



## Nobody Is Above the Law Host Guide

**Thank you for hosting!**

**Donald Trump could fire Special Counsel Robert Mueller**, the person leading the Department of Justice investigation of possible illegal actions by Donald Trump and members of his presidential campaign, and the efforts to conceal those activities.

This would be a constitutional crisis for our country. It would demand an immediate and unequivocal response to show that we will not tolerate abuse of power from Donald Trump. Our response in the minutes and hours following a power grab will dictate what happens next and whether Congress—the only body with the constitutional power and obligation to rein Trump in from his rampage—will do anything to stand up to him.

That's why we're preparing to hold **emergency "Nobody Is Above the Law" rallies** around the country if Mueller is fired.

This is our moment to stand up to protect our democracy. Let's mobilize to show that we won't let Donald Trump become the authoritarian that he aspires to be. The law applies to all of us, and it's essential that it also apply to the most powerful people in our country.

## Before the Event

### **1. Choose your type of event.**

Things you should decide:

- Venue
  - We're encouraging hosts to select federal courthouses or district offices for members of Congress, both House and Senate, since these venues reflect concern about the rule of law and draw attention to the need for Congress to act to hold Trump accountable.

- But there may be a better location in your immediate area that will attract more people—a town square, city hall, or a common center for civic activity. Feel free to pick the location that works best for you and your attendees.
- Size of your event
  - Is there a maximum number of attendees that your venue can accommodate? Who is your target audience for attendees—everyone? Expect large numbers but don't be disappointed if they don't show. People signing up in advance might not be available the day of. By the same token, more people may be motivated to react if there is a genuine political crisis because Donald Trump fires Robert Mueller than will RSVP for a hypothetical scenario, so your event may be quite large!
  - Do you need guest speakers? Do your speakers represent diverse constituencies impacted by Trump curtailing the investigation?
- Organizations/allies
  - Are you trying to get the attention of a specific person or include a specific organization?
- Sound
  - Do you want to have amplified sound at your event? If so, do you need a permit and/or an electrical outlet for that? Can you meet your needs with a battery-powered bullhorn?

## **2. Choose a date, time, and location for your event.**

- You can decide on the date, time, and location of most events. But this one is a bit different, because we don't know if or when Trump might obstruct the investigation.
- Most rallies will begin hours after news breaks of a Mueller firing:
  - If Mueller is fired BEFORE 2 p.m. local time → events will begin @ 5 p.m. local time
  - If Mueller is fired AFTER 2 p.m. local time → events will begin @ noon local time the following day
  - This is the general plan—individual hosts may tailor their events to their local plan as needed.+
- Where are you hosting this? At a federal courthouse? At a park? Outside of a congressional office?
  - Be sure to pick a location with decent cell signal or Wi-Fi, since you want people to post on Facebook and Twitter about your protest.
- Once you've decided date/time/location, please go into your Host Dashboard and update your event, then message your attendees about the new date/time/location.

## **3. Principles**

- MoveOn believes that we can build a country with room for all of us, with an economy that works for all of us, that welcomes refugees and immigrants, that takes action to address climate change, that makes it easier, not harder, to vote, that values Black lives,

that stands against sexism, racism, Islamophobia. As a host, you share a commitment to nonviolent action to achieve this vision.

#### **4. Policies, Permits, and Safety**

- Policies and Permits: Depending on where you are hosting your event, check to see if there are any permits and policies that you need to follow.
- You are encouraged to reach out to the local police department to notify them of your intent to organize a public event. It may be challenging to acquire a permit for an event without knowledge of the date you wish to host it, but communicating about your plans up front will hopefully limit challenges you encounter on the day of the event.
- **Safety:** The safety of you and your guests is important to us. Before your event, you should review our [de-escalation tips](#) and this [4-minute video on tips for how to handle potential disruptions to your event](#). If there is an immediate emergency and you need help, please call the appropriate authorities, such as 911.

#### **5. Plan logistics.**

Decide what volunteer roles need to be filled. Depending on the size of your event, you may have your hands full during the event. If you have an idea of what roles you'll need, you can recruit for them specifically, or you can build the roles based on the people you recruit. If stretched for volunteers, more than one person can have multiple roles. If you have many volunteers, you can assign multiple people the same roles and have them work together.

Here are potential roles to consider:

- **Coordinators**
  - Role: Bring team together and hold the commitments of the team
    - Convene and facilitate group meetings
    - Figure out how the team will communicate moving forward. We recommend Facebook groups or group texts.
    - Make all volunteers “co-hosts” of the event page by going to your Host Dashboard and selecting their names from the RSVP list. This will enable them to see other RSVPs and manage event details.
    - Create agendas, take notes, and keep time at team meetings and at the event
    - Wrangle and hold team accountable
    - Fill in gaps by supporting other roles as needed
    - Work to make underrepresented communities feel safe and welcome and for their voices and leadership to be visible—in the planning and at the event
    - Ensure the event stays on message. This includes asking participants to discard signs that are off-topic, off-message, or that don't reflect our commitment to nonviolence.
- **Vibes**

- Role: Listen and seek for agreements and suggestions within the group, maintain good and high energy among participants
  - Create a list of possible songs and chants to use at the event.
  - Keep high energy at meetings and during the event by emceeing, leading chants, etc.
  - Greet participants as they arrive
  - Work to make underrepresented communities feel safe and welcome and for their voices and leadership to be visible—in the planning and at the event
  - Facilitate meeting and event debriefs and ensure learnings are captured and implemented
  
- **Logistics**
  - Role: Coordinate the material needs of the event on the day of
    - Assemble all materials and bring to meetings and event (including creating lots and lots of evergreen signs ahead of time to distribute to participants during the event)
    - Coordinate location prep and clean-up
    - Secure permit if needed
    - Serve as peacekeepers during the event (or recruit others to fulfill this role)
  
- **Messengers**
  - Role: Communicate with broader community around needs and resources of the team—and with the world!
    - Line up potential speakers for a variety of possible scenarios and prep them. Attorneys, policy experts (such as college professors), religious leaders, and folks directly impacted all make great speakers!
    - Do outreach and coalition building. Consider if there are local organizations that would support this action and ask them for support recruiting event helpers.
    - Work to make underrepresented communities feel welcome and for their voices and leadership to be visible—in the planning and at the event. Remember that leadership means knowing when to lead and when to take a step back and follow the leadership of others.
    - Work with media
      - Customize the template press advisory and keep an email alert to reporters in your draft folders, ready to send.
      - Show up to the event early and be ready to greet reporters as they arrive
      - When giving interviews, stick to the talking points provided by MoveOn in the hours following a crisis
    - Work with social media

- Take live video during the event using Facebook Live
  - Upload photos to social media in real time, tagging @MoveOn and your elected officials, and using the event hashtag, #NotAboveTheLaw
- Best practices:
  - Ask people how long they can stay and assign tasks accordingly.
  - Never allow people to feel that you wasted their time.
  - Have a variety of hands-on and more quiet tasks to do (calling lists vs. typing up data for example). Introverts and extroverts have equally important roles to play.
  - Maintain regular meeting schedules—regularity is key.
  - Appreciate and thank your volunteers

## **6. Update your event on the Host Dashboard.**

- **Use your Host Dashboard—the online page for your event.**
  - Very important: Update the date, time, and location of your event!
  - The link to your Host Dashboard is included in the confirmation email you received after you registered your event, as well as in the subsequent logistics emails about the event.
  - If you didn't save at least one of those emails or can't reach your event page, let us know at [mueller@moveon.org](mailto:mueller@moveon.org) so we can re-send the link to you.
  - On your Host Dashboard, you'll see everyone who's registered to attend your event, tools to invite people to attend the event, tools to communicate with your current attendees, and any event materials and resources posted to the page.
- **FYI: MoveOn is changing the (hidden) event dates:** MoveOn is moving the placeholder date of all events far into the future. When we initiated these events, we suggested events be created for a placeholder date of December 31, 2017, which was a long way off at the time. As of the last update of this document, December 31 was less than two weeks away! MoveOn will be moving the date of all events to November 2020. But don't worry—the date of every event is hidden and will be made visible only if a firing occurs. (That's why one of the first things you should do in the event of a firing is set the event date to the day of the rally!)

## **7. Prepare the basic materials you'll need.**

What resources do you already have? What resources will you need to find? Do you need to buy/bring things? Are you going to ask your volunteer helpers to bring anything? What's the checklist?

- Make a checklist of things you'll need at your event.
- Create an agenda for your event.
  - Having an agenda in advance will help with the flow of your event.
- Other materials that are helpful:

- [https://www.trumpisnotabovethelaw.org/survey/mueller-firing-rapid-response-materials/?](https://www.trumpisnotabovethelaw.org/survey/mueller-firing-rapid-response-materials/)
  - On this link, you'll find
    - Sample recruitment emails
      - before Mueller is fired
      - after Mueller is fired
    - De-escalation tips
    - Local media advisory
    - Indivisible guide for Mueller-related questions to members of Congress
    - "No one is above the law" printable placard design

### **8. Recruit people to your event.**

- Build a list.
  - Build a list of your friends, neighbors, local leaders, organizations, etc.
- Reach out to them.
  - Hit the phones and call your list to invite them to your event.
  - Record responses to your calls. This will be helpful later on to remember if a person said they were coming or not. It will also help you avoid double calling someone.
- Do social media outreach.
  - Share your event link with your followers on Facebook, Twitter, and other places.
  - Ask your volunteers and any partner organizations to do the same.
- Email.
  - Using your Host Dashboard, you can email your contacts to invite them to attend. You can also share your event over local listservs that you are on.
  - Once attendees are signed up for your event, you can email them, using your Host Dashboard (**you can find your Host Dashboard in your host confirmation email**), asking them to bring needed items. To track this, ask attendees to reply to your email with the item(s) they are willing to bring.
- Invite media.
  - Build your media list.
    - Search the Internet for lists of media contacts, or just go to the websites of the local media outlets in your area and find contacts for their newsroom or assignment desk.
    - There are lots of sites that maintain contact lists.
    - Here are a few good places to start:
      - <http://www.usnpl.com>
      - <http://www.newslink.org>
      - <http://capwiz.com/capwiz/dbq/media/>
    - Ask members of your rapid-response group if they have any strong personal media connections.
    - Ask local progressive organizations working on your issue if they can share their list.

- Read the newspaper and keep an eye out for which reporters are most likely to write the story.
    - Outside of traditional media, be sure to make lists of independent bloggers and photographers as well as local individuals with social media influence.
  - Send out the advisory before the event.
    - Localize it for your city.
    - Find good messengers to quote in the advisory.
    - Most folks use email.
- Contact reporters.
  - Follow up after you've sent the advisory. Make it clear why it's incredibly important that they cover your event. This phone call is the most important part of earning media coverage.
  - Call reporters on the day of the event. Give them a quick update (e.g., how many people you're expecting) and then pitch them on coming again. Make sure they still have your advisory and resend it if they don't.
  - Talk to the reporter or editor where possible—don't settle for leaving voicemails or messages with the receptionist. Your pitch calls are your best weapon; make sure you're using them.
- Look for reporters at your event.
  - Have a designated press liaison.
  - Greet reporters and answer any questions they have.
  - If they have cameras, help them get the shots they're looking for.
  - If you have any good volunteers with powerful stories, introduce them to reporters.
  - Don't be afraid to call media back again if they didn't show to a previous event.
  - Build relationships. Reporters are people too. If they know and trust you, they're more likely to come.

### **9. Listen to our Host Prep Call.**

- Here is a [link](#) to listen to a recorded host prep call.

### **10. Stay connected.**

- **Opt in to SMS:** It's very important that we can reach you by text message in case of a firing. If you aren't already getting text messages from MoveOn, you can **join by texting the word ALERT to 668366**.
- **Join the Slack Team:** This is a messaging tool that lets hosts interact directly with each other to share best practices, troubleshoot, come up with messages, and more. If you want to be in touch directly with hosts, follow the steps to join on a computer or smartphone. [Click here to sign up!](#) (Updated 3/19/18)
- **Join the Google Group:** You can also join a Google Group moderated by organizing staff to stay in the loop about news of the day. To ask to join, please email [notabovethelaw+owners@googlegroups.com](mailto:notabovethelaw+owners@googlegroups.com).
- **Create a group text:** If you have a group of leaders you're working closely with for your event, consider setting up a group text with them so you can coordinate quickly if a firing occurs.

### **11. Have a final check-in call.**

- Host a check-in call with anyone with a role in your event.
- Walk through the event from start to finish to make sure everything is ready and everyone is clear about their role. Anyone who is speaking or playing a role should be on the call.

### **12. Make final preparations—including reminder calls.**

As soon as you know the events will happen, make sure you're ready! Reread this guide and review all of your materials. Also, be sure to check in with any local partner organizations (if applicable) before the event to finalize any logistics items and talk through any questions.

Your registered guests should hear from you before the event. This is by far the best way to help ensure that people show up. Log in to your Host Dashboard (**you can find your Host Dashboard in your host confirmation email**) and, if you have time, call everyone who's RSVP'd, let them know you're excited to see them, and remind them of where and when to meet. Be sure to send an email to everyone who RSVP'd from your Host Dashboard, reminding them what time you are starting and how to get there.

## **Triggering our events**

### **THE RED LINES:**

- 1. Firing Mueller**
- 2. Pardons of key witnesses**
- 3. Actions that would prevent the investigation from being conducted freely, such as replacing Mueller's current supervisor, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, or repealing the regulations establishing the office \***

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(Please note that this one is a key difference. Originally, we set up this rapid-response network for a Mueller firing. Firing Rosentstein, though, would be comparable to Nixon's "Saturday Night Massacre." Nixon had ordered the firing of the Watergate special counsel, and his attorney general and deputy attorney general resigned rather than carry out the order, after which Nixon fired the prosecutor. Rosenstein's ouster would similarly open the route to firing Mueller, or stifling the investigation from above, which is why we need to take it so seriously.)

### **How we'll trigger events:**

- If these red lines were crossed, the coalition would quickly convene and determine whether to launch the 700+ "Nobody Is Above the Law" events and would communicate with you and the other event hosts, as well as the people RSVP'd to your events, as quickly as possible.
- If you hear that Mueller has been removed as special counsel, or Rosenstein has been fired, you can assume events are on! (MoveOn will contact you, but there's no need to wait before swinging into action.)
- If you hear of a pardon, please wait for word from the national coalition if you wish to launch only if other hosts do so nationwide, as well!



- **MoveOn will send an email and a text message** to all hosts as soon as events are triggered by the national coalition.
  - a. If you're not currently receiving text messages from MoveOn, **you can be added to our SMS list by texting the word ALERT to the number 668366.**

## What to do when events are triggered

1. SMS your co-host group text, if you have one, to notify them.
2. Decide on the date and time you will hold your event—presumably what your group decided in advance, but likely 5 p.m. local time if you receive news before 2 p.m. that day, or noon the next day if you get news later.
3. Log into your Host Dashboard.
4. **Update the date and time of your event.**
  - a. This is very important to make clear that your event is actually happening today, rather than being listed on the website but not active.
    - i. People looking at the online map, who may be motivated to attend, will know that your event is actually materializing today with you there to host.
    - ii. MoveOn will send emails to all RSVPs indicating the place and time of events happening within the next 2 days—if your event has not been updated to reflect the correct date, your RSVPs will not get this email!
5. Send a message to your RSVPs through the Host Dashboard, alerting them to Mueller's firing and informing them of the time and place of the event. Be sure to include the address and the directions to find your specific location to avoid any confusion.
  - a. You can even draft this email in advance and keep it on your computer to copy/paste in!
6. Send your pre-written press release to your pre-selected press list.
7. If you have a contact at the local police department with whom you've been in touch about the event, call them to notify them that the event is about to happen.
8. If you have time, particularly if the event is the next day, you can call pull up your RSVP list in the Host Dashboard and call or SMS your RSVPs.
9. Grab your signs and supplies, and go!

**MoveOn will notify everyone RSVP'd to attend events listed as happening that day or the next day via email and SMS (if they opted in to getting text messages from MoveOn).**

**Here is a sample message** you can copy, edit, and paste into your message to your attendees.

SAMPLE EMAIL TO RSVPs:

Dear democracy defenders,

Moments ago, **Donald Trump fired special counsel Robert Mueller**, the man investigating Trump and his inner circle.

You signed up to attend the rapid-response rally that I'm hosting in the event Trump carried out this action.

The event is ON!

Here's the information:

VENUE:

ADDRESS:

TIME:

DATE: (TODAY / TOMORROW)

[Add anything you want to ask attendees to bring, be prepared to do, suggestions on what to wear, etc.]

Here is the event link—make sure you share it with your friends and family immediately! {LINK}

There are over 300,000 people pledged to protest nationwide. Together, we can make a difference.

I hope to see you there!

—NAME

## During the Event

### **1. Arrive 30 minutes early for set-up**

- Typically, some people will show up early, and you'll want to be there to greet them. Also, make sure the area is set up and ready for attendees' arrival.
- Expect large numbers but don't be disappointed if they don't show. People signing up in advance might not be available the day of.
- Discuss a check-in process for your volunteers and if you have any guest speakers.

### **2. Start on time (or as close to it as possible).**

Don't delay more than ten minutes after your advertised start time—especially if any reporters are there.

### **3. Follow the agenda.**

You and your volunteers should have created an agenda before the event. Make sure you follow it, because it will help with the flow on the day of.

### **4. Remain law-abiding.**

- Please remember our host principles.
- Please observe all posted signs and respect requests from law enforcement.
- Additionally, please look through and have your helpers look through these [de-escalation tips](#).

### **5. Tell the story of your event.**

We want these events to be reported by the press and to be trending on social media. You, your helpers, and your attendees should take photos, take video, live Tweet/Facebook and tag people that need to be tagged elected, orgs, news outlet, etc.

- Be sure to announce the hashtag to your attendees—#NotAboveTheLaw (and tag coalition groups such as @Indivisible and @MoveOn)—several times during the event, so that any attendee with a smartphone can live tweet from your event. And feel free to tweet photos and videos you take, as well as text. You can use the same event hashtag on Instagram and Facebook.
- If you have media present, follow this tip to increase the odds that you get an accurate count of attendees: About 10–15 minutes into the event, have someone count the number of people participating, find the media folks covering the event, and tell them the number. You'll not only help the media do their job, you'll reduce the chances that they'll report a crowd of 100 as “several dozen.”
- You can send photos to us directly at [photos@moveon.org](mailto:photos@moveon.org). In your event materials, you'll also find instructions for using Facebook Live to livestream video from your event.

## **6. HAVE FUN!**

# **After the Event**

### **1. Follow up with the media.**

- Whether you had media present or not, send a post-event press advisory to all media in your area immediately after the event. A simple way to do this is to take the pre-event advisory, change the tense of the verbs from future to past, add some details and some key quotes, some compelling photos, and some links to video from the event, head to a coffee shop or other place with Wi-Fi right after the event ends, and send it to your media list. You can have the advisory ready to go, except for the head count and other live details, before your event even starts.

### **2. Follow up with folks who registered for your event.**

- Thank them for attending, if they could. Don't forget to send a thank-you note to anyone else who played a role in your event.

### **3. Email any remaining photos.**

- You should send your photos to [photos@moveon.org](mailto:photos@moveon.org), as well as posting them on Twitter and Facebook using the hashtag #NotAboveTheLaw.

### **4. Let us know who showed up and how it went!**

- After the action, we'll send you an email with a link to a short survey, and you can use that survey to tell us about your event.

