



## What is a Legal Observer?

---

### What is a Legal Observer?

**Legal observers are trained volunteers who support the legal rights of activists. They provide basic legal guidance and are independent witnesses of police behaviour at protests.**

Legal observers are independent from the protest and do not participate as activists. They support protestors by:

- Distributing bust cards and briefing activists about their rights.
- Keeping notes about the actions of the police on protests, which may be later used to challenge the police on their behaviour.
- Monitoring arrests, including collecting witnesses and helping to connect the arrestee with support in the police station.

Legal observers can be identified on actions by their orange hi-viz vests that say “Legal Observer”.

Legal observers have no official legal status or privilege, but the police are often aware of the role, and legal observers may act as a deterrent to police wrongdoing.

Legal observers are not:

- Lawyers
- Medics
- Media spokespeople
- Stewards or police liaison: legal observers may occasionally speak to the police to find out information, but will **not** pass messages between police and activists.

[Contact the Independent Legal Observer Network](#) if your group is planning an action that may need legal observers – please try to give as much notice as possible, preferably at least two weeks.

If you are interested in being trained as a legal observer, you can see future training dates and sign up [here](#).