

Frequently Asked Questions on Current Protests and Racial Justice



Disability is a natural part of the human condition, just like a person's race, and exists in every community. A person may experience injustice because of their race, or because of their disability, or both.

We can work to fight injustice, through learning more about each other's differences and practicing tolerance. Learn more through these frequently asked questions (FAQs):

What does race mean?

Race is a type of diversity, just like disability is a type of diversity. It is diversity based on perceived differences in physical appearance. Racial diversity makes our communities and country strong.

Just like inequality and injustice hurts people with disabilities, inequality and injustice hurts people based on their racial identity / identities. Injustice especially hurts Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

I'm seeing protests and rallies in my neighborhood or on TV and social media. What is happening?

Millions of people across the country have taken to the streets with sadness, frustration, and anger over the recent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Tony McDade, Malik Williams, and many



other Black Americans. People are protesting the loss of Black lives, police violence, and institutionalized racism. People are demanding justice.

Participating in protests or rallies like these is an expression of our freedom of speech. The freedom of speech is our 1st Amendment right and core to our American values. Other ways people express their freedom of speech to fight injustice include letter-writing, speaking to elected officials, or joining coalitions and committees.

What is institutionalized racism?

Racism is when someone is treated unfairly because of their race. Racism can be part of the way people feel, think, make decisions and/or treat other people. Institutionalized racism means that racism and racial bias have become a part of systems, laws, and practices, and hurt the quality and safety of people's lives. Institutionalized racism can be found in education, housing, employment, health care, and public safety.

On TV and social media, I'm seeing that fires have been set and some people are looting or damaging property in some places. What is happening?

These are examples of civil unrest. This may include violent demonstrations, riots, and strikes. It can sometimes involve breaking laws or damaging property. These are usually not the same people who are peacefully protesting or participating in marches and rallies.

Also, a few people are looting. Looting can be breaking into buildings and taking things. People who are looting or damaging property may have other reasons for their behavior and may be taking advantage of the confusion to act in ways that may be illegal.

Many cities and counties have set temporary curfews, telling people that they should not be outdoors during certain times when civil unrest most often occurs.



How can I stay safe during protests or civil unrest?

Keep calm, stay aware of your surroundings and who is nearby, and stay safe. If there is a curfew in your city, follow that curfew. A curfew tells you when you must stay home. If you need to run essential errands like grocery shopping, do so before curfew begins.

If you participate in a protest or rally, use a buddy system, be prepared, and have a backup plan for getting to safety if the scene becomes unsafe. If it becomes unsafe, leave the area as quickly as possible and get to safety. If you are unable to leave the area, seek shelter in a large public building and ask for help.

What if I want to be involved?

There are many ways to be involved. Many are educating themselves about the issues. Some are joining the protests and marches, if they are able. Some are posting to social media. Some with extra dollars are donating to charity. Some are having difficult conversations with friends and family.

There are many ways you can advocate. You can advocate through protests, marches, education, and inclusion. Depending on your ability and interest, some ways to be involved include:

- march and protest
- join advocacy efforts with others and supporting people who experience discrimination and injustice;
- teach others about racism and other forms of discrimination and injustice;
- form relationships with community leaders of other groups
- report incidents of discrimination and injustice;
- talk to community leaders and elected officials and share your concerns about discrimination and injustice.



Also, you may be an ally. An ally is an advocate who speaks or acts on behalf of others who experience discrimination and injustice, even if that discrimination looks different for them than it does for you.

Take Care of Yourself Too

This is a difficult and stressful time for many. You may feel upset or confused at what is happening in our community. Reach out to trusted friends and family members for emotional support. Talk about your feelings and about what you see. To manage stress, you may want to limit the amount of news you read and watch. Find ways to help and to advocate for yourself and others.

Resources and Ways to Learn More

- [Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Response Guide, from Southern Poverty Law Center](#)
- [What Racism Looks Like, from the University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham RACE Committee](#)
- [Talking Race with Young Children, National Public Radio Life Kit Podcast](#)
- [A list of Anti-Racism Resources, posted on the Good Good Good Media website, Adapted from Anti-Racism Resources List compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker and Alyssa Klein](#)
- [Talking About Race, from the National Museum of African American History and Culture](#)
- [NAACP Issues and Fact Sheets](#)