

Peacekeeping
From the Death Penalty Action Team
“Guide to Peacekeeping at San Quentin Events”
(distributed by BPF Prison Project)

The goal of peacekeeping is to facilitate a peaceful, orderly assembly that makes a space for all those who are opposed to the death penalty to express their opposition in a constructive fashion. Peacekeepers assist anti-death penalty people at the vigil and provide the following assistance:

1. Directions to and from the vigil assembly area.
2. Communications between various areas of the vigil and the stage.
3. Stage control. One team is responsible for keeping the stage and access to the stage clear for the MCs and the speakers.
4. Perimeter control. Two teams are responsible for staying at the rear edge of the crowd, facing away from the stage.
5. Information support. One team is responsible for supporting the main table.
6. Bubble Team. One team forms the “bubble” team to stay with pro-death penalty supporters who insist on being near the stage to ensure they do not block or disrupt the free speech rights of the vast majority of people who are peacefully gathered at the event.

Guidelines for peacekeepers

1. Be aware of your environment
How far is your team from the crowd?
How far is your team from the stage?
Do you know where the main table is?
Look at the other peacekeeper teams. Do they look OK?
How does the stage look?
2. Talk with other peacekeepers.
Talk with people in your team. Discuss the environment.
Discuss anything that looks like it might be a problem.
Say hello to anyone wearing a peacekeeper vest or who is a designated peacekeeper.
3. Control confrontations.
De-escalate individual confrontations by engaging anti-death penalty people in a discussion about stopping the death penalty.
Dissuade individuals from arguing with pro-death penalty supporters. (Suggest that they would probably be more successful with workmates, their own family members, friends, etc.)
Find a way for confronters to back down.
Notify the main table.
4. Organize vigil participants when necessary. Our most important strength is our overwhelming majority at the vigil. If a situation appears to be getting bigger than the team can handle, immediately have part of the team start to organize the nearby protesters to maintain a stable environment. Peacekeeper teams are NOT expected or advised to handle very confrontational situations on their own. Organized

assistance from other vigil participants should be the first step a team takes if they are unable to disengage confrontations.

5. Act as a group. The team leader must lead the team in times of action. Plan on who will be the designated runner to the main table. Designate at least two people to organize other vigil participants. Designate two cool-headed people to face away from the stage at all times to manage any action with the team leader.

6. On-the-spot recruiting. If a person in the crowd seems like they would be a good person to join the peacekeeper team (cool head, clear thinker, rapport with others) and a team needs more people, then ask the person if they'd like to wear a green vest and be a peacekeeper. **BE SURE TO REVIEW THIS SHEET WITH YOUR NEW RECRUIT!**

Do not leave your team before advising the team leader.

Going home. The end of the vigil is a time for increased caution. People are tired. The walk back to the cars is long and dark. Some people may feel somewhat "down" or very introspective at the end of the vigil. **HOWEVER**, it is the responsibility of peacekeepers to remind people of several simple things they can do to make the ending of the night safe.

1. Advise people to walk in groups.
2. Make sure each group has a flashlight.
3. Walk at a safe distance from the road.
4. Advise people to leave with their heads up, alert and aware of their surroundings.

Incident Record

Time: _____

People present: _____

Situation: _____
