

July 2026



# 41 Ways to Free Somebody

*an everyday guide*  
**to freedom**

The work of freeing people has never rested in courts and legislatures alone. It lives in the hands of neighbors, teachers, clergy, and everyday people like you. People building on the long tradition of taking responsibility for one another. We've gathered some of the tactics and tools that ordinary people have created to protect one another from incarceration in all its forms (jails, prisons, and detention centers). Below are 41 ways to free somebody, organized by approach. Pick what works for you, check off what you do and keep going. Because freedom is an everyday act.

## **1** *Keep People Out of Reach*

Sometimes freedom looks like preventing system contact by removing barriers and reducing people's exposure to law enforcement. Fixing a broken tail light, buying out a street vendor and ending school suspensions all make people less vulnerable to arrest or detention.

### Got 5 minutes?

- 1. Swipe someone through who can't cover their public transport fare.
- 2. Get informed about your school's discipline policies and inquire about their racially disparate impact.
- 3. Find resources on non-punitive discipline for the educators in your life.
- 4. Print "The 4 Steps To Take Before Contacting The Police" and share it with friends, family, and neighbors. [dontcallthepolice.com](http://dontcallthepolice.com)
- 5. Find and use alternatives to calling the police at [dontcallthepolice.com](http://dontcallthepolice.com)
- 6. Ditch the doorbell camera or choose one with local storage and end-to-end encryption.
- 7. Pay immigrant workers you employ to stay home in moments of increased enforcement, even a day makes a difference.
- 8. Buy out a street vendor during an enforcement or policing surge.
- 9. Cover the cost of a broken tail or brake light for someone who can't afford it.

### Got more time?

- 10. Host a brake light clinic in your neighborhood.
- 11. Buy a stack of single-ride public transportation tickets and distribute them.
- 12. Organize with parents to change punitive truancy policies.
- 13. Run for your school board.
- 14. Organize with your school community to halt suspensions.
- 15. Pool childcare with nearby families so immigrant care providers can safely stay home during raids and enforcement surges.
- 16. Gather family or friends to discuss the Mayday Collective's "12 Things To Do Instead Of Calling The Cops"
- 17. If you're in healthcare, commit to Beyond Do No Harm's 13 principles to interrupt criminalization in healthcare.
- 18. Work through United Against Police Terror San Diego's syllabus on how and why to stop calling the cops.
- 19. Organize with neighbors to pool money and buy out local vendors for a week.

## 2 Stand Between

Sometimes freedom looks like running interference: putting yourself between people and the systems looking to incarcerate them.

### Got 5 minutes?

- 20. Walk or drive a child from an immigrant family to school during immigration enforcement surges.
- 21. Print and share red cards explaining people's rights during enforcement.
- 22. Be an emergency contact and authorized pickup for an immigrant parent's child.
- 23. If you see someone detained by ICE, stop and safely observe. Film if comfortable. Ask if they want you to call someone.
- 24. If you see ICE or police, let your neighbors know when and where. Start a group chat if you're not in one already.

### Got more time?

- 25. Organize a walking school bus to walk immigrant children to school in times when their parents feel safer at home.
- 26. Attend a Copwatch or ICE watch training.
- 27. Join NDLO's Adopt-A-Corner campaign.

## 4 Bring them Home

Sometimes freedom looks like getting folks out.

### Got 5 minutes?

- 34. Pay someone's bail or donate to a bail fund.
- 35. Write a letter to on behalf on an political prisoner with Amnesty International's Write for Rights.
- 36. Write a support letter for someone navigating the criminal legal system.
- 37. Find a parole prep guide and send it to someone you know serving a long prison sentence.
- 38. Tell the medical professionals in your life about the Medical Justice Alliance.

These actions come from An Everyday Guide to Freedom, a series lifting the tactics and technologies that everyday people have used to protect each other from incarceration in all its forms. Visit [fwd.us/freedom](http://fwd.us/freedom) to read the full series or scan the QR code to the right.

## 3 Reach Inside

Sometimes freedom looks like lending your time and talents to support folks inside and their connections to the outside world.

### Got 5 minutes?

- 28. Donate to the Otay Mesa Detention Collective's effort to put money on detained immigrants' commissary accounts so they can call their families and lawyers.

### Got more time?

- 29. Become a pen pal with an incarcerated individual who wants correspondence.
- 30. Volunteer to teach classes or run programs inside a jail or prison.
- 31. Speak a language other than English? Volunteer for Freedom for Immigrants' national immigration detention hotline that helps connect families with detained loved ones.
- 32. Make it easier for someone to visit their incarcerated loved one; offer a ride, cover hotel costs or watch their kids.
- 33. Find a local organization that works with families of incarcerated and detained people and to sponsor a family to visit their loved one.

### Got more time?

- 39. Host a letter-writing party for Amnesty International's Write for Rights.
- 40. Volunteer with a group that trains people to help incarcerated people prepare their parole applications.
- 41. If you're a medical professional, volunteer with the Medical Justice Alliance.

