

GETTING READY FOR THE WOMEN'S MARCH

The Women's March is fast approaching, and we're excited to help you prepare for your local association to turn out on January 19th! This guide offers some thoughtful tips to keep in mind as you prepare to participate in the Women's March, including what to bring with you on the day of and how to follow up the march with continued action in your community.

If you need or are interested in YWCA talking points regarding the Women's March, please refer to our "Women's March Talking Points," included at the end of this guide.

BEFORE THE MARCH

- **Locate your local sister march using the Women's March [interactive map](#).**
- **Make and/or print signs for the march, using YWCA's [downloadable signs](#).**
- **Get the word out:**
 - Share information about your local Women's March with people in your community. Let people know that the local YWCA will be attending and invite others to join!
 - Think about who are the people who need to be at the Women's March and invite them to participate with you. Reach out to your local partners and frequent collaborators in your work.
 - If your local YWCA would like to issue a press release announcing participation in the Women's March, feel free to utilize the "[YWCA Women's March 2019 Press Release Template](#)."
- **Make a plan of action:**
 - Choose a location and time to meet up before going to the march together.
 - Make sure you know the names and cell phone numbers of people who are going with you to a demonstration. Typically, large gatherings of people limit cell reception, so stick together and have a meeting spot pre-determined for after the march in case people get separated.
 - Keep in mind that people may bear identities that make them more vulnerable in spaces with heightened police and law enforcement present. Have a plan in place on how you will handle potential confrontations.
 - Do research on the march before you arrive - it's helpful to know if and where they will have bathrooms, water, and medical assistance. Have a way to bring the march route with you (download to your phone or take a screenshot, print out a paper copy).
 - Have a point of contact with someone who is not attending the march, to call in case of an emergency.

- **Pack your day-of essentials:**

- Water bottle
- Appropriate clothing for the weather - hand warmers, hat and gloves, rain jacket or poncho (easier than carrying an umbrella)
- Sunscreen
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Small bag - check the information for your local march, as they may have specific restrictions on bags you can carry with you
- Cell phone and portable charger
- Cash and identification - it is not recommended to carry your whole wallet with you, take only what you need and leave the rest!

DURING THE MARCH

- **Take care of yourself!**

- Frequently apply sunscreen and drink water
- Take breaks and stretch as needed, it's important to take care of your body
- Be safe and stay with your group

- **Be heard!** Chant loud and hold your signs high. Your voice and your presence are powerful.

- **Build community.** Use this as an opportunity to connect with other organizations and individuals in your community who have come out to the march. Exchange stories of why you are marching, and the work you do in the community

- **Engage on social media:**

- Use the #WomensWave hashtag to connect with other participants
- Tag @YWCAUSA on Twitter to share your photos, videos, and tweets from your local march
- Encourage your followers to join in on the conversation and post their experiences too
- Share why you are marching. Use these sample messages as a starting point and personalize to highlight the issues most important to your community:
 - “Today [your YWCA] is marching for racial justice, for reproductive rights and for survivors. #WomensWave”
 - “Gender justice is immigrant justice is racial justice. Today we are marching to uplift experiences of all women and marginalized people. #WomensWave”

AFTER THE MARCH

- **Hydrate and rest.** You may be very energized and excited after the march but take some time to rest!
- **Follow up with anyone you met.** If you were able to get their contact information, reach out to them to schedule a meeting to connect more and perhaps find overlap in your work.
- **Reflect and plan.** Think about how you can bring the energy of the Women's March back to your work. We invite you to look at the 2019 Policy Priorities document and think about how this work will be applied locally at your YWCA.
- **Use this moment to build your relationship with your Members of Congress.** This is the beginning of the new Congress, when you have a perfect opportunity to get in touch with your elected officials, welcoming them into office and offering them a preview of your priorities.
 - Use the "[Meeting with Your Elected Official](#)" guide to plan and prepare for a meeting with your Member of Congress.
 - Use the "[Tell Your Story](#)" guide to craft a compelling narrative of the work you do with the YWCA and how your Member of Congress can help support that work, whether that be funding for a particular program or making a public statement on a certain issue.

WOMEN'S MARCH TALKING POINTS

- YWCA USA has been closely monitoring the negative reports surrounding the Women's March over concerns about financial transparency and allegations of anti-Semitism. We appreciate seeing the strong statements denouncing anti-Semitism and bigotry prominently posted on the Women's March homepage, which have also been reflected in the various conversations that we have had with lead organizers and our peer organizations.
- YWCA USA is in direct communication with leaders of the Women's March and our peer organizations in the women's advocacy, racial justice, and social justice communities, to discuss these concerns and ensure that our values and priorities around inclusivity, intersectionality, and collaboration are reflected in this effort.
- YWCA USA supports the Women's March, but more importantly we support the values and unity principles of the Women's March as they align with our work to eliminate racism and empower women, particularly women of color. Paramount is our commitment to uplifting and advancing racial justice. To that end, we have been a contributor to the Women's March policy agenda as an active member of the Racial Justice committee. The full Women's Agenda is set to be released before the March next week.
- YWCA USA has and will continue to focus on the critical issues that further our mission to eliminate racism and empower women, while we do the long-term, hard work of building a truly inclusive movement. These are issues that have guided and defined YWCA's mission and work for 160 years, and we will continue to stand up and speak out — not only through marches, but through our policy advocacy and the critical services and programs we provide.
- We want to make sure that the issues that bring us together stay at the forefront of our policy and advocacy agenda before decision-makers in Washington. YWCA USA continues to represent the values of our mission and the tireless and excellent work of our local YWCAs.