



COMMUNICATION WITH THE POLICE



As we are undertaking actions of civil disobedience, we often come into contact with the police. There is contact with police officers before, during and after an action. This document will give you some tips & ideas on how you can communicate with representatives of the police and keep the open XR-Spirit, without endangering you or your fellow rebels. This document is the result of a cooperation between Regenerative Culture Berlin and the Legal Team Berlin. If you have questions or comments contact the Legal Team on Mattermost or by e-mail.

The cops you run into, are people. That means they are like us, human beings with feelings, needs and life stories. Like all other living beings, they are also affected by the crisis to which we want to draw attention. Even if it may sometimes appear that they are our "opponents", they are part of the life we are committed to.

At the same time, they are there in a role. This role can mean that they cannot or are not allowed to open up to us, that they may also be exposed to strong pressure or that they may feel torn between their job as a police officer and possible sympathy for our cause as a human being. Be aware of the differences between these two layers in your communication.

Polite and respectful communication, as we do with all people around us, is important and always advisable. At the

same time, it is part of the role of the police to get information from you, that may be used against you and other rebels. To make sure that you don't share any information that may have negative effects for you or your environment, **we advise you not to talk about the following points with the police:**

- **Personal details.** These include, for example, how long you have been with XR and who you're traveling with. We don't recommend talking about your jobs because fines may be based on your salary. The same applies to personal details from other rebels.
- **Action planning.** It is better not to talk about who planned what or who took on an organising or coordinating role.
- **Action.** For example, don't talk about what you want to do next or what else is planned - and don't state the names of other persons.
- **Structures, working methods and internal Meeting** of Extinction Rebellion

You could talk about this:

The fact that you can't talk with cops about everything doesn't mean you shouldn't talk to them at all. In case you feel that you are able to get in touch politely and respectfully, you can:

- talk about the weather, the climate & the climate crisis. Speak about the IPCC reports, the consequences of the climate crisis, the Urgency, etc.
- express your feelings regarding the climate crisis.
- talk about the responsibility of all citizens* incl. police officers as well. Ask them, for example, whether they are also afraid for the future.
- ask questions that might make the police officers able to think about their behaviour.
- ask questions to ease the situation. For example, ask whether the police officer is happy to be on such a beautiful, extraordinary operation.
- ask if police officers want to have something to eat or drink in case nearby food is distributed to rebels.
- invite police officers to join the workshops, sing-along, etc. or generally participate in the rebellion. Even though it is unlikely that something like this would be accepted.

You shouldn't touch cops. Also make sure that you don't call them by their first name, which can be taken as an insult. Besides, it's always important to check whether you and the situation are

sufficiently relaxed to communicate well with the police. If you think that you are tensed or charged and maybe not able to control what you do or say next, don't talk to police officers - also if you're not sure whether a particular piece of information can be shared. You always have the option to end the conversation politely.

In most of the action sights, there is also an XR team, which is explicitly there to be in contact with the police. This team is prepared and trained for this situation.

After actions, it can happen that you are requested to testify. There are different circumstances, for which you will find detailed information in the law booklet. And please also get in touch with the Legal Team in this situation.

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