

LAST CHANCE FOR ANIMALS

Direct Action Training Manual



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Introduction to Last Chance for Animals

Last Chance for Animals (LCA) is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to eliminating animal exploitation through education, investigations, legislation, and media attention. The organization believes that animals are highly sentient creatures who exist for their own reasons independent of their service to humans; they should thus not be made to suffer for the latter. LCA therefore opposes the use of animals in food and clothing production, scientific experimentation, and entertainment. Instead, it promotes a cruelty-free lifestyle and the ascription of rights to non-human beings.

LCA was founded by Chris DeRose in 1984 and has its roots in the anti-vivisection movement. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., DeRose has fought all battles non-violently and has spent time in jail for his peaceful actions. One tactic that rocked the foundation of animal experimentation was a daring daytime break-in with LCA at the UCLA's Brain Research Institute, documented by a film crew to show the shocking truth of animal "research." This live-action footage clearly demonstrated that animal rights activists do not fabricate laboratory horrors as they had been accused of for years.

Through the Special Investigations Unit (SIU), LCA works in the trenches to obtain revealing video and photographic documentation of abuse against animals. In 2006, the HBO America Undercover documentary "Dealing Dogs" profiled LCA's investigation into America's largest and most notorious animal dealer, C.C. Baird. This was the largest multi-agency investigation (federal, state and local) on any animal issue in U.S. history. This groundbreaking documentary introduced people into the world of animal dealers, stolen pets, animal flea markets and medical research. LCA believes that the media, and most specifically television, represents the best tool for educating people about the issues that affect animals.

Some of LCA's current campaigns include educating the public on the plight of elephants in captivity (FightingBack4Elephants.com), fighting to end Puppy Mills (BanPuppyMills.com) and raising awareness for the nearly 2 million companion animals that are stolen each year, many ending up in research facilities (StolenPets.com). LCA is also battling in Washington D.C. to pass the Pet Safety and Protection Act (PSPA). When passed, the PSPA will keep companion animals safe from ending up in research facilities.

For more information please visit www.LCAAnimal.org.

Direct Action Q & A

Q. How will I know what to do?

A. You should appoint a captain that will lead the protest. The captain will coordinate, thoroughly plan, and train others in their roles in the direct action. At the training session and at the site, all instructions should come from the direct action captain. Anyone attempting to interfere or alter the plans at any time is to be ignored, unless the captain tells otherwise.

Q. Do arrests always take place?

A. No. The objective is to have the demands met, not to be arrested. You should, however, be prepared for that possibility by having a photo ID with you, such as a drivers license.

Q. Why wouldn't we be arrested if we're involved in direct action?

A. First, if the demands are met, we will cooperate with the police, avoiding arrests. Secondly, the decision to make arrests is at the discretion of the police and based on several factors, including the size of the direct action team. Large numbers of people participating in direct action sometimes discourages arrest.

Q. Can I bring others to the direct action?

A. Yes, if they have gone through the direct action training session immediately prior to the direct action. If not, they are welcome to join the support team.

Q. What will happen to me legally?

A. There are several possible scenarios;

1) If you are arrested, you may simply be released with a warning not to return to the site. You would not go to trial, and nothing would go on your record.

2) If you are arrested and have no warrants (for unpaid parking tickets, for example) and the police choose to charge you, you will likely be issued a citation which indicates your court appearance – generally everyone arrested at the site would be given the same

court date. In this case, bail may or may not be required. You would then be released.

3) If you are arrested and have warrants, your process is much more complicated. You may be separated from the rest of the arrested direct action team. You will have to arrange for cash payment of the warrant fine. You may be held much longer and will not be released at the same time as the rest of the direct action team. In this case, the proceedings are *your* responsibility. This is why you may not participate in direct action if you have warrants.

4) If you are arrested and have prior arrests, it is difficult to say how things will proceed. In this case, we consult with our attorneys before putting an individual in this situation.

In any of the above 4 cases, the district attorney's office may choose to pursue the matter, or drop the charges at any time.

Q. Will this be on my record?

A. Not if charges are dropped, or if after a trial you are found not guilty. If after a trial you are found guilty, it will go on your record as having been found guilty to a misdemeanor.

Q. Do I need to wear special clothing or bring special supplies or provisions?

A. Unless the team has special clothing selected, i.e. group T-shirts, just wear clean, comfortable non-leather clothing and shoes. You may be exposed to heat, cold, wind or rain so try to anticipate and dress accordingly, bringing a jacket, hat, umbrella etc. when necessary. Remember, your appearance reflects directly on the cause, so refrain from wearing inappropriate clothing.

If your captain puts you in charge of a specific item such as keys, locks, signs, bullhorn or water, then *you* are responsible for seeing that the item(s) are ready for use and in good repair with new batteries, fresh signs, enough film, etc.

Q. How long do we stay in place at a direct action site?

A. You stay in place until the demands are met, until your direct action captain informs you of a change, or until you are removed by the police. This means you must make business, family, animal, social and

transportation arrangements in advance, so nothing will distract you from our goal.

Q. What if I just can't stay for the entire direct action?

A. Generally, it is important to participate in direct action only if you can stay for the entire duration. The anticipated length of the direct action will have been discussed beforehand, so you'll have an idea of time commitment.

Remember, it took 99 people four days of occupation at the National Institutes of Health to force the Secretary of Health and Human Services to view videotape of the University of Pennsylvania Head Trauma Laboratory. But the demand was met, funds for the "research" discontinued, and the laboratory was shut down.

Direct Action Code of Behavior

These six statements must be agreed upon by all those participating in the civil disobedience and must be followed at all times during the action.

1. We will not engage in violence -- verbal or physical.
2. We will not carry weapons, or anything that can be construed as a weapon.
3. We will not run.
4. We will not damage property.
5. We will not drink alcohol or take drugs before or during an action, except for express medical purposes.
6. Our appearance will be clean, and our attitude will be polite.

The Psychology of Direct Action

The police are trained to react in specific ways to direct actions. Their goal is to convince you to give up, and they will use any tactic they can to achieve their goal.

They will tell you that:

- Your friends gave up a long time ago;
- You're the only one left;
- Others won't be released from jail until you give up;
- The demands have been met;
- The structure you're on or in is dangerous;
- The property owners will not press charges if you give up now;
- That you will not be arrested if you give up;

...and any number of variations!

Their motive is to break the chain of strength and unity. If an activist or a team sees another activist or team giving up, they may do the same.

The direct action captains are prepared to make decisions throughout the action. They are aware of all the factors involved in the action – pivotal information that may not be known the by direct action team. Their priorities are your safety, and staging an effective direct action.

It is critical that you follow their instructions. Any deviation from the plans could jeopardize the safety of the team and the success of the action. Anyone taking this kind of risk will be asked to leave the action, and not be allowed to participate in the future.

It is important that we all look out for each other. If you notice an activist breaking the code of behavior, remind him or her of our purpose, or philosophy and our strategy. If the inappropriate behavior persists, let a team captain know.

If You are Arrested...

Once you have been asked to leave, you will be told that if you do not leave, you will be arrested – generally for trespassing. You or your team captain should advise them that you will not leave until your demands are met.

After a period of time, the police will approach each individual and tell them they are under arrest and cite the charge. If it is a traditional arrest, you will be standing up and they will put your arms behind your back, cross them at the wrists and handcuff you. They will then walk you out. If it is a passive arrest scenario, the police will put you on your stomach, put your arms behind your back, cross them at the wrists and handcuff you. They will then carry you out.

Your team captain will determine which of these two kinds of arrest will occur.

Handcuffs can hurt if you fight them when they're applied. Relax. If they're too tight, politely mention this to an officer, and he or she may loosen them for you.

You may be seated or laid on your stomach on the ground while the police are bringing more activists out or arranging transportation. Sit quietly. If you are on your stomach, raise your head up to indicate that you are okay. If you are not okay, keep your head down and personnel from the support team will respond.

Once you are in the police car or van, lean forward to avoid compressing the handcuffs into a tighter position.

REMEMBER:

You must have a valid photo ID, such as a driver's license;

You must not have any warrants – even parking tickets or leash law violations that have gone to warrant;

You must always provide the police with your correct name.

The Media

Raising the public's consciousness through media exposure is a critical factor in direct action.

Print and electronic media provide us only a few sentences or seconds to make several crucial points: why we have chosen a particular direct action site; what our claims and proof are; what our demands are. All the information must be accurate and stated in the most efficient, effective manner. It is imperative that we utilize each opportunity to its maximum potential.

We carefully prepare all the information and media statements before any direct action. Our spokespersons are well versed in the issues being addressed.

If you are approached by a member of the media and asked about the action, the best thing to do is repeat our demands (you will know what they are) and refer the reporter to our spokesperson. Inappropriate or inaccurate statements can weaken the overall action terribly, and have serious repercussions.