western Regional Advocacy Project, 2010. <http://wraphome.org/what/without-housing/>

Toolkit for Organizing • Housing History

a snapshot of power in housing

The 1990s - The Clinton and Bush Administrations

- Homelessness and poverty continued to rise, yet the federal government under the Bush Administration made deep cuts and reforms that destabilized families and made it even more difficult to afford rent. The programs included the programs meant to help people pay for rent and other basic necessities.
- The Clinton Administration reinforced the racism built into the War on Drugs by instating mandatory minimum sentencing laws for drug crimes and by investing heavily in prison construction.
- Increased stigma around people with criminal records meant that people had a hard time accessing housing when they returned to their communities because many landlords would not rent to tenants with criminal records. That is still happening today; many people exit prison straight into homelessness.

The 2000s to now

- Despite the fact that homelessness continued to rise, the federal government has not restored funding for public housing.
- During the early 2000s, banks issued loans for homeownership en masse, not all of which were good loans. Banks disproportionately targeted people of color and immigrants for subprime mortgages - bad loans - even when they had the same income levels as their white counterparts.
- In 2008, we entered the Great Recession. The "housing bubble" that was created by the banks issuing so many bad home loans burst. Homes across the country went into foreclosure as unemployment rose. The loss of wealth in communities of color was much more than the loss of wealth in white communities. Per 1,000 households, 11 homes that were lost were in communities of color versus 5 homes lost in segregated white communities in Washington State. [8]
- Coming out of the Great Recession, income and wealth continued to be concentrated at the top as the number of people who have low-incomes grew.
- Despite the rising need for affordable homes, rents went up across the country because people who had been homeowners flooded the rental market. The increased competition continues to drive up rental prices.
- And, gentrification abounds. (See page 14)

[8] The High Cost of Subprime Lending in Washington State, 2009. http://budgetandpolicy.org/reports/the-high-cost-of-subprime-lending-in-washington-state/pdf_version

Toolkit for Organizing • Housing History

reflection questions

Here are some questions to consider after reading this section. If you are reading this section as a group, discuss these questions together.

What causes people to become homeless?

Why is homelessness a systemic problem?

What are some common assumptions about homelessness that are not accurate?

What is the role of racism and other systems of oppression in the current housing and homelessness crisis?

As a society, who do we hold responsible for homelessness?

What are the issues that impact the housing and homelessness crisis?

How have you been impacted by the policy decisions that have led to the crisis that we're seeing today?

What do you see as a solution to the current housing and homelessness crisis?
There could be many pieces to the solution. What are they?

Who has the power to make changes in this system?

Who needs to be involved in the fight for housing justice and an end to homelessness?

Toolkit for Organizing Community Organizing 101



What is community organizing?
Community organizing is the main tool used by social movements to make change. One key element of organizing is building power with people who don't have it, often because it's been systematically denied to them. Power, privilege, and oppression are all important things to think about as you organize.



what is community organizing?

There are many styles of community organizing across the country. Here's a definition to consider:

“Organizing is bringing the talents, resources, and skills of people in the community together to increase their collective power to transform themselves and their community and work for social change. Organizing is different than mobilizing, development, or service work. It involves building relationships and consolidating perspectives, thoughts, and ideas into an organizational structure.” - scott winn at the Seattle Office of Civil Rights

Let's break that down into some key elements of community organizing:

- Bring people from the community together around a common problem.
- Identify issues in the community and build relationships.
- Share what resources, talents, and perspectives people in the group have to offer.
- Come up with a common narrative or story for the group. What change do you want to see?
- Develop a plan of action to build power and to push for change.

Read further for:

Our Assumptions
Elements of Organizing
Steps to Organize for Change

Pro-tip:

There's a lot of organizing knowledge out there! Search "community organizing" the Internet or the library to keep learning.

our assumptions for RAP

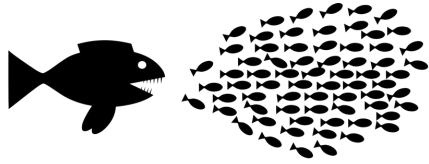
1. We know our world is built on relationships between people, organizations, and institutions.
2. The relationships in our world too often reflect a massive difference in power, where many are oppressed for the benefit of a few.
3. The power differential reflected in these relationships is created and reinforced by laws and policies.
4. Social change aims to disrupt those relationships and change laws for justice.
5. True justice can only be achieved if people who are most directly impacted are “at the table.”

What does this mean?

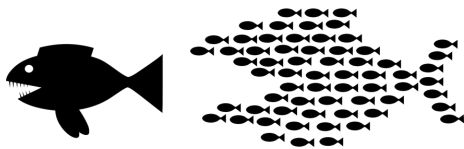
The problems we see in our world did not happen by accident. They stem from systems of oppression that maintain power and privilege for certain groups of people. Those systems of oppression are built into laws and policies by decision-makers who are people with power and privilege. They have had the power to consolidate and maintain their power for decades. Organizing collectively - with a unified, anti-oppressive message - is one tool to achieving justice and fighting for a more equitable world.

elements of organizing

Below are some basic concepts that are fundamental to organizing.



ORGANIZE!



Power: Organizing aims to shift the balance of power or to demand that somebody who has power use their power to make a specific decision or change. **Power is not a value -- it can be used for good or bad.** Organizing also builds power by bringing together many people. Power can be viewed as: organized people, organized money, and organized information.

Goals:

First, what do we want our world to look like, and then what are the specific changes we want to see to realize that vision?

- An example could be: "Our vision is that nobody experiences homelessness in our community."
- One specific change that will be a step in that direction is: "We want to see the state invest in more affordable homes."

Strategy:

- A careful plan or method for working toward your vision, usually over a sustained period of time; the skill of making or carrying out plans by using tactics to achieve a goal.

Tactics:

- Action of a person or organization to promote forward movement in the direction of your goal, resulting in a reaction from your target.
- "If the strategy is the ladder, tactics are the steps on the ladder."

"Wins": There are multiple ways to "win" in organizing. The obvious win is getting your issue resolved. Also, important to your campaign's success, even if your specific policy hasn't been won yet, is that you built your base, built community, or got further than you have before. Be sure to celebrate all of your wins, even in times where you haven't gotten exactly what you wanted.

elements of organizing

Base:

- the group of people and organizations who are deeply committed to your issue, many times directly impacted by your issue or serve people who are.

Allies:

- people and organizations that have similar interests on issues. Many times these are organizations or people whose issues intersect with your issues, such as housing and transportation or health and education.

Decision-Maker:

- The person who can give you what you want. It is especially necessary to know who these folks are when working on a legislative or city campaign.
- Decision-makers are always people or individuals, not groups. For example, a Representative Smith is a decision-maker, not the state legislature.
- Decision-makers are sometimes referred to as **targets**.

Problem:

- Informs about what's wrong (makes a complaint).
- Makes everyone responsible (and no one).
- Hard to know when it's fixed (problem lingers).
- Example: Homelessness

Issue:

- Frames the values at stake, to point to the demand.
- Identifies a target who is responsible for granting or blocking change.
- Know whether you win or lose.
- Example: Housing is a human right. We demand that the Governor invest \$200 million for homes for people experiencing homelessness.

There are problems in our communities. Our organizing challenge is to transform our problems into issues that we can make a plan around and take action on.

organizing for action

Step 1: Analyze

Gather with people to identify the issues that are happening in your community.

- Is the group that you're bringing together representative of the communities that are most impacted?
- Who is not at the table? How can you bring them in?

As a group, identify what you see as a solution to the issues that you've identified.

- Set some short-term and long-term goals.
- For example, a short-term goal could be that you hold a few more smaller community meetings to evaluate the issues in the community. A long-term goal could be to pass a piece of legislation at the state level.

Think about the scope of your goals.

- Do your goals involve a behavior change (ex: landlord complies with code), a legal change (ex: a bill passed), or an institutional change (ex: a bank prohibits redlining)?
- Who are the key players involved in this issue? Who has the power to make the change that you want to see? Who is your target?

Step 2: Planning

Develop a strategy that could help you achieve your goals.

- This could be a plan that: informs the public, identifies your base and allies, encourages people to take action (like boycotting, voting, writing to a lawmaker) that affects your target to make decisions that could help you meet your goal.

Identifying the tactics in the strategy. How are we going to execute our strategy?

- What are the steps involved in meeting your strategy?
- For example, if you want to build your base, you could hold house meetings. If you want to influence a lawmaker, you could do a letter writing campaign. See the list of 198 ways to do nonviolent action in the appendix on page viii to get some ideas!

organizing for action

Identify roles in the strategy.

- Who is going to hit the streets? Who is going to speak at events? Who is going to create the message and the flyers? Who is going to prepare the snacks?
- Roles could include leaders, coordinators, social media experts, logistics planners, or cooks!

Make a plan for safety.

- Are there any safety considerations in the action or campaign that you are planning?
- Who could those safety concerns impact? How can you, as a collective, address those safety concerns?
- Keep this in mind while you are planning your roles!

Step 3: Action/Campaign Delivery

You've got your plan, and now you're ready to jump into action and carry out your strategy!

- Along the way, keep track of your timeline and milestones. You may need to modify your tactics depending on the organizing conditions.

Step 4: Impact/Evaluation

Reflection is important. Take time as a group to talk about your action.

- What did we achieve? Did we build community? Did we "win"? Did we develop an effective strategy? Are we closer to achieving our vision? What did we learn? What was successful, and what can we do better next time?

Celebrate your wins!

- Celebrate the success of your short term goals!
- Celebrate the success of your long term goals!
- Celebrate the fact that you're coming together in community to resist unjust power structures and fight for a more just society!
- Don't limit yourselves to a narrow view of "wins."

Toolkit for Organizing Community Meetings



A community meeting is a small gathering of people discussing issues in their community. You can organize a community meeting to learn collectively, recruit new members, or to ask people to commit to take a specific action. The community setting is an ideal forum to get to know people, share information about an organization and its issue campaigns, listen to what people have to say, and encourage them to be involved.



how to organize a community meeting

1. **Identify the purpose of the meeting.** Recruit new members? Hear about issues in the community? Plan an action.
2. **Set a time, date, and location for the meeting.** Is the location accessible?
3. **Find a few people to help you run the meeting.** Ideally, you want to have a host to manage the logistics and a leader to facilitate.
4. **Invite people to your meeting.** Tip: Make sure you get yeses.
5. **Make an agenda with suggested group agreements.** Make sure your agreements are inclusive.
6. **Make a plan for food**, whether it's snacks or a potluck check on any dietary needs.
7. **Remind** the people you invited at least twice before the meeting.
8. **Hold your community meeting.** Hooray, the day is here!
9. **Follow up with the people who attended.** Thank them for coming and follow up on any commitments that they made.
10. **Evaluate the meeting** with your group or the person who helped you host.

Read further for:

Tips for Facilitation
Agenda and Ground Rules
Planning your Meeting
Accessibility Checklist

Pro-tip: Provide just enough seating. Too many empty seats take up energy in the room!

Toolkit for Organizing • Community Meetings

planning ahead

Decide on roles for the meeting. One person could play the role of a leader, host, and timekeeper, but it's helpful if you have more than one person working on it.

Host: The host is the person who coordinates the logistics of a meeting, including the space, food, time, and location.

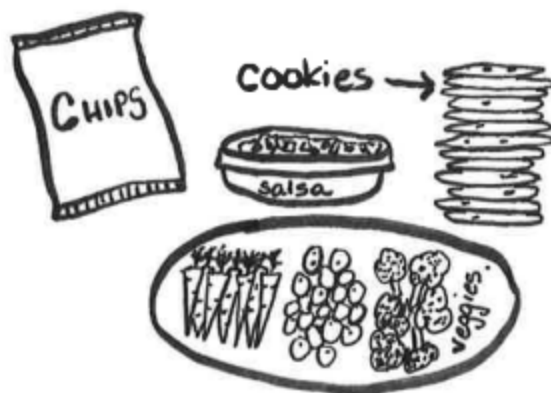
Leader: This person helps to guide the conversation. Some key roles are: listening for themes that are coming up from the group, asking questions to keep the conversation going, asking clarifying questions to see if you're understanding the sense from the group, making sure that everyone gets the opportunity to share their perspective, and keeping the group on track.

Note-Taker: If you have multiple people planning the meeting, ask someone to be a note-taker. You can always ask one of the people attending the meeting if they would be willing to take notes.

Practice your presentation and your story before the meeting.

Make a plan for food! You don't have to provide a whole meal for everyone, but snacks are a must. You can plan to bring a few things yourself, or you can ask a few of the folks coming to the meeting to bring along an item, potluck style. It could even be something simple like juice, cookies, chips, and salsa. **Be sure to take allergies and dietary restrictions into account.**

Find a location that is accessible and safe. Look over the accessibility checklist!



agenda and group agreements

One way to write an agenda is by using the POP model: Purpose, Outcome, and Process. If it's a first-time meeting or a group that doesn't know each other, you can create the agenda in advance. At the beginning of the meeting, state the purpose of the meeting. Share the outcome that you hope to get from the meeting. Lastly, you share your agenda, the process that meets your outcomes.

Basic Agenda

- I. Introductions and check-ins
- II. Group agreements
- III. Purpose and outcomes: what are we here today to do?
- IV. Introduce the Resident Action Project
- V. Community discussion
- VI. Final thoughts and wrap up

Suggested Group Agreements

- **Why am I talking? vs. Why am I not talking? (aka Step Up, Step Back)** If you tend to be a person that talks a lot, be mindful of how much you're contributing to make sure that others have a chance to contribute. If you are a person who generally does not contribute as much during meetings, challenge yourself to contribute a bit more.
- **Don't Yuck my Yum** All ideas are welcome here. Please be respectful of ideas as they come up.
- **Name it.** If something comes up that is problematic, name it, and be open to feedback if someone calls you in about something you said.
- **Expect and accept nonclosure.** These problems are huge. We're working on them, but we're not going to solve them today.
- **What's said here stays. What's learned here leaves.** We want to respect the confidentiality of experiences people share. Please don't share others' personal stories outside of the group unless you ask permission first. Do take the larger concepts and themes of the conversation outside of the room to share with others.
- **Speak from your own experience and listen with humility.** And don't make assumptions about the experiences of others.
- **Use the Parking Lot.** (See notes in *Tips on Facilitation* on page 26 and 27.)
- **Anything else participants in the group would like to add?**

Toolkit for Organizing • Community Meetings

presenter's notes

Introductions and Check-ins (10 mins)

Ask folks to introduce themselves to the group. If folks haven't already signed in on the sign-in sheet, ask them to do so at this point. Be sure to include an ice-breaker or community building exercise. It's important to talk about the issues, and it's also important to make space for people to get to know each other.

Suggested Ice Breaker

- Come up with a list of questions ahead of time. They could be anything from "what's your favorite food?" to "what are some things that are concerning you about the world right now?"
- Split the group in half. Have one half of the group organize into a line, and have the other group stand so the two lines are facing each other and people are paired up.
- Ask the first question, and give folks two minutes to discuss. Then, have one of the lines move to the right (with the person on the end coming around to the other side) and ask the next question. Keep doing this until you get through a few questions. This will give folks a chance to get to know each other better.

Review Group Agreements (10 mins)

It's helpful to write the ground rules up on a big sheet of paper or whiteboard. Ask folks if there are any others that they would like to add.

Ask the group if everyone agrees to the ground rules. (These ground rules can be helpful tools for you as you facilitate the meeting. Getting buy-in from the group helps to hold everyone accountable.)

Purpose and Outcomes (10 mins)

Purpose: We're here today to talk about the Resident Action Project and the issues around affordable housing and homelessness in our community.

Outcomes: Today, we hope to brainstorm a list of issues that we're seeing in our community. We will then take that list to a larger community meeting with other groups of folks who are also meeting to compare notes and come up with next steps for action. Does that sound good?

Toolkit for Organizing • Community Meetings

presenter's notes

Briefly introduce the Resident Action Project. (10 mins)

The Resident Action Project is a growing, statewide network of residents of affordable housing, folks in need of affordable housing, and nonprofit staff who are engaged in the year-round cycle of advocacy to get more affordable homes and to end homelessness. At this point, it would be helpful to pass out any brochures or information sheets that you have about the Resident Action Project.

Community Discussion (35 mins)

Go around the room and ask each person what they think about the first question:

What issues are you seeing in your community?

If people don't want to share yet, they can pass. After each person has shared, open it up for the larger group to discussion. After about 20 minutes, transition the conversation to focus on the question:

What are some potential ideas for action that you'd like to bring to the larger group?

Discuss as a group. We might not make final decisions today, but this meeting is an important step.

Appreciations (5 mins)

Do a final go around and ask folks to say one word about how they're feeling. If you're able to in the space, invite people to stay for some social time afterward.

Final Asks, Updates, and Thank You (10 mins)

Are there any events coming up that folks would like to mention? Opportunities to get involved? Try to get a commitment from attendees at this point. Let people know when you will follow up with them and how. Finally, be sure to thank everyone for coming!

tips for facilitation

Facilitating a community meeting relies on many of the same skills and instincts we use whenever we bring people together – we want to make sure that people have a positive experience! These gatherings aren't just a party though. There are clear goals and reaching them requires a special level of attention and dedication on the part of the facilitator. You have a lot of power as the facilitator, and that calls for some intentional planning to make create an equitable and anti-oppressive space.

DO

- Facilitate the discussion
- Set ground rules
- Create a safe, anti-oppressive space
- Set an example
- Make sure that everyone has the opportunity to contribute
- Keep to the agenda
- Define unfamiliar terms and acronyms
- Practice active listening
- Ask somebody to take notes

DON'T

- Dominate the discussion
- Get into debates
- Shut people down
- Get side-tracked
- Let others dominate the discussion
- Lose track of time
- Use jargon that people might not know



Toolkit for Organizing • Community Meetings

tips for facilitation

Creating an Anti-Oppressive Space

- **Keep the group agreements in a visible place and go over them together at the beginning of the meeting.** Use them to hold the group accountable throughout the meeting.
- **Ask if anybody in the group** has additional group agreements that they would like to add.
- **Create a culture of "naming it" around oppression.** Everyone shows up with different identities, experiences, and backgrounds. Systems of oppression have been normalized in our society, and we need to be intentional about addressing them in our organizing spaces. Inevitably, people will say things that are problematic. Encourage people to name those moments and to be open to feedback if something they say gets "named."
- **Use open-ended questions to address conflict in the group.** Open-ended questions can help check for understanding of another person's experience and to come to a place where people can state what they need and what behaviors they would like to see changed to feel safe.
- **Remind people to speak from their own experience** and not make assumptions about the experiences of others.
- **Use a "Parking Lot."** Issues come up that are important, but off topic. Acknowledge these issue by writing them in a "Parking Lot" on a large piece of paper so that people can follow up on that conversation after the meeting is over.
- **Make sure the space is accessible.** See our accessibility checklist on page 31.
- **Practice due diligence and hold the meeting in a location that is unlikely to be triggering for people.** Depending on who you're meeting with, people might not feel comfortable meeting in certain businesses, public spaces, neighborhoods, etc because of oppression that they could experience in those places.

Community Meeting Tips

- As guests arrive, greet them and introduce them to each other.
- Once everyone has arrived and settled in, review the day's agenda. Do another round of introductions with an icebreaker to get the conversations flowing.
- Emphasize that each member matters.
- Doing this work is often personal. Talk about personal experiences as far as you feel comfortable. Make space for other folks to talk about their experiences.
- Be sure to focus on the organization and not just on the issues. That will help you transition into action.
- Have materials ready at the end for immediate engagement and action.

Toolkit for Organizing • Community Meetings

accessibility checklist

Whether you're planning an event at somebody's home or in a public space, be sure that you take attendee's access needs into account by going through this checklist with your team ahead of time. Not all of these will apply for every meeting depending on who is attending. Just make sure that you check in.

- ☐ Ask all people who RSVP for disabilities and access needs
- ☐ Include accessibility information in emails and invitations
- ☐ Ground level or elevator access
- ☐ Ramps and/or stair railings
- ☐ Wheelchair seating
- ☐ Wide Doors
- ☐ Handicap Parking
- ☐ Materials typed in at least 14 pt font
- ☐ Room for maneuvering all types of physical disability support
(ie. wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, service animals, etc.)
- ☐ Have appropriate support for people who are deaf or blind, such as
TDD/TTY computer or phone
- ☐ Microphones for voice projection
- ☐ Close accessibility from bus stop or parking lot to meeting location
(or separate transportation from bus stop/station to meeting location)
- ☐ Gender-neutral bathrooms
- ☐ Scent-free environment, if needed
- ☐ If pets are around, ask attendees if they have allergies
- ☐ Make sure there is seating for all participants
- ☐ Translation needs

turnout and recruitment

1. Build a turnout list

A turnout list includes all of the people you want to invite to your meeting. Here's an exercise to help you and other meeting planners think about all of the networks that you're connected to. List all of the places that you regularly go, and then list a few people who you might reach out to in each place. Here's an example.

Your Apartment Building		Weekly Volunteer Activity
Neighbor 1		Volunteer 1
Neighbor 2		Volunteer 2
Neighbor 3		Volunteer 3
Exercise Class	You	Friends you brunch with
Person 1		Pal 1
Person 2		Pal 2
Person 3		Pal 3

2. Come up with a recruitment strategy

How are you going to get people to come to your meeting? You could use other tools, like Canvassing on page 41 or Social Media on page 56. Here is a list of strategies in order of effectiveness from low to high:

Flyers ---> Email ---> Text ---> Phone Call ---> In Person

3. Reach out to potential attendees!

Invite twice as many attendees as you would like to attend. When you're ready, get some help making phone calls and talking to folks for turnout. Get a commitment from each person who is invited. "Maybe" almost always means "no." Try to get "yeses!" Here's a sample script:

Hi _____! It's _____ - how are you? Great - Today I'm calling about this organization I'm a part of called the Resident Action Project. We're working on housing and homelessness issues, and it seems like something that you care about a lot. Would you be interested in attending a meeting with me next week to learn more? Great! Here's the info. Do you have any dietary needs or accessibility needs? Okay, thanks! See you then!

4. Follow up, Follow up, Follow up!

Follow up with attendees twice before the meeting: once a week ahead of time and once the day before. This will increase turnout.

Materials and Follow-Ups

Materials

Sign-In Sheet. Make sure that you find out everyone's name and the best way to contact them. Send around a sign-in sheet at the beginning of the meeting.

Agendas. Agendas don't need to be fancy and printed. You can just have it on a large piece of paper or on a computer screen.

Updates. A sheet with upcoming events, advocacy actions, etc.

Information sheets. This could be a one-pager about the Resident Action Project or information about a policy that you're working on.

Following Up

Thank yous. Follow-up with each person who attended your meeting to thank them and get feedback.

Post-meeting to-dos. If you've said that you would do something during the meeting, follow up within the timeframe that you committed to. If it takes longer than expected, let folks know. A big part of organizing is building trust within a group, and follow-through is a great way to do that.

Host and Leader meet to evaluate the meeting. What went well? What can we improve on for next time? Did we meet our goals for the meeting?

Do a write-up or debrief of the meeting the RAP organizer. Send an email or call them.

Toolkit for Organizing • Community Meetings

follow-up form

Please fill out this form and contact Resident Action Project staff to let them know how your community meeting went.

What was the date, time, and location of your community meeting?

How did you do outreach for the meeting?

How many people came to your community meeting?

What were the issues that came up during your community meeting? Where did you feel the most energy?

Overall, what went well?

What would you do differently next time?

How was your experience of the support provided by RAP staff? What did we do well, and where could we improve in the future?

Anything else you would like us to know?

Toolkit for Organizing One-on-Ones



Building meaningful relationships is key to building power for a successful grassroots movement. One-on-one meetings are a great way to build your base, to get commitments from folks, and to strengthen relationships. This is also an opportunity to learn about the person's experiences, networks, and skills to open up a conversation about what role might be the best fit for them in your organization.



preparing for a one-on-one meeting

- 1. Identify people who might be interested in your organization.** Think about your community networks. They could be neighbors, classmates, colleagues, community members, or family members. You can also go to community events to talk about your issue with folks and invite anyone who is interested to have a one-on-one with you.
- 2. Do some preparation.**
 - What do you already know about the person you're meeting with?
 - What questions do you want to ask them?
 - What do you want to share about your experience?
 - What commitment do you want to get, and how do you want to make your ask?
- 3. Set a time and location for the meeting, and be intentional about the setting.**
 - Are you going to be able to talk about some potentially personal things? If so, is the environment suited for that?
 - Is the person going to have to spend money at that location?
 - If there's food involved, check-in with the person to see if they have any dietary restrictions or preferences to keep in mind.
- 4. Follow up with the person** two days ahead of time and the day of the one-on one to confirm that they're planning to meet with you.

Read further for:

Coaching Tips
Follow-up from your one-on-one
Report Back Form

Pro-tip:

Check out the exercise on page 32 to think about who you might want to invite to a one-on-one.

Toolkit for Organizing • One-on-Ones

coaching tips

One of the best ways to identify and develop leaders to be in relationship with is through a one-on-one meeting, a technique developed and refined by organizers over many years. A one-on-one meeting is not just a chance to drink coffee and chit-chat. It is an intentional face-to-face meeting conducted in 3 parts:

1. Break the ice and introduce yourself.

Don't be "coy"; be up front about what your interest and purpose is in the meeting. Let the person know who referred you and why you followed up. Explain what the campaign / organization / team is; this is not a sales pitch, but it is important to provide some context for the other person to understand what you are about and what actions you're taking that will make a change.

2. Explore their values, purpose, and resources.

Most of the one on one is devoted to asking probing questions to learn about the other person. You should let the other person do most of the talking (70/30-rule) but it's not an interview; you have to share enough of your own values, purposes, and resources that it can be a two-way conversation. You want to learn three key things about the person through this exploration: • Who is this person? • What do they want to see changed? • What role can they see themselves playing in making change?

3. Invitation to make a commitment.

A successful one-on-one meeting ends with a commitment, most likely to meet again and to engage in action. By scheduling a specific time for this meeting or action together, you make it a real commitment. The goal of the one-on-one is not about tasks; it's to build commitment to continuing the relationship in service of a shared purpose and desire for change.

Notes on Prep and Debrief

Before a one-on-one, think strategically about location; your goal is to make the person feel comfortable and that might happen best in their home or office, or at a public location – let them choose. After your meeting, take 15 minutes to write up notes or fill out the reporting form at the end of this section. Some people will feel uncomfortable if you take notes during the conversation, so ask permission before you pull out a pen and paper.

Adapted from tools developed by Kolot Chayeinu & Brooklyn Congregations United, affiliates of PICO national network

planning worksheet

As the leader, you want to gain a better understanding of the person you're meeting with and how they could play a leadership role that would increase RAP's capacity and provide personal fulfillment for them. Use this worksheet to jot down some ideas and questions.

1. Introduction and Purpose

How will you introduce yourself? What is most important from your story to share? How will you get the conversation going?

2. Building a Relationship

What do you already know about their story that you want to dig deeper on? What question could you ask that might help them interpret their experiences in a new way?

3. Resources and Skills

What resources, skills, and gifts have you seen them bring to this movement that you can honor? In what ways could they increase their leadership in the movement?

4. Plan and Commit

What do you want to ask them to do? What kind of role do you think might suit them? The next steps you identify at the end of the one-on-one might be different from the ones you imagine at the start.

Toolkit for Organizing • One-on-Ones

more tips

The number one tip that we have for conducting effective one-on-ones is to **PRACTICE**! Holding one-on-one meetings can be a bit nerve-wracking for some people. It gets easier with **practice**. One-on-one meetings are really important for building *your* leadership and for bringing new folks into the work.

Dos

- Schedule 30-45 minutes for the conversation
- Listen 70% and talk 30%
- Focus on exploration and learning
- Share experiences, motivation, and vision
- Be clear about next steps together

Don'ts

- Be vague about the purpose and length of time
- Persuade, make a sales pitch, or interview
- Chit-chat about private interests
- Skip stories to "get to the point"
- End the conversation without a plan

Some final notes....

- Be intentional about the space that you choose to meet with people.
- Ask about the best way to contact folks.
- Ask if there are any access needs that people have to participate in the work.
- Don't be afraid to share about yourself. Sometimes one-on-one meetings are nerve-wracking for people because it's a space where you might feel vulnerable. That's okay - just share what you feel comfortable sharing.
- Talk about things that "mean something" - go deeper than the surface level of conversation!
- Listen with empathy as people talk about their experiences.

follow up and reflection

Following your one-on-one, make a few notes about what happened.

What did you learn about the person you met with?

What next steps did they agree to, and what follow-ups did you commit to?

After the Meeting

- **Contact the person within 24 hours** to thank them for meeting with you and to follow up with any information you said you'd provide.
- **Check-in** before meetings or events they said they would attend.
- **Add this person to your contact list** for the Resident Action Project.
- **Contact Resident Action Project staff** to debrief the meeting.

Toolkit for Organizing • One-on-Ones

follow up form

Fill out this form and follow up with RAP staff about your one-on-one. This will help us to keep track of all of the new members and commitments that people make.

Date: _____

Your Name: _____

Name of Person You're Meeting With: _____

Person's contact information

Email address _____

Phone number _____

Your relationship (how did you meet?): _____

Commitment: _____

Follow up with Resident Action Project staff:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Notes:



Toolkit for Organizing Canvassing



Canvassing is a fundamental organizing tool. It involves knocking on doors in a community. You can canvass to ask people to come to a meeting, to do a community survey of an issue, to ask people to register to vote, and more. It's a great way to meet folks face-to-face where they are and to show that you're invested in hearing what they have to say.



10 steps to organize your canvass

1. **Set a goal for yourself.** Why are you canvassing? What outcomes do you want?
2. **Choose a community that you want to reach.** Is this the building that you live in? Is this your neighborhood? Is this a neighborhood nearby?
3. **Set a date, time, and meeting location for your canvass.** When do you think people will be home so you can have the highest amount of contacts?
4. **Recruit volunteers for your canvass.**
5. **Plan for any extra logistics.** Do you need to get permission to enter a building? How do you want to divide up your "turf?" How will your volunteers get transported from your meeting location to their canvass sites? How will you get all of your materials back at the end of the day?
5. **Write a script.** Be sure that you include a clear ask!
6. **Develop a training** for your volunteers.
7. **Gather all of your materials**, including walk lists, leave-behinds, and tally sheets.
8. **Train your volunteers, and do your canvass!**
9. **Follow up** with volunteers, and do any follow-ups that were needed for the canvass.
10. **Evaluate your results.** Did you meet your goal? What went well, and what didn't? What might you do differently next time?

Read further for:
Canvass Planning Checklist
Writing your Script
and more!

Pro-tip:
Every door is a new
opportunity.

canvass planning checklist

Planning a canvass involves a lot of details. Here's a checklist.

- ☐ Set a goal for your canvass
- ☐ Do the organizer math to estimate how many doors you will need to knock on to meet your goals
- ☐ Research the area that you're canvassing, if needed
- ☐ Get permission to access buildings, if needed
- ☐ Recruit volunteers
- ☐ Set a starting location for the canvass
- ☐ Develop a training for volunteers (see page 49)
- ☐ Follow up with volunteers twice before canvass to confirm that they're coming
- ☐ Develop a script (see page 44-45)
- ☐ Gather snacks
- ☐ Make a list to map out where each person will door knock
- ☐ Set a meeting point
- ☐ Figure out transportation for each group from meeting point to the turf
- ☐ Make a plan to get materials back from volunteers
- ☐ Develop a flyer explaining why you stopped by
- ☐ Print copies of your script, walk list/tally sheet, leave-behinds for volunteers
- ☐ Check the weather and prepare accordingly

canvass planning worksheet

Here are some questions to work through while you're planning your canvass.

What is the goal of your canvass? (inviting people to an event or meeting, recruiting people, doing a survey, voter registration, etc)

What community would you like to focus on during your canvass? Is the community you're trying to reach representative of the larger community impacted by this issue?

What do you know about the people who live in the area that you will be canvassing? Are there any language needs or other access needs that might impact your planning process?

How many doors do you plan to knock on? How many volunteers will you need? (See: Organizer Math on page 48)

How will you recruit volunteers?

Have you planned all of the logistics for your canvass?

How will you follow up with volunteers after the canvass?

writing your script

The script will change depending on what kind of canvass you are doing.

Generally, your script should include:

1. Who you are and where you're from
2. Why you are knocking on somebody's door
3. Your Ask
4. Thank you

Turnout for an Event - Example Script

Hi! My name is _____ and I'm one of your neighbors in [neighborhood].
How are you today?

I'm out here with several other volunteers because we are concerned with the rising homelessness in our neighborhood and in our city.

We're organizing a community meeting with our neighbors to talk about what's going on and what we can do about it.

Ask: Would you be interested in joining us?

[If Yes] Great! I'm glad that you're interested. Here's a flyer with the date, time, location, and my contact information. Can I please have you put your name and some contact information on this sheet so I can follow up with you when the meeting gets closer? Thank you!

[If No] Thanks for your time.

Tips

- Include an FAQ sheet for volunteers if you anticipate questions.
- Keep the script short, but give the volunteers enough information so they can carry on a conversation if the person at the door has more questions.
- Make sure that the ask is clear and that volunteers are prepared with follow-ups.
- Always leave some literature, whether folks answer the door or not!

writing your script

Voter Registration Canvass - Example Script

Hi, how are you today? My name is _____, and I'm a volunteer with the Housing Alliance. I'm stopping by today to ask you if your voter registration is up to date?

[If Yes] That's great - I'm glad to hear it! Do you have any questions or concerns about the upcoming election?

[If No] I have some voter registration forms here. Would you like to fill out your form now? We'll mail it off for you so you can get your ballot in time for the election!

[If Yes]: Great! Don't forget to fill out the entire form. You'll receive a voter's card in the mail in a couple of weeks. Do you have any questions for me about voting?

[If no] Okay. Thanks for your time!

Common Reasons People Say They Don't Want to Vote - Talking Points

All of these politicians are just corrupt.

It's not just politicians that you're voting on – you also get to vote on initiatives/laws.

I don't feel like I know enough to vote.

There are a lot of voting guides that have good information out there and organizations that endorse candidates and ballot measures. Here are some examples...

My vote doesn't count anyway.

There are several recent elections that have been won by just a handful of votes! Just this past November in Seattle, Councilmember Lisa Herbold won by 36 votes, and former Governor Gregoire won by 133 in 2004. When the races get so tight, every vote certainly counts!

I can't vote because I have a felony. Actually, you can! As long as you're no longer under supervision of the Department of Corrections, you can re-register.

other materials

In addition to the script, make sure you provide your volunteers with a walk list and/or tally sheet to keep track of the data they collect. In addition, you always want to have something to leave behind at doors where you don't get an answer.

Walk Lists and Tally Sheets

Send your volunteers out with a walk list of all the addresses or doors that they will knock on. Or, if you are not going to specific addresses, send them out with a tally sheet. These tools will help you and your volunteers keep track of the doors they've knocked on. By recording the results of each knock, you can evaluate your canvass afterward. When you're thanking your volunteers, let them know how many doors your team collectively knocked on and how many conversations you had. You can set the tool up however makes sense to you. See the tally sheet on the next page as an example of something you could put together.

Leave Behinds

Prepare something to leave behind at the doors, whether folks answer or not. This could be a flyer for an event. If you're doing voter registration, this might be an information sheet with directions to register to vote online. If you'd like someone to get in touch with you about a community survey, you could leave an information sheet with a website or other information. Just make sure that whatever you leave behind is straight forward and to the point. Folks will be more likely to read it. **Make sure that you never leave any canvassing material in mailboxes!** It's against the law. You can leave it rolled up in people's doorhandles, under a doormat, or tucked into the door jam.



walk list/tally sheet

[Date] Canvass

NH = Not Home

R=Refused Conversation (Closed Door)

Y = Yes, agreed to your ask

N = No, said no to your ask

Doors Knocked

Address/Door #	Results	Notes

setting healthy expectations for turnout

If you've ever knocked on doors before, you know that you have far fewer conversations with folks than the number of doors you knock on. This sheet is meant to help you think about how many doors you need to knock on to reach a certain number of people.

"Canvassing Cold" vs. "Canvassing Warm"

The responses that you get at the doors will vary depending on whether or not you've been in the area before. In general, about 50% of people do not answer their doors. "Canvassing Cold" is when you knock on doors in a community where you have not already built relationships. "Canvassing Warm" is when you have developed relationships in a community or knocked on doors there before. The response to your canvass may get warmer as you keep canvassing in a community.

Organizer Math

For every ten doors you knock on, you will likely have about half of those folks answer their doors. Of those folks, you might have about half of them say yes to whatever it is you're asking them to do. Another half of those folks might actually follow through if you're asking them to vote, come to a community meeting, etc.

Here's an example of how you use organizer math. If you're trying to turn out 15-20 people to a community meeting in a place where you don't already have relationships, you can plan for:

- 200 door knocks
- 80-100 contacts
- 60-80 conversations
- 30-40 yeses to attend community meeting
- 15-20 people turn out to your meeting

training for volunteers

Things to Include

- **Why they're here today.** Be sure to let folks know why they're there. If you're doing voter registration in low-income buildings, for example, you could let folks know that the people they're talking to have been systemically left out of the democratic process. To fight for a stronger democracy, we're going to be intentional about inviting these folks in. If you're recruiting for an event, you could let folks know that this is contributing to our base-building goals, and thus our growing power.
- **Tips at the doors.** See sidebar.
- **Practice Practice Practice.** You can model a few different kinds of door knocking conversations, and then have folks practice a couple of times in pairs. As they practice with the script, let them know that they should adapt it so it feels comfortable to them.
- Be sure to let folks know how you want them to **record information** on their tally sheets.
- Ahead of time, brainstorm all of the **potential questions** that could come up at the doors, or questions that volunteers might have about your canvass. Go over a list of Frequently Asked Questions or talking points during the training so volunteers don't have to call you often when they're out in the field.
- **Information about how to contact** you if they're out in the field and have a question.

Tips at the Doors

- Knock loudly, but in a friendly way.
- Wait thirty seconds to a minute before moving on after you knock.
- Leave literature rolled up in handle. **Never leave it in a mailbox.**
- Do not approach a door if you feel uncomfortable.
- Watch for no soliciting signs. People might be upset if you knock on their door.
- If you're entering a yard with a gate, shake it a bit to see if a dog comes up. If a dog comes, you don't have to go up to the door.
- Don't take it personally if people shut the door on you. It happens, and there are also people that are really friendly!
- If you are doing political work, make sure that you're talking to the voter on your list. If you're doing a survey or inviting people to meetings, don't worry about that.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Go over the script. Change it so it fits for you. Let people know that you're a volunteer -- that helps!
- Give a clear ask. Let folks know who you are and why you're there before you make your ask.
- Remember, every door is a new opportunity!

the day of the canvass

Today's the day! You've got your volunteers, and you're ready to train them. You've cut your turf and figured out where you want to canvass. Here are some final considerations.

- Be sure to send your volunteers a note beforehand to let them know to wear comfortable shoes and to dress for the weather.
- Prepare clipboards with walk lists/tally sheets, scripts, leave behinds, and any other materials that you're sending with folks. If it's rainy outside, find some plastic bags to place over the clipboards. Ziplock bags or sheet protectors also work!
- Give your volunteers a few snacks for the canvass. A typical canvass will last two to three hours. Granola bars are a canvassing favorite.
- Be sure to give volunteers your phone number so they can get in touch with you in case they run into trouble.
- Send people out in pairs. People can either knock on doors together, or they can split up the list. Always good to give folks the option.

Follow-Ups and Debriefs

Coordinate a way to get information and materials back from volunteers. Do a quick debrief with them before you thank them and send them on their way. What kinds of things seemed to resonate with folks at the doors? How was their experience? You might want them to volunteer with you again, so you want to make sure that you get their feedback and maintain that relationship!

follow up form

Please fill out this form and contact staff from the Resident Action Project to set up a debrief meeting about your canvass.

What was the date, time, and location of your canvass?

How many doors did you and your volunteers knock on?

How many contacts did you get?

How many commitments or yeses did you get?

What went well about your canvass?

What was challenging about your canvass?

How do you feel about the support provided from RAP staff? What did we do well, and where could we improve?

Anything else you'd like to talk about?

Toolkit for Organizing Tabling



Tabling is an organizing tool that lets you meet people where they're at. Whether you're tabling at a community event, on a street corner, in the lobby of your building, or in another public space in your community, you have the opportunity to have conversations with folks about the work that you're doing to see if they're interested in getting involved. It's also a great way to build leadership.



preparing to table

Tabling is the outreach method that takes the least amount of work to organize. It gives you the opportunity have several short conversations about your issue with folks who are in places that could indicate that they would be a good fit for the Resident Action Project.

1. **Pick a strategic location to table.** Is there an event happening where the people you are trying to reach will be? Is there a certain day of the week where folks come to the front desk to pay rent in your building? Try to pick a time, location, and event that will give you lots of opportunities to talk with folks.
2. **Gather materials that you'd like to use.** This could include sign-up sheets, brochures, information sheets, treats, etc.
3. **Write up a few talking points.** Generally, folks stopping by a table respond to a short snapshot of what your organization does. A few folks might want to stay and have longer conversations. Write down a few talking points ahead of time, and include info about events, upcoming actions, signing up for the mailing list, etc.
4. **Follow up with staff** from the Resident Action Project after the event to pass along the information from the sign up sheets and to debrief your tabling experience.

leadership and planning

Tabling is a great way to build leadership in volunteers who are interested in helping with outreach.

Setting a Strategic Goal

There are many reasons that you might end up tabling. It could be a one-off for an event that you were invited to. It could also be a strategic part of your organization. For example, if you're trying to educate people about your group, you might ask if you can set up a table at a volunteer fair in a community that you are trying to reach. You could also ask to set up a table near the front desk of a building when people are coming by on the first of the month to pay their rent. In any case, here are some things to consider:

1. What are you hoping to get out of this tabling? (Building leadership; building our list; recruiting people for an event; building a relationship with an organization that is hosting the event we are tabling at)
2. Who are you reaching by tabling?
3. To most effectively get what you want out of tabling, how should you best use the few minutes that we get to talk with people, and which materials are most important?
4. How will you follow up with people after tabling?

Sample Script

For most people, you won't have the opportunity to talk for more than a minute or two. Try to write a script that is short and to the point, but also include some talking points for people who are seeking more information.

Example Script for Tabling in a Building:

"Hi! Thanks for stopping by our table! We are the Resident Action Project, and we are working on housing and homelessness issues. We're holding an event in a couple of weeks nearby, and we'd love for you to join us. Do you think you can make it? Great! Please sign up on this list, and here's a flyer for the event! Feel free to invite anyone else who may be interested."

sign-up sheet

Sign up to learn more about the Resident Action Project!

Name

Email

Phone Number

City

○

○

○

○

○

○

○

○

○

○

follow-up form

Please fill out this form and contact Resident Action Project staff to set up a short debrief conversation.

What was the date and location of your tabling session? Was it associated with an event?

How did it go? What went well, and what was challenging?

How many people did you talk to? How did you feel the conversations went?

Are there any follow-ups that you need support with? For example, did anyone ask for some more information or for a one-on-one meeting?

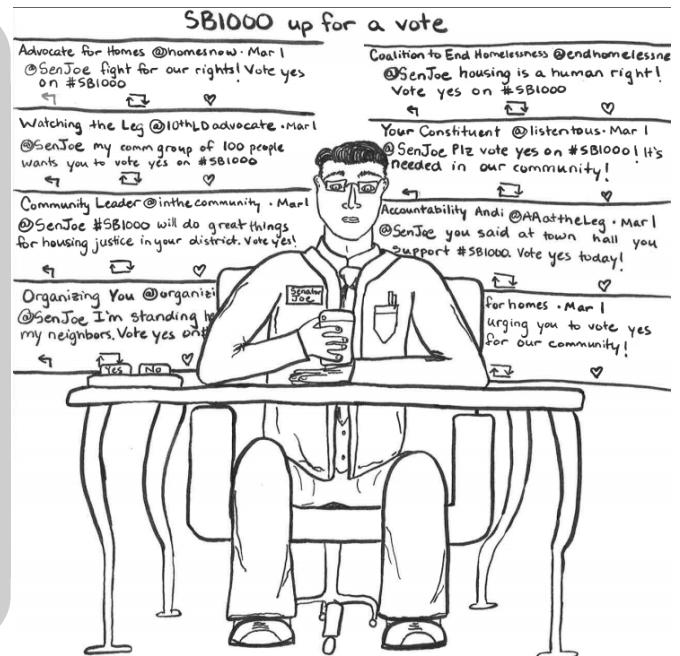
How did you feel about the support that you got from RAP staff? What did we do well, and where can we improve?

Please pass along the sign up sheet information to RAP staff to put into the database.

Toolkit for Organizing Social Media



Many people are connected to social media, and it's proven to be an effective organizing tool in the past decade. You can do outreach, organize events, contribute to an ongoing conversation, and take action online, like participating in a Twitterstorm. This section provides a few tips and suggestions for how to use Facebook and Twitter to organize.



using social media for RAP

There are many opportunities to use social media in organizing. Many contemporary movements find strength in Twitter and Facebook. Twitter is a great way to get the word out about your issue or organization to people who aren't already involved. People on Twitter can contribute to an ongoing conversation through hashtags -- for example: #BlackLivesMatter #NoDAPL #WAHomes, etc. You can also do actions like a Twitterstorm where many people tweet together at a strategic time to get a hashtag to trend or to call the attention of a particular lawmaker.

Facebook is a good way to get the word out about your organization, as well as organize internally with networks that you are already a part of.

Here are some ways to get involved with RAP online:

- ☐ Join our closed Facebook group, and invite others to join as well
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/residentactionproject/>
- ☐ Sign up for our Newsletter
<https://residentactionproject.org/signup/>

Toolkit for Organizing • Social Media

facebook

Facebook is a great way to communicate within organizing circles and bring new people into your community.

Groups

You can create a Facebook Group for members of your organization to join and connect with each other. There is a statewide Resident Action Project Group already, but there might come a time where you want a local group as well. We recommend that you create a **closed** group (where new members must be added by current members) to maintain privacy, which is important in case people share their personal experiences, policy strategy, etc. It can be a great way for people to talk with each other, build relationships, and build community. You can also ask folks to invite their friends or other folks to the group.

Events

Facebook is a great way to organize and promote your events, especially if you already have a lot of folks organized in a Facebook group. Ask the folks in your group to invite others to your events and repost events on their own pages.

Posts

To keep conversation flowing in the group, post articles and/or questions for people to engage with. When folks take action in some way, even if it's small, tag them in a post to recognize their efforts. You can contribute to a culture of appreciation and support through your posts and tags.

In addition to posting in a group, don't forget that you can post things to your own page. You can post events, articles, news, and updates. Keep contributing to the ongoing conversations about your issues.

Facebook Live

If you're holding an event or an action, you can live stream for people who are participating remotely to see. Be mindful of people's privacy when you're choosing which events to live stream.

Toolkit for Organizing • Social Media

twitter

Twitter is a great way to participate in existing conversations and to directly and publicly communicate with lawmakers and other organizers. Twitter is a great place to build a narrative and take action.

#Hashtags

A hashtag is a word or phrase with a pound "#" symbol in front of it that serves as a way for people to contribute to an ongoing dialogue about a topic. For example, somebody might post: "Housing is a human right! Vote yes on #HB1000. #waleg." This contributes to two larger conversations: one about a particular bill that's moving and one about the Washington State Legislature. You can contribute to existing conversations, or create your own with a hashtag. Remember, each post can only have more than 140 characters! You can also post links to articles, pictures, or videos.

Tweeting @ and Tagging

As you use hashtags, you can also tweet at people or tag people in your posts. This can be particularly strategic depending on what kind of campaign you are doing. If you tweet at somebody, it is like directly messaging them in a public way. You might do this with a lawmaker, for example: "@SenJoe, homelessness is a crisis in our community. Will you vote yes on #HB1000?" By putting "@SenJoe," which is the name of the account that you're tweeting at, at the front of the post, you are tweeting at them. You can also tag people: "Today @SenJoe voted no on #HB1000 despite the fact that he said he would support it at our town hall. Let's hold him accountable." The account will still see that it's tagged, but it will show up in your general feed rather than showing up directly on their page. If you want to tag an account and you want that to be the first thing in your tweet, make sure that you include a period before it: ".@SenJoe voted no on #HB1000 today despite the fact that he said he would support it at our town hall. Let's hold him accountable!"

considerations for social media

1. Social media can be an effective organizing tool because it's already integrated into so many people's lives. If you can become a part of the social media stream, you can keep people engaged in the work on an ongoing basis.
2. Though many people have access to social media, there are many who don't. In particular, some people who are low-income who cannot afford to pay for WiFi, a computer, or a data plan for their phone. If you are going to use social media in your organizing, make sure you offer other ways for folks to get involved, and be up front with them about the way that you are planning to communicate with them.
3. Social media can be a great way for folks to engage who are not able to attend meetings that are far away. There are many roles that one can play in organizing, and there is certainly a role for folks who need to participate remotely.
4. Some folks who do have access to social media might not use it because they don't know how. If someone expresses an interest and is open to starting an account, it can be helpful to sit down with them for a half an hour and walk them through the basics of how to use it.
5. Privacy. People may or may not want to have a public role in organizing. Be sure that you're being mindful of privacy and safety for folks as you're organizing online.

Toolkit for Organizing Self-Care and Group-Care



Organizing is incredibly important work. It can be exhilarating as well as exhausting. Most of the people in the Resident Action Project have personal experience with housing instability and/or homelessness, which can make it challenging to talk about these issues constantly. Putting ourselves on the front lines for justice requires us to promote both self-care and group-care.

Self-care is anything that meets the needs of a person in order to be physically and mentally healthy to keep organizing. Self-care is exactly what it says... self-care. You need to listen to yourself and do what replenishes you. Self-care looks different for every person, and it is important that the group respect whatever self-care practices people need to do without judgment.

Self-care could include any number of things, but here are a few examples: taking some time alone during long meetings, drinking enough water, being able to doodle or do something with their hands during a meeting, eating certain kinds of foods, etc. One easy way that you can promote self-care within a group is to talk about it. At the beginning of meetings, you can have a group agreement that is simply "take care of yourself," and let folks know what you mean by that.

Similar to self-care, group-care can look many different ways. Group-care can be an intentional group space for people to care for one another through sharing and listening. Group-care can also be built into our leadership model to promote a healthy and sustainable group culture. Each meeting can start with a "check-in" for example where people can share briefly what's going on in their lives.

Investing in self-care and group-care will make your organizing more sustainable in the future. It will help to prevent burnout, spread out the workload, and build strong connections between the people who are organizing together, which is critical as we know that none of the solutions are going to happen quickly.

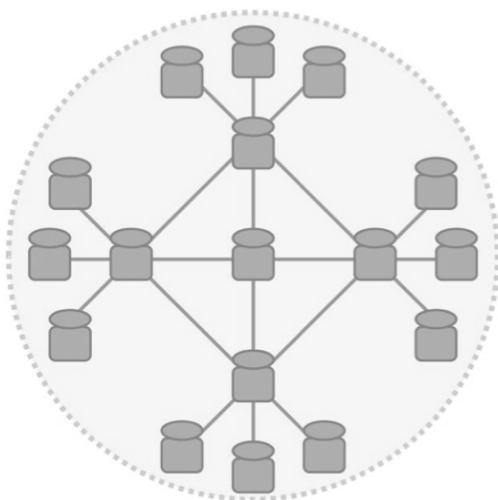
self-care worksheet

This is a tool you can fill out to remind yourself of what you can do to take care of yourself.

1. Name one thing you can do to take care of yourself every day:
 - a. **Physically**: what can I do to care for my body?
 - b. **Mentally**: what can I do to care for my mind?
 - c. **Emotionally**: what can I do to care for my feelings?
 - d. **Personally**: what can I do to care for myself as a person? (What do you enjoy doing? How do you enjoy spending your time? How can you care for yourself in those ways?)
 - e. **Spiritually**: how can I take care of my spiritual needs?
2. Who is somebody that you can call to talk through a problem?
3. What is one thing that you love about yourself?

group-care

Group-care is way of being intentional about the culture in a group of people to make sure that everybody has the opportunity to care for themselves and one another.



A leadership team is a network. Everybody is connected to each other through relationships.

Three key elements of a leadership team are relationships, accountability, and commitment. These elements are the glue that holds the leadership team together. Read more about them on the next page.



group-care

Relationships: members are cared for

Caring for each other matters, and caring is a leadership practice. This requires that we act in ways that show care. That means that you pay attention to people. Be genuine and curious. Listen, and see the whole person. Motivate your peers, and pay attention to what they need. Ask your self how you can respond to what they need and act in ways that help. Give people feedback on the things that they're working on. Caring begets caring.

What is one concrete way that you can care for your peers in organizing spaces?

Commitment: shared learning and fulfillment

We must be committed not only to the organization, but each other. Take people as they are, but don't leave them there. Help people see and build on their own strengths. Support and nurture leadership and growth in one another.

How do you show your commitment to others, and how do you want them to show their commitment to you?

Accountability: team is well coordinated

On a leadership team, everybody is connected by relationships and commitment to our mutual goals and learning. But what makes the structure work in a coordinated way is mutual accountability. Mutual accountability involves assigning roles, respecting boundaries, and following our values.

What does accountability look like for you on your team?

Toolkit for Organizing • Self Care and Group Care

group-care

Here's a list of some ideas for how you can do group care.

- Check in with people regularly. How are they doing?
- Go to events together
- Share food with one another
- Send encouraging texts when you know somebody is about to go to a meeting or take action
- Do restorative activities together
- Learn more about your co-organizers. Can you carpool or help each other with childcare?
- Learn what skills and talents people have in the group, and see if they are willing to share. Is someone a yoga instructor? Does someone know how to make art?
- Have an appreciation circle
- Listen to each others stories
- Support people when they say no to taking on another commitment
- Learn about anti-oppression, identities, privileges, and oppressions
- Spend time with people outside of organizing spaces
- Do theater exercises together
- Do icebreakers enthusiastically
- Brainstorm ways that you'd like to care for yourselves and each other as a group!

Toolkit for Organizing Appreciation



"Thank you for Being."

Hill Cummings, Resident Action Project
leader

We appreciate everyone who has been involved with the Resident Action Project.

We appreciate all of the leaders of the movements that intersect with our work, of which there are many.

We appreciate everyone who wakes up every day with a commitment to justice.

One of the leaders in the Resident Action Project, Hill Cummings, often tells his peers "Thank you for Being." We frequently appreciate the work that each of us is *doing*. Hill asserts that it is also important to appreciate each other for simply Being. We are all showing up to this work with different ways of Being. We are doing justice to ourselves and others by recognizing that.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this toolkit, and to everyone who picks it up to look through it.

Onward, to action!

glossary for social justice

Ableism: A system of oppression that includes discrimination and social prejudice against people with intellectual, emotional, and physical disabilities, their exclusion, and the valuing of people and groups that do not have disabilities.

Accessible:** A term that describes a space that makes necessary accommodations for people with disabilities, people with mental health issues, and people with other health issues to allow them to participate fully.

Ageism: A system of oppression that works against the young and the old and values individuals in their 30s to 50s.

Ally: A person who is a member of an advantaged social group who takes a stand against oppression, works to eliminate oppressive attitudes and beliefs in themselves and their communities, and works to interrogate and understand their privilege.

Anti-Semitism: The systematic discrimination against and oppression of Jews, Judaism, and Jewish culture and traditions.

Asexual: An identity term for a people who either do not feel sexual attraction or do not feel desire for a sexual partner or partners. Some asexual individuals may still have romantic attractions.

Bisexual: An identity term for people who are attracted to people of two genders, usually to both men and women. Bi* is used as an inclusive abbreviation for the bi, pan, and fluid community.

Cisgender: Individuals whose gender identity and expression align with their birth-assigned sex.

Cissexism: The system of oppression that values cisgender people, upholds the gender binary, and marginalizes, oppresses, and makes invisible the lives and experiences of transgender people.

Classism: The institutional, cultural, societal, and individual beliefs and practices that assign value to people based in their socio-economic class. Here, members of more privileged socio-economic classes are seen as having a greater value.

Collusion: Thinking and acting in ways that support dominant systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Both privileged and oppressed groups can collude with oppression.

Toolkit for Organizing • Appendix

Cultural Appropriation:** When a person takes something from another culture and commodifies it, performs it, and calls it their own.

Discrimination*: When members of a more powerful group behave unjustly or cruelly to members of a less powerful group

Equality:** The idea that everybody should receive the same service, treatment, or amount of something

Equity:** Instead of giving everybody the same service, treatment, or amount of something, equity takes into consideration that specific needs of individuals and adjusts to make sure that everyone has access to what they need to be successful.

Gay: An identity term for a male-identified person who is attracted to other male-identified people.

Gender: Socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society deems masculine or feminine. This social construct is often linked to and confused with the biological construct of sex.

Gender Identity: A person's innate sense of their own gender: being a man, a woman, a girl, a boy, in between, or outside of the gender binary.

Gender Neutral:** Not adhering to normative expectations in the gender binary. For example, gender neutral bathrooms can be used by people with any gender identity.

Genderqueer: A person who's gender identity and/or gender expression does not conform to the gender they were assigned at birth. People who identify as genderqueer may not identify within either male/man or female/woman binaries. They also may or may not identify as transgender.

Heterosexual: An identity term for a female-identified person who is attracted to male-identified people or a male-identified person who is attracted to female-identified people.

Homophobia: The fear, hatred, and intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as LGBTQ+.

Intersectionality: A feminist sociological model and/or lens for critical analysis that focuses on the intersections of multiple, mutually-reinforcing systems of oppression, power, and privilege. Intersectional theorists look at how the individual experience is impacted by multiple axes of oppression and privilege. Variables include, but are not limited to: race, gender, ethnicity, religion, ability, education, sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, gender expression, class, first language, citizenship, and age. (J. Beal 2011)

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Intersex: A person whose genitals, secondary sex characteristics, chromosomes, and/or hormone levels do not fit into the medical/societal definition of male or female.

Islamophobia: The irrational fear or hatred of Islam, Muslims, Islamic traditions and practices, and, more broadly, those who appear to be Muslim.

Lesbian: An identity term for a female-identified person who is attracted to other female-identified people.

LGBTQ+: An acronym that is inclusive of all identities in the queer community - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and other identities such as genderqueer, asexual, intersex.

Oppression: The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society. Oppression denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life chances and sense of possibility. Oppression also signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privilege groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.

Oppression resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche as well. Eradicating oppression ultimately requires struggle against all its forms, and that building coalitions among diverse people offers the most promising strategies for challenging oppression systematically. (Adams, Bell, and Griffin, editors. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*. New York: Routledge.)

Pansexual: An identity term for a person who is attracted to people of all genders: cisgender men, cisgender women, transgender individuals, and people who identify as genderqueer.

Power: The ability to get what you want (The GLSEN Jumpstart Guide: *Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression*).

Prejudice: A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics. (Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*. Claremont, CA: Claremont Graduate University.)

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Privilege: A group of unearned cultural, legal, social, and institutional rights extended to a group based on their social group membership. Individuals with privilege are considered to be the normative group, leaving those without access to this privilege invisible, unnatural, deviant, or just plain wrong. Most of the time, these privileges are automatic and most individuals in the privileged group are unaware of them. Some people who can “pass” as members of the privileged group might have access to some levels of privilege (J. Beal 2009).

Queer: A term for individuals whose gender identity/expression and/or sexual orientation does not conform to societal norms. This reclaimed term is increasingly being used as an inclusive umbrella term for the LGBTQ+ community.

Pronouns: A word that substitutes for a noun. Most people have pronouns that they expect others to use for them. Most cisgender individuals use pronouns that line up with their birth-assigned sex. Many genderqueer and Transgender folks have selected pronouns that best suit who they are and sometimes generate new terms.

Racism: Oppression against individuals or groups based on their actual or perceived racial identity.

Religious Oppression: Oppression against individuals or groups based on their religious beliefs and practices.

Sexism: A system of oppression that privileges men, subordinates women, and devalues practices associated with women.

Sexual Orientation: A person’s sexual and emotional attractions, not necessarily dependent on behavior. Terms associated with sexual orientation include: gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, heterosexual, and more!

Social Justice: A process and a goal. A commitment to a socially just world and the committed actions to make that world a reality. Or, “The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure... Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others, their society, and the broader world in which we live.” (Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice)

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Transgender: An umbrella term for people who do not identify with their birth-assigned sex and/or whose gender expression does not conform to the societal expectations. Trans* is used as an inclusive abbreviation.

Structural Oppression:** The combination of ways that history, ideology, and policy decisions have come together to contribute to a system to oppress people solely based on their identities

Transphobia: The fear and hatred of transgender people.

White Privilege: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to share the norms and values of society that white people receive, tacitly or explicitly, by virtue of their position in a racist society. (Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Second Edition, Routledge, 2007)

Xenophobia: The fear and hatred of that which is perceived to be foreign or strange.

Please note that many of these definitions have been influenced by multiple sources. Some terms have specific roots in communities of color, the LGBTQ communities, and other marginalized groups. We thank everyone out there who does social justice work and has contributed to our understanding of the above terms.

This glossary is borrowed and adapted from Suffolk University's social justice terminology list at: <http://www.suffolk.edu/campuslife/27883.php>

* indicates that we have updated the definition from this list

** denotes terms that have been added to this list

glossary for housing

See the National Low Income Housing Coalition's Advocates Guide on page vii for a more complete glossary of terms around housing policy.

Affordable: Defined by the federal and state standard rental cost is 30% of gross income of a household, including the cost of utilities. True affordability depends on income level -- people at the lowest incomes still can't afford to pay 30% and still be able to afford food and other basic necessities.

Affordable Housing: Housing that does not require the tenant to pay more than 30% of their income in rent and utilities.

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Gentrification: When cost of living rises in a neighborhood and demographics change following redevelopment.

Housing Trust Fund: Housing Trust Funds are district funds established by city, county, or state governments that receive ongoing dedicated sources of public funding to support the preservation and production of affordable housing and increase opportunities for families and individuals to access decent affordable homes. Housing Trust Funds systemically shift affordable housing funding from annual budget allocations to the commitments of dedicated public revenue.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD): HUD is an organization of the federal government that oversees many federal housing programs.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit: A federal program that is meant to fund the construction and preservation of low-income housing. It does this by forming partnerships with for-profit entities and giving them tax breaks when they pay into the program.

Permanent Supportive Housing: Permanent supportive housing is housing for people who have the highest barriers to being successful in private market housing. This includes folks who have been homeless for long periods of time, people living with mental illnesses, or people who live with certain kinds of disabilities. Permanent supportive housing provides services on site to help people to be successful in their housing.

Public Housing Authority: Public Housing Authorities are charged with providing housing for people who are low-income, families, people who are disabled, or seniors. Housing Authorities are overseen and funded through HUD through the Federal Government.

Section 8 Voucher (Housing Choice Voucher): This is a voucher that comes from a program through HUD that is administered through local public housing authorities that provides rental assistance for people with low-incomes.

Zoning: Zoning determines when and how you are able to develop land in a city. Each city and county has different zoning requirements, and this impacts how neighborhoods can be developed.

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resources for continued learning

There are many more resources out there! Feel free to send us resources that you've found helpful to add to this list.

In Defense of Housing by David Madden and Peter Marcuse, 2016. Book.
This book has a sharp analysis of power and how the current housing crisis was created.

National Low Income Housing Coalition's Advocates Guide

This guide explains federal housing policy.

http://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/2017_Advocates-Guide.pdf

Race: The Power of Illusion, 2003. TV Series.

This PBS series explores issues of race and racism in the United States. The whole series is worthwhile, and *Episode 3: The House We Live In* specifically focuses on housing.

The Big Short, 2015. Movie.

This movie explains the conditions that led to the housing bubble bursting and the Great Recession that began in 2008.

Western Regional Advocacy Project's Without Housing Report, 2010

This report goes through a readable, but detailed history of the current crisis around homelessness.

[http://wraphome.org/wp-](http://wraphome.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/09/2010%20Update%20Without%20Housing.pdf)

[content/uploads/2008/09/2010%20Update%20Without%20Housing.pdf](http://wraphome.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/09/2010%20Update%20Without%20Housing.pdf)

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198 methods of nonviolent protest and persuasion

by Gene Sharp from *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*

FORMAL STATEMENTS

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public declarations
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

COMMUNICATIONS WITH A WIDER AUDIENCE

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

GROUP REPRESENTATIONS

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

SYMBOLIC PUBLIC ACTS

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

PRESSURES ON INDIVIDUALS

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternization
34. Vigils

DRAMA AND MUSIC

35. Humorous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
37. Singing

PROCESSIONS

38. Marches
39. Parades
40. Religious processions
41. Pilgrimages
42. Motorcades

HONORING THE DEAD

43. Political mourning
44. Mock funerals
45. Demonstrative funerals
46. Homage at burial places

PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES

47. Assemblies of protest or support
48. Protest meetings
49. Camouflaged meetings of protest
50. Teach-ins

WITHDRAWAL AND RENUNCIATION

51. Walk-outs
52. Silence
53. Renouncing honours
54. Turning one's back

THE METHODS OF SOCIAL NONCOOPERATION

OSTRACISM OF PERSONS

55. Social boycott
56. Selective social boycott
57. Lysistratic nonaction
58. Excommunication
59. Interdict

NONCOOPERATION WITH SOCIAL EVENTS, CUSTOMS, AND INSTITUTIONS

60. Suspension of social and sports activities
61. Boycott of social affairs
62. Student strike
63. Social disobedience
64. Withdrawal from social institutions

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

65. Stay-at-home
66. Total personal noncooperation
67. "Flight" of workers
68. Sanctuary
69. Collective disappearance
70. Protest emigration

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THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC

NONCOOPERATION ACTION BY CONSUMERS

- 71. Consumers' boycott
- 72. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
- 73. Policy of austerity
- 74. Rent withholding
- 75. Refusal to rent
- 76. National consumers' boycott
- 77. International consumers' boycott

ACTION BY WORKERS AND PRODUCERS

- 78. Workers' boycott
- 79. Producers' boycott

ACTION BY MIDDLE-PEOPLE

- 80. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

ACTION BY OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT

- 81. Traders' boycott
- 82. Refusal to let or sell property
- 83. Lockout
- 84. Refusal of industrial assistance
- 85. Merchants' "general strike"

ACTION BY HOLDERS OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- 86. Withdrawal of bank deposits
- 87. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
- 88. Refusal to pay debts or interest
- 89. Severance of funds and credit
- 90. Revenue refusal
- 91. Refusal of a government's money

ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS

- 92. Domestic embargo
- 93. Blacklisting of traders
- 94. International sellers' embargo
- 95. International buyers' embargo
- 96. International trade embargo

THE METHODS OF ECONOMIC

NONCOOPERATION SYMBOLIC STRIKES

- 97. Protest strike
- 98. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

AGRICULTURAL STRIKES

- 99. Peasant strike
- 100. Farm workers' strike

STRIKES BY SPECIAL GROUPS

- 101. Refusal of impressed labor
- 102. Prisoners' strike
- 103. Craft strike
- 104. Professional strike

ORDINARY INDUSTRIAL STRIKES

- 105. Establishment strike
- 106. Industry strike
- 107. Sympathy strike

RESTRICTED STRIKES

- 108. Detailed strike
- 109. Bumper strike
- 110. Slowdown strike
- 111. Working-to-rule strike
- 112. Reporting "sick." (sick-in)
- 113. Strike by resignation
- 114. Limited strike
- 115. Selective strike

MULTI-INDUSTRY STRIKES

- 116. Generalised strike
- 117. General strike

COMBINATION OF STRIKES AND ECONOMIC CLOSURES

- 118. Hartal
- 119. Economic shutdown

THE METHODS OF POLITICAL

NONCOOPERATION REJECTION OF AUTHORITY

- 120. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

CITIZENS' NONCOOPERATION WITH GOVERNMENT

- 123. Boycott of legislative bodies
- 124. Boycott of elections
- 125. Boycott of government employment and positions
- 126. Boycott of government departments, agencies, and other bodies
- 127. Withdrawal from governmental educational institutions
- 128. Boycott of government-supported institutions

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129. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents

130. Removal of own signs and placemarks

131. Refusal to accept appointed officials

132. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

CITIZENS' ALTERNATIVES TO OBEDIENCE

133. Reluctant and slow compliance

134. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision

135. Popular nonobedience

136. Disguised disobedience

137. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse

138. Sitdown

139. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation

140. Hiding, escape, and false identities

141. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

ACTION BY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL

142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides

143. Blocking of lines of command and information

144. Stalling and obstruction

145. General administrative noncooperation

146. Judicial noncooperation

147. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents

148. Mutiny

DOMESTIC GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

149. Quasi-legal evasions and delays

150. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

151. Changes in diplomatic and other representation

152. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events

153. Withholding of diplomatic recognition

154. Severance of diplomatic relations

155. Withdrawal from international organizations

156. Refusal of membership in international bodies

157. Expulsion from international organisations

THE METHODS OF NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

158. Self-exposure to the elements

159. The fast (fast of moral pressure, hunger strike, satyagrahic fast)

160. Reverse trial

161. Nonviolent harassment

PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

162. Sit-in

163. Stand-in

164. Ride-in

165. Wade-in

166. Mill-in

167. Pray-in

168. Nonviolent raids

169. Nonviolent air raids

170. Nonviolent invasion

171. Nonviolent interjection

172. Nonviolent obstruction

173. Nonviolent occupation

SOCIAL INTERVENTION

174. Establishing new social patterns

175. Overloading of facilities

176. Stall-in

177. Speak-in

178. Guerrilla theatre

179. Alternative social institutions

180. Alternative communication system

ECONOMIC INTERVENTION

181. Reverse strike

182. Stay-in strike

183. Nonviolent land seizure

184. Defiance of blockades

185. Politically motivated counterfeiting

186. Preclusive purchasing

187. Seizure of assets

188. Dumping

189. Selective patronage

190. Alternative markets

191. Alternative transportation systems

192. Alternative economic institutions

POLITICAL INTERVENTION

193. Overloading of administrative systems

194. Disclosing identities of secret agents

195. Seeking imprisonment

196. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws

197. Work-on without collaboration

198. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

After choosing your issue, fill in this chart as a guide to developing strategy. Be specific. List all the possibilities.

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies, and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign. 2. State the intermediate goals for this issue campaign. What constitutes victory? <p><i>How will the campaign</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win concrete improvement in people's lives? • Give people a sense of their own power? • Alter the relations of power? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, canvass, etc. <p>What is the budget, including in-kind contributions, for this campaign?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign. Fill in numbers for each: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand leadership group • Increase experience of existing leadership • Build membership base • Expand into new constituencies • Raise more money 3. List internal problems that have to be considered if the campaign is to succeed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who cares about this issue enough to join in or help the organization? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose problem is it? • What do they gain if they win? • What risks are they taking? • What power do they have over the target? • Into what groups are they organized? 2. Who are your opponents? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will your victory cost them? • What will they do/spend to oppose you? • How strong are they? • How are they organized? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Primary Targets <p>A target is always a person. It is never an institution or elected body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 2. Secondary Targets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has power over the people with the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 	<p>For each target, list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to make its power felt.</p> <p>Tactics must be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In context. • Flexible and creative. • Directed at a specific target. • Make sense to the membership. • Be backed up by a specific form of power. <p>Tactics include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media events • Actions for information and demands • Public hearings • Strikes • Voter registration and voter education • Lawsuits • Accountability sessions • Elections • Negotiations

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