

REVITALIZE NOT MILITARIZE

# the **Border Reality Checkpoint**



**REVITALIZE**  
**NOT MILITARIZE**  
**BORDER COMMUNITIES**

## Introduction:

The Border Reality Checkpoint is a co-launched initiative of the [Southern Border Communities Coalition](#) (SBCC) and [ACLU of New Mexico Regional Center for Border Rights](#) that aims to raise awareness of how abuse in our nation's expanding "border zone" threaten civil liberties and impact the quality of life for all of us.

The recently released Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) audit of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) use of force provides further evidence that CBP and the Border Patrol are out-of-control. Many border residents, including teenagers and US citizens, have been killed or suffered abuse, yet no agents have been held publicly accountable.

Congress, the White House and even the United Nations are aware of these problems, but we feel the people most affected, border residents, should also be aware of what is happening and should know what they can do to protect their rights, speak up about abuses, and join efforts to demand reforms.

**Save the Date!**

**Border-Wide Day of Action**  
**Wednesday - July 9**

**Border Reality Checkpoints deploy  
across the southern border region.**

Go to [RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org](http://RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org)

## Objective:

The US southern border is more than a line and is home to 15 million people who encounter Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Border Patrol agents daily through our ports of entry, interior checkpoints or roving patrols.

Many border residents are not fully informed of their rights in the border region—or mistakenly think they have no rights at all. Others may not be aware of how the lack of accountability and oversight over CBP impacts other border community residents.

A federal law-enforcement agency that operates above the law should be of concern to all border residents, especially when people are being hurt, killed, and deprived of their basic rights with no repercussions.

The Border Reality Checkpoint is an action that provides an opportunity to educate our communities regarding their rights, inform residents about abuses, and invite them to take action to bring greater oversight and accountability to CBP. This action also presents a unique opportunity to engage the media.

In the same way Border Patrol enforcement extends well into the interior of the country, we want to extend the conversation about impacts on our communities through the border region and beyond.

## Setting up a Checkpoint

### Form a team

Your team should be comprised of the following:

- **Coordinator** – organizer who also serves as primary spokesperson or point of contact for the group.
- **Sign Carriers** – Volunteers who will hold signs about the action. One volunteer for every sign.
- **Canvassers** – Volunteers who will talk to passersby and share postcards for signing. The more canvassers the better for areas with high pedestrian traffic.
- **Legal Observers** – Volunteers who will be on stand by to document testimonies of abuse and who will observe the action for safety concerns.
- **Spokespersons** – Designated messengers who will speak to the media. Public statements during the action are great for **media attention**.
- **Materials Manager** – A volunteer to manage the materials needed.

*Prepare your volunteers before the action by holding an orientation or a practice run. Strongly emphasize safety precautions and remind volunteers this is not a civil disobedience action, but rather a peaceful, First Amendment activity to inform motorists or pedestrians of their rights and about the border reality. Volunteers should also know this even might lead to encounters with law enforcement, including immigration officials.*

### Materials You'll Need

- **Orange Safety Vests** – For all participants. Get them ASAP either online, at dollar stores or Home Depot.
- **Signs** – Large poster board size signs with the messages: Border Reality Checkpoint, Know Your Rights, Control the Border Patrol and more (see examples).
- **Flyers and Postcards** – Copies of Know Your Rights information and the Postcard to President Obama. Contact a local SBCC partner for these resources.
- **Abuse Documentation Forms** – Download from [RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRToolkit](http://RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRToolkit).
- **Revitalize Not Militarize Gear** – Gerbera daisies (available at arts & crafts stores). Posters, stickers, shirts: contact a local SBCC partner for these items.
- **Other Items** – Pens, clipboards, wood stakes, staple guns, duct tape, water, snacks, sunblock, and cameras for documenting.





## Setting Your Location

Deploy your checkpoint in a public and safe place near a Border Patrol interior checkpoint or a port of entry run by Customs and Border Protection, or near a high traffic pedestrian area to engage the community.

**Near a Border Checkpoint or Port of Entry:** Select a location that is a public space (not private property) within reasonable proximity of where pedestrians or motorists leave an interior checkpoint or port of entry. Be mindful of the fact that Border Patrol may restrict your ability to set up in close proximity to the checkpoint, but that so long as you are in a public space and not interfering with checkpoint operations you have a right to be there.

You should consider a location that includes a safe space for volunteers and motorists or pedestrians to pull over, such as a rest area or public road alongside a highway or interstate.

**Border Reality Checkpoints in the Community:** Find a public venue with high pedestrian traffic to interact with individuals as they pass by. In all cases, research whether local ordinances require a permit for your event. In some cities, as long as the number of people remains low (e.g., 25 or less), no permit is required for free speech in a public venue. Finally, pick a location that is easily accessible for your local media outlets.

### Safety:

All volunteers should be equipped with an orange, safety vest to guarantee visibility. Volunteers should also stay on public property with a safe distance between them and traffic—for example, beside the shoulder of a highway.

You may not force vehicles or pedestrians to stop or set up cones to direct traffic; you're simply inviting individuals via signs to pull over into a safe location for more information regarding their rights or to report abuse (like advertising a community car wash).



## Informing the Media:

Send out your media advisory inviting press to attend your checkpoint a day or two prior to the event.

Send a press release the morning of your action (between 8-9am) and follow up with calls to ensure they know about the event.

We have sample media releases on [RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRCToolkit](http://RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRCToolkit).

Be prepared to send photos of your action to media outlets unable to attend in time for them to feature your event on the evening news and please share photos on your social media sites including the [Revitalize Not Militarize Facebook page](#).

## Coordinating with Law Enforcement

Depending on where your event will be held, inform relevant local jurisdictions (city police, county sheriff, or state police if on an interstate/highway) prior to your event.

Emphasize safety precautions that will be taken for both volunteers and motorists. Explain that you will not block vehicle or pedestrian traffic and that you're not planning civil disobedience. You're simply holding a public education event on public property. You may also consider informing local CBP leadership for actions at ports or Border Patrol leadership for checkpoint actions to clarify your intentions not to interfere with agent/officer operations or trespass on government property.



## During the Checkpoint

In addition to assigning point people to speak with the media and law enforcement, dedicate trained volunteers or staff to provide "Know Your Rights" information to motorists or pedestrians who stop by and document any testimonies of abuse.

If law enforcement challenges your right to hold your event, emphasize your First Amendment rights, safety precautions and intentions to remain on public property. Be prepared to report your concerns to local, civil rights legal support organizations, such as the ACLU.

## After the Checkpoint

This action can generate follow up inquiries and interest from the community regarding know your rights materials or reporting abuses. We recommend you consider a plan to respond to or refer complaints.

For more information on how to document abuse, or sample resources to launch your own campaign, visit [RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRCToolkit](http://RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRCToolkit).



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### Additional Materials You Will Need

- [Border Patrol Checkpoints: FAQ's](#)
- [Abuse Documentation Form](#)
- [Know Your Rights](#)
- [Sample Media Advisory](#)
- [Sample Signs](#)

Download these at  
[RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRCToolkit](http://RevitalizeNotMilitarize.org/BRCToolkit)

## Revitalize Not Militarize

The Border Reality checkpoint is just one action in the ongoing Revitalize not Militarize campaign. To learn more about previous actions, including the Border Quilt and Flower Power, visit [www.revitalizenotmilitarize.org](http://www.revitalizenotmilitarize.org) and contact Alliance San Diego at (619) 269-1823 to learn more about the Southern Border Communities Coalition and ways you can get involved.