

QPIRG Concordia Guidelines Concerning the Police, Concordia Security and other Authorities

Concerning SECURITY and POLICE

These guidelines are proposed in the spirit of QPIRG's anti-oppression mandate. As part of our anti-oppression practice, we wish to avoid, as much as possible, the involvement of police in our day-to-day work. We particularly want to avoid interactions with the police at QPIRG due to the nature of our political work, which includes support for non-status migrants, prison justice work, anti-police brutality work, as well as supporting individuals who are marginalized or criminalized in other ways.

We write these guidelines based on the belief that we can meet the majority of any conflict or incident that may arise in the QPIRG space. We can achieve this partially by anticipating any potential problems, and by applying a high degree of patience. We write these guidelines with the understanding that situations that involve conflict or may involve security/police are inherently stressful. We propose these guidelines in a non-judgmental way, as a way of building our collective knowledge and capacity as QPIRG Board, staff members and space users, as part of an ongoing process.

CSIS and other SECURITY AGENCIES

QPIRG Concordia adopts the statement by the People's Commission Network concerning CSIS (attached to this document). This statement will be posted at the QPIRG space, and shared with all working groups and space users. This statement constitutes QPIRG's approach to CSIS and other state agencies.

CONCORDIA SECURITY

QPIRG Concordia liaises with Concordia Security with regards to our external key list (Concordia students on the QPIRG key list are able to access the key at the Hall Building security desk).

QPIRG's space is in a private building, and Concordia Security has no jurisdiction over our space. We aim to limit any Concordia Security involvement in our space, aside from staff liaison, via e-mail, concerning key access.

POLICE VISITS

If the police (SPVM, SQ, RCMP, etc) visit the QPIRG space uninvited, we ask them to leave. The police can only legally enter and search the space with a warrant. We advise all space users to demand to see a warrant, and to have a copy, before allowing police into the space. If you can, verify whether the warrant is signed and dated. When police

are at the QPIRG space, we ask that space users phone a staff member and a designated lawyer. This information will also be posted in the QPIRG space.

Space users are asked to document the visit, when possible. Documentation includes photos and video, as well as writing a report of what happened after any visit by a police or security agency (including unannounced visits by Concordia security). This documentation will be stored in the Board minutes binder, and shared at the next scheduled Board meeting.

We encourage space users to speak to staff members about these guidelines, including how to properly document an incident.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS POLICE (for QPIRG Board and staff)

QPIRG Board and staff aim to avoid any police involvement or meddling in the QPIRG space as well as at our events. When conflicts arise in the space, we strive to de-escalate the situation or to solve them via discussion and mediation techniques. Inappropriate or abusive behavior is not tolerated in the space, and people responsible for such behaviors are asked to leave the space.

Any space user can make a complaint or initiate a process with the Conflict Resolution and Complaints Committee (CRCC).

While we try to avoid any police involvement in the space, Board, staff members and space users have the discretion and personal choice to phone the police/911 when the situation warrants, namely when someone's physical safety is threatened.

QPIRG Concordia Guidelines Concerning Police Raids

Scenario one:

Cops show up WITHOUT a warrant

- 1) As soon as you know the cops are on their way, let everyone in the space know; people who do not wish to be present in the space can leave, or wait in another area of the building.
- 2) You do not have to let the cops in if they don't have a warrant. Tell them that they are not welcome in our space.
- 3) Inform both staff and our designated lawyer that there has been a visit by the police.

Scenario two:

Cops show up WITH a warrant

- 1) As soon as you know the cops are on their way, INFORM everyone in the space; people who do not wish to be present in the space can leave, or wait in another area of the building.
- 2) Before the police enter the space, READ the warrant thoroughly. The police are technically not allowed to enter the space until you are finished reading the warrant. Check for the following information:
 - the warrant should cite that the cops received information from a particular person (presumably a specific cop, though if it was someone else the identity can be concealed) saying that "XYZ gives reasonable grounds to believe that they will find ABC";
 - check to see if there are limitations to the warrant (ie: time frame, only specific places that they can search; etc);
 - seizure powers: anything described in the warrant can be seized; the police are not supposed to seize computers and need a specific warrant to do so;
 - the warrant must state somewhere that they can search computers and print materials;
 - the warrant must be signed by a judge.
- 3) CONTACT the staff and QPIRG's designated lawyer (this information is in our emergency contacts book).
- 4) DOCUMENT the search with cameras, if possible.

5) General things to remember:

- stay calm;
- you are not required to answer a single question;
- you should not speak with the police (with the exception of asking them questions to keep them accountable) and not reply to any of their questions;
- the search warrant gives them power to search but NOT to detain people; you can leave or stay during the search;
- the police do not have the right to search you or your personal belongings; that being said, they may do so anyways, so be aware;
- you don't have to provide your ID or have your photograph taken if you are not under arrest;
- a search warrant is not an arrest warrant, the police cannot detain you with a search warrant; however, the police can claim that you are obstructing their search, so if they have to ask you more than once during the search to stop video-taping, or to stay in one place, they could arrest you for obstruction;
- be aware that the police do have arrest powers that do not depend on an arrest warrant (eg: finding illegal substances);
- keep the police accountable; if they are asking you stay in one place, ask them if you are being detained any why; ask them if you are being charged.