Best Practices for Signal Groups & Local Organizing
2.4.26 last updated
Signal group naming convention can help folks find their people: (region/city/county) Rapid Response Group. (ie. Boulder County RR Group)

- Each signal group should have 2-3 LEADS, depending on the region/area, ideally these folks support each other and take on different roles in the group..
    - Common expectations for leads include:
        - Vetting signal admissions of new chat members
        - Answering questions as they arise
        - Sharing resources and events
        - Monitoring the group dynamic, addressing conflict if needed (see below, handling big feelings)
        - Coordinating gatherings, meetings, trainings, canvasing, tabling opportunities, etc.
        - Have at least one megaphone and encourage others to do so for mass raid incidents
- Keep in mind that the signal groups do not replace either calling the hotline or notifications from the dispatcher. Alerts from the dispatcher go through the web based rapid response system and are based on a radius of a specific address provided by the caller. These alerts come from a 720 number and can not be sent to a signal chat.
    - However! A regional or area signal chat is a place for confirmers or other un trained responders to request back up, share ideas, concerns and get technical or moral support for verifying ICE activity.
- Vetting process for signal groups:
    - Ideally, signal group members are trained as Confirmers, or have a plan to attend a confirmer training. CORRN is working to meet the training requests and needs.
    - It's ok to ask Confirmers, ask from who and when they took the training so the group has an idea of how many people are trained as Confirmers, not as a tool to create an inside / outside dynamic. We only get tighter and better as this WITH each other.
    - Make sure new folks being added understand the Signal Chat VIBES guidelines, such as:
        - Keep in mind when things are hot, you need to breathe more.
        - Assume best intentions, where possible. Try to stay curious and encourage more learning. Especially when giving feedback! See below Handling Big Feelings
        - A group that has grown some TRUST are both MORE likely to take care of each other on the street and MORE likely to deal with infiltrators and provocateurs swiftly.
        - Protect the identities of the chat members and directly impacted folks in particular.

- Signal is encrypted and messages will disappear, but someone in the chat can always screenshot what is said. Don't say anything you wouldn't want read back to you in court.
  - Signal chat SECURITY guidelines for ADMINS:
    - Turn on **Disappearing messages** - set to 1 week max
    - Turn on **Approve new members -** members have to be approved by an admin to join
    - Turn off **Enable and share link** - this way members can only be manually added by the admin
  - Signal chat SECURITY guidelines for MEMBERS:
    - Have a code to get into your phone - not biometrics like fingerprint or face. These can be forced if someone gets a hold of both you and your phone.
    - Turn off preview message notifications, so they can't be seen on your lock screen.
      - **On Android**: Tap your profile picture, then *Notifications* > *Show*. **On iPhone**: Tap your profile picture, then *Settings* > *Notifications* > *Show*.
        - Choose either "name only" or "no name or message"
      - If you are frequently in contact with Law Enforcement Officers, turn on screen lock, which means you need to enter your screen lock PIN to open Signal
        - **On Android**: Tap your profile picture, then *Privacy* and enable "Screen Lock."
        - **On iPhone**: Tap your profile picture, then *Settings* > *Privacy* and enable "Screen Lock."
      - Ensure you're using a keyboard that isn't leaking more information than you would like
        - The default keyboard in Android (Gboard) and iOS are ok
        - **On Android**: Open the *Settings app* > *System* > *Keyboard* > *On-screen keyboard* and disable any keyboards you do not use. You should also delete any keyboard app you do not use.
        - **On iPhone**: Open the *Settings app* > *General* > *Keyboard* > *Keyboards*, and remove anything you do not need. You should also delete any keyboard app you do not use.
      - Turn on **Registration lock.** This keeps someone from registering a Signal account on another device without the PIN you set up when you first installed Signal.
        - **On Android**: Tap your profile picture, then *Account*. If you haven't already created a PIN, you

may need to do so by tapping the "Create a PIN" option. Then set the "Registration Lock" toggle to on.
  - **On iPhone**: Tap your profile picture, then *Settings* > *Account*. Then set the "Registration Lock" toggle to on.
- Gatherings
  - Encourage the group to coordinate topics and facilitators
  - Don't let too much time go by before gathering as a group to make sure momentum doesn't dwindle
  - Coordinate canvassing efforts after big events and encourage confirmers to debrief together
  - Support trainings such as:
    - Practicing scenarios
    - Direct action
    - Safety culture
    - Technology and keeping each other safe
    - Mutual aid
- Handling big feelings
  - Put a heart next to your name if you are down to debrief if a group members has had to deal with something troubling
  - Conflict - Inevitably, someone will do something NOT the way you would do it.
    - If it's a learning opportunity, first try to share why you would do it differently, share your reasoning. The more trust there is on the chat, the more people will be willing to listen to each other's reasoning.
    - If it's not a learning opportunity, we encourage folks to address the conflict as individuals, rather than putting in the larger group chat.
    - We encourage folks to address conflict in person, rather than by text, it just goes better, and will improve overall trust. But use zoom if necessary.
    - If needed, we encourage folks to find a neutral mediator, and if you need help finding one, let us know.
    - If no resolution emerges, decide if you'd like more help from a lead or if you need to take a particular action.
- Ideas that might strengthen the Signal Groups
  - In rural areas with fewer trained responders, expand the geographic range for notifications. Identify the community and regional movement practices and adapt the geographic range accordingly. For example, in the Roaring Fork Valley in western Colorado it is common for individuals to travel up and down the valley several times a day stretching from Rifle to Aspen and spanning Garfield, Eagle, and Pitkin Counties. In practice we have seen several instances where people right next to a reported action were not notified by the dispatcher. If you would like your profile in the web based system to have additional zip codes attached for notification reach out to your signal chat lead.

- ○ Create a Memorandum of Understanding that enables trusted and vetted local advocates to receive data and information about incidents in their area. Our ability to respond to the needs of our community is limited to our knowledge of needs. This may involve a consent form from a caller or impacted individual to share the information for purposes of building responses and providing support and resources.
- ○ Create a form for impacted individuals to submit their basic information and request help for rent, groceries, transportation, etc. Then share with trusted, vetted, local advocates who can source support locally.
- ○ Outline protocols for a safety plan for events and planned actions.