

# THE DOS & DON'TS of prolife picketing

**DO:** Stay on a public sidewalk or walkway and keep moving while picketing.

**DO:** Bring literature about alternatives. However, this information can only be given with permission.

**DO:** Sing and speak about your message but stay positive and remember excessive noise volume could be interpreted as intimidating.

**DO:** Prepare for speaking to those interested in knowing more about your cause.

**DO:** Engage in conversation.

**DON'T:** Trespass on private property.

**DON'T:** Force contact with those entering an abortion facility.

**DON'T:** Lay picket signs on private property.

**DON'T:** Block access of pedestrians and vehicles at the picketing site.

**DON'T:** Harass or intimidate those entering the abortion facility.

**DON'T:** engage hecklers or counter-demonstrators in conversation and under no circumstances touch or threaten them.



prolife  
picketing



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Guidelines and  
Techniques

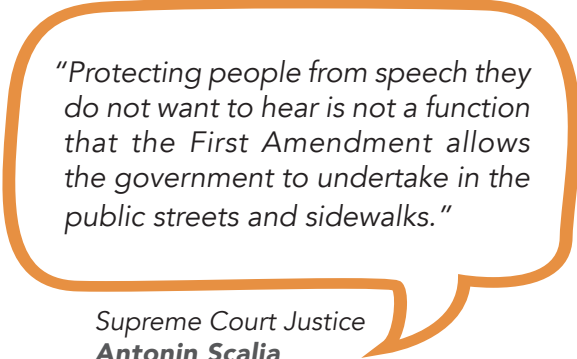
# WHAT ARE YOUR Constitutional rights?

Right to Life of Michigan holds that the health of a democratic society is fostered by the open expression of dissent by its citizenry on matters of justice and social policy. Public protest on matters of conscience is a fundamental part of the American tradition.

To voice objection to abortion and to increase the public's sensitivity to and awareness of it, as well as the abortion stand of elected officials, are beneficial objectives if conducted in a peaceful manner.

Picketing activities at abortion facilities and at appearances by government officials who espouse a pro-abortion position serve to awaken the public conscience to the presence and devastating consequences of abortion.

Picketing provides opportunities to educate abortion-minded clients, those accompanying them, abortion providers, and the general public about the value of the unborn child, the potential physical and psychological harm to the mother, as well as positive alternatives to abortion.



*"Protecting people from speech they do not want to hear is not a function that the First Amendment allows the government to undertake in the public streets and sidewalks."*

Supreme Court Justice  
**Antonin Scalia**

# THE SUPREME COURT and peaceful protests

## **Schenck v. Pro-choice Network (1996)**

Paul Schenck challenged a court injunction barring him from protesting near abortion clinics. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld creating 15 foot "buffer zones" at clinics, but ruled "floating buffer zones" around people were unconstitutional. The ruling was a way of maintaining public safety and a balance between the rights of protesters and the "right" to obtain an abortion. The decision leaves demonstrators free to picket, as long as women seeking abortions are not blocked from entering clinics.

## **Hill v. Colorado (2000)**

The State of Colorado, in response to abortion clinics protests, created a law stating that protesters within one hundred feet of any health care facility may not approach within eight feet of any other person, without consent, for the purpose of protest, education, distribution of literature or counseling. The case focused on the idea of the "right to be let alone" and Colorado's law was upheld.

## **McCullen v. Coakley (2014)**

The U.S. Supreme Court unanimously struck down a law in Massachusetts that created a 35-foot "buffer zone" around abortion facility entries and exits. The case originated when the law was challenged by a grandmother who frequently prays in front of abortion clinics. The Court argued that the buffer zone harmed free speech. Since Eleanor McCullen wasn't harming anyone, and was peaceful, she was welcome to stay. The Court declined to reexamine their decision in Hill v. Colorado.