

Taking Action





WIDE AWAKE GUIDE

No sleep for ICE.



Find this guide at smvmt.org/WideAwakeGuide

Introduction

Purpose

Why target hotels?

Working people have the power to shut down business as usual until local businesses stop cooperating with ICE. Everything in our society depends on our participation (or not), and if we band together to take action, we can topple key pillars of ICE's illegal occupation.

Hotels are a pillar that we can topple. We won't rest until ICE has nowhere to lay their heads — we will literally run them out of our communities by forcing businesses to stop complying.

Why wide awakes?

This winter, Sunrise Twin Cities has been holding wide awakes at hotels that house ICE. These noise disturbance actions have been successful for several reasons, including:

- They wake up ICE. Enough said.
- They put pressure on the hotel. It's very difficult for a hotel to operate when its guests can't sleep.
- They are an accessible form of nonviolent protest that carries relatively low risks and only requires a small group to be successful.

Our movement thrives off experimentation, diverse tactics, and — when a tactic is working — strategic discipline. Wide awakes are working. Now **we need our entire movement on board**, moving forward together with the full weight of our power.

Why Hilton?

A Hilton hotel conceded to our demands and stopped housing ICE, and were promptly dropped as a franchise by Hilton corporate. We won't stand for this. Hilton is not just collaborating with fascists — they're punishing franchise hotels that choose not to. We're focusing on this target to make an example of them and send a message to other hotel companies: if you choose ICE, we're coming for your bottom line.

Taking action

Ground rules

- We are non-violent - this helps us welcome the most people to plan these actions.
- No property damage.
- No harassing staff or people staying at the hotel - the staff are fellow workers and are NOT to blame. Be polite and respectful, and ask to speak with a supervisor or manager if they are unable to help.

If you haven't taken action before (and even if you have), start by reviewing the **Sunrise Action Guide**. This guide has information on Sunrise's orientation to non-violent direct action, how to decide when and how to take action, as well as resources that will help you plan and hold powerful non-violent direct actions.

Join the signal chat to chat with other folks taking action - smvmt.org/wideawakechat

Step 1: Find your target

No matter where you live, there is a good wide awake target near you. Here are some options to help you get started:

- **Hilton hotels that house ICE:** We recommend this option, although it does take some scouting ahead of time to make sure ICE is staying at the hotel. You can stake out the hotel to look for ICE officers entering and leaving, and we've also had success asking (confidentially and on the sly) hotel staff.
- **Hilton owners/office headquarters:** We need to make it clear that there's a reason why Hilton is collaborating with fascism: a few people at the top of the company are making money. Find out where they live and wake them up.
- **Bought-out politicians:** You can also make demands of your local politicians (e.g. revoke liquor licenses of all hotels that house ICE).

How to ID Where ICE is Staying:

- Reach out to your local ICE Response Network or immigration justice organization
- Search on your local social media where ICE is responding and present. DM who is posting that info for leads

Step 2: Recruit

- Create a graphic for your event
- Send texts and emails to friends and neighbors

- Post on Signal & Whatsapp groups.

Step 3: Make art

- Check out our guides on how to make action art that looks powerful and disciplined [here](#).
 - We recommend making stenciled signs! They're cheap, easy, and look great. Guide is [here](#).
 - Go to the '[Action art](#), Photo, video and social media' tab to learn more

Step 4: Make a Plan

- Pick a meeting time and location a few blocks away from the hotel, and communicate it to people
- Bring art!
- Make sure there is one person in charge of talking to the police (a 'police liaison'). These actions are not meant to be arrestable, and we plan to leave when asked. A police liaison helps us do that safely.
- Tap 1-2 people to be in charge of recording and taking photos.
- Decide if you're going to have any speeches. If so, recruit people to speak.
- Depending on size of your event, you may need the following additional roles - see role appendix for more details
 - Press Lead
 - Marshals
 - Art Marshals
- **Get ways to make noise** - including some extra pots and pans if needed.
 - We highly recommend bringing a megaphone to communicate!
 - Drumsets and instruments are fun ways to keep the vibe going.

Step 5: Day of action

- Remind everyone who is coming of the plan (including dressing warm and bringing noise!)
- Welcome everyone at your pre-action location. Go over the plan, make sure everyone knows to be non-violent and that this isn't arrestable. If it's a large group, decide on a quiet signal
- Head over to the hotel together
- De-escalate any conflict using these [de-escalation skills](#)
- Take pictures and videos! (And after the action, [upload them to the Digital Assets Library](#))
- Leave either when police come, or after around an hour (whichever happens first).
- If it makes sense, debrief
- Make sure everyone gets home safe!

Tone

Fierce, relentless, militant optimism, righteous anger, powerful

We want to make our leaders afraid of our movement's power, and be forced to pick a side. We have righteous anger towards our target and deep love for our community. We must maintain a cathartically emotional, militant optimist tone, deeply grounded in MLK's [Principles of Non-Violence](#).

Risk

We need to prepare for this new terrain. While Sunrise does not endorse or support any illegal activities, some risks are out of our hands with the police, ICE, bystanders, or outsiders escalating the action. There is a level of risk inherent in any action we take, and each of us experience that risk in different ways. **Participating in an action may be a much higher sacrifice for some of us, because of our race, class, gender identity, our ability, our immigration status or other factors.** When we take action together, we need to take into account

how different members of our group will experience interactions with the public, politicians, press and police. Check out this [Know Your Rights Guide](#) from the ACLU to make sure you are prepared. Consult the [Taking Action Guide](#) for more information about risk, and contact your local National Lawyers Guild chapter for guidance and support.

Making noise in public is protected free speech. You should research if your locality has a noise ordinance and what time it is active for to schedule your action. Sunrise Movement does not condone any illegal activity.

Staying safe while taking action

Always have a wide-awake buddy that you are accountable for! We advise against taking these actions alone. We are stronger in community.

Digital Security

- Turn off biometric phone unlocks
- Keep sensitive information close to the chest
- Anticipate service disruptions or dead batteries
- Plan for the action via Signal

Plan for Cold Weather

Because Wide Awake Actions often go into the night, we suggest dressing warmly.

- Layer up
- Cover your face for added warmth and if you wish to protect your identity
- Wear waterproof footwear
- Bring mittens and gloves

General Safety Tips

- Have a buddy!
- Leave when asked by the police

Do Not:

- Go inside the hotel
- Destroy property
- Argue with the police



Messaging



Messaging

Our Story

This isn't just a protest. **It's a haunting.**

We are living inside the dreams of a few greedy billionaires. **They dream of obscene profit while millions of us lie awake**, losing sleep over ICE raids, climate collapse, and the brutal question of how to make ends meet under the worst income inequality in our nation's history. Their dreams are our nightmares.

For our whole lives, we've watched our government pour unimaginable wealth into instruments of death—into weapons shipped across oceans to kill families, only for those weapons to come back home to our own neighborhoods in the hands of ICE. We've watched Big Oil CEOs bankroll fascists and buy out politicians in exchange for the government subsidies that allow them to burn our futures and poison our homes.

Then they look us in the eye and tell us there's no money left.

No money to stop the climate crisis.
No money for good, green jobs.
No money for healthcare, education, childcare, retirement, or even food for the hungry.

They want us to believe that the reason there's not enough is each other.

They blame immigrants so that we don't blame billionaires, but we call B.S. We know exactly who's to blame: the sick, greedy few who hoard the wealth that we work long hours to create.

We are here to defend each other. Across race, gender, and immigration status, we recognize that the pathway to a more prosperous future is solidarity.

Wherever ICE goes, we will be there. When they come to kidnap our neighbors, we will be there. **When they lay their heads down on their pillows at night, they will hear us**—whistles in the dark, pots and pans ringing out, night after night—until they understand what it feels like to live without peace.

Fuck ICE. Abolish billionaires.

We are wide awake.

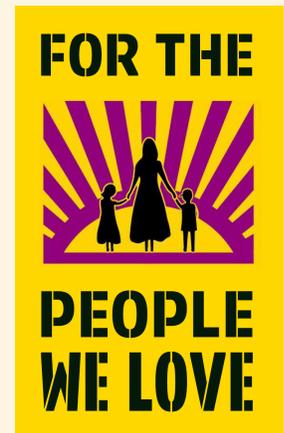


Our Demands

Symbolic demands:

- **Abolish ICE**
- **Abolish billionaires/fund workers**
- [when appropriate] **Green New Deal**

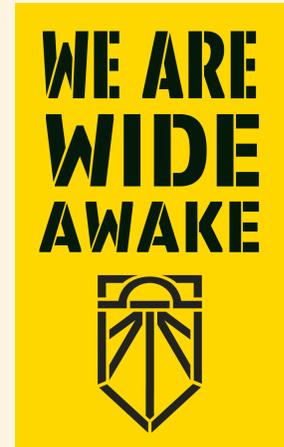
Symbolic demands provide a North Star for our organizing. They are goals that meet the crisis we face at the scale that it demands, and they communicate our vision of a better future.



Instrumental demands:

- **Hilton: Stop housing ICE**
- *You may also choose a different instrumental demand that fits your local context and campaign.*

Instrumental demands communicate an urgent win that can be achieved *right now*. Unlike symbolic demands, which should be unified across our entire movement, instrumental demands should be made to fit each of our local organizing contexts. They provide organizers with achievable goals that structure our activities and build toward our larger symbolic demands.



Slogans

These slogans are suggestions. It may make sense to modify them for your local context:

- No sleep for ICE**
- Hilton: Stop housing ICE**
- We are wide awake**
- No justice, no sleep**
- Abolish ICE | Abolish billionaires**
- Fuera ICE**
- For the people we love**
- For the places we call home**
- Fund workers, not ICE**

Template designs can be found [here](#).

Messaging Dos

- ★ Explain the strategic logic -- we're here to get hotels to stop housing ICE
- ★ Blame billionaires + Trump's administration
- ★ Talk about how people are on our side (including the public and hotel guests)
- ★ Claim victory - we're already seeing some wins.

Messaging Don'ts

- ★ Blame workers or staff at hotels - many of them are scared and immigrants themselves.
- ★ Say the goal is to "make people mad"

Action art, photo, video, and social media



Action art, photo, video, and social media

Visual strategy

Visual Strategy is everything communicated through the visuals of your action. This includes your action art (banners, signs), your staging (the way people stand and hold their signs), and lots of details like people's body language. The more thoughtful and aligned with your overall strategy your visuals are, the more powerful your action will be. This [Action Art Guide](#) is the product of many, many creative organizers' hard work over the years, and it's a great resource.

Action art

Once you've decided on your slogans you need to choose what art you're making for your action. Check out our [Banner Guide](#) and [Stencil Guide](#) for everything you need to know about how to make powerful, disciplined action art.

Usually people hold an [art build](#) to make the art for an action. It's a great time to get to know each other, welcome new people, and spend some valuable time making objects with our hands. If possible, plan ahead to order supplies online that aren't available locally. Learn more about supplies in our [Supply List](#).

Template designs can be found [here](#).

Staging, photo, and video

We pay attention to staging, photo, and video because our goal isn't to just hold one action — it's to inspire others to do the same. To get content that looks good on social media, recruit for these roles:

- *Essential* - video lead. No experience is required! This [Action Photo/Video Guide](#) has everything you need to know.
- *Optional* - photographer. Movement photographers make our organizing look powerful. Become one yourself with our [Action Photo/Video Guide](#) and [this in-depth action photography guide](#).
- *Optional* - Art Marshall. Staging is making a plan for how your participants and action art will be positioned during your action to be as powerful as possible and to be able to capture photos and video that tell a clear story of the action. Check out this [staging & photography slideshow](#) to learn more about all of the details of powerful staging and day-of roles

Upload photos and videos to the Digital Assets Library!!

Be sure to get consent before taking and uploading photos—learn more [here](#).

Social media

When the action is done, be sure to post a wrap-up video (or carousel with photos) and tag @sunrisemvmt so that National's social team knows to uplift it!

- If you're new to video editing, [this is a great intro to CapCut](#). (If you want access to our CapCut pro, email allyson@sunrisemovement.org)

Appendix: Action roles



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Role	Role description
MC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role: This person will be in charge of introducing speakers and leading chants/songs ● Tasks to complete: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a run-of-show for the day of your action that everyone on your team has access to ○ Put together a list of chants/songs to do
Marshals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role: Keep people safe from cars, right wing agitators, etc. These are the people often in yellow vests. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Most Wide Awakes won't need a marshal for under 20 people. If it's 20-50, having 3-5 marshals could be helpful. If more than 50, especially if you're marching on a road, we recommend finding marshals.</i>
Art Lead / Art Marshals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role: This person gets supplies for art and brings people together to make art. At the protest, they make sure the art is held in a way that's clear for photos and videos. ● Tasks to complete: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Buy or find posters/cardboard & markers for people to make signs ○ Find a location & time for everyone to get together before the walkout and make signs together ○ Bring art to protest ○ Keep an eye on photos and if art is legible.
Socials/video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role: This person will make sure video and photo content is captured and posted
Press	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role: Recruit press to event, and talk to them while they're there. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Put together a list of local press contacts to reach out to (if the planning team and safety lead feel comfortable with this) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Edit template media advisory and send to local press contacts ■ Contact the press for interviews and send them your photos/videos ○ Prep for any interviews ○ Tell people to direct interviews to you.

Appendix: Historical Context



Who were the Wide Awakes?

The Wide Awakes were a mass youth movement for the abolition of slavery in the 1860s. In the years leading up to the Civil War, they turned politicians who supported slavery into waking nightmares, serving as escorts and protection for the often maligned and even attacked abolitionist politicians of the newly forming abolitionist political party.

“Eighty of them, looking statuesque in flared dark capes, dark greatcoats, dark trousers, and dark boots. Many held torches on long wooden staffs. Their young faces were framed by black soldiers’ caps, tucked low against the rain. Some held banners with their stark symbol: an open, unblinking eye”

They grew up in a world blind to its failings, unwilling to change. Slavery had trudged along for nearly a century after the Revolutionary War, and while many of America’s founders had admitted to its evil, they had not mustered the political courage to abolish it.

These young people, on the other hand, were wide awake to both the moral failings of slavery and the urgency of acting immediately to free millions of enslaved people.

Over the next 5 years, the two-party system of their day broke apart with the election of Abraham Lincoln, slavery was abolished, and Reconstruction in the South offered a pathway to remedying the generational wrongs that Black Americans had experienced.

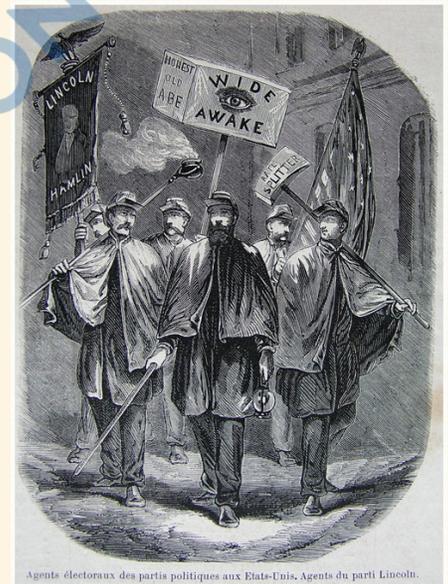
Unfortunately, we know that reactionary forces succeeded in crushing the promise of Reconstruction. Jim Crow was born, and it would be another 100 years until Black Americans won legal access to the equality that the 14th Amendment was supposed to have granted.

Now, **our generation is looking at the unresolved crises from our nation’s past and the rising crises we face every day.** We’re watching our government fail to act on gun violence in our streets and our schools, a climate crisis burning down our futures, gestapo ICE agents terrorizing our neighborhoods, and a political system that has been fully captured by billionaires.

We’ve seen how bought-out politicians behave. **Just like the Do Nothing Whigs before them, the Do Nothing, corporate wing of the Democratic Party** expects us to be happy with the fact that they’re NOT the most extreme far right. They benefit from billionaire-bought government too.

We deserve a government that fights for our future, that fights for what’s right, and we will win it.

We continue the fight of the Wide Awakes, of the frustrated young people from every generation who have served as the moral compass of our society.



Agents electoraux des partis politiques aux Etats-Unis. Agents du parti Lincoln.