

# First Amendment Protest Response

The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees the right to exercise free speech and assemble peacefully. The Phoenix Police Department has taken steps to ensure these rights are protected. Training and education are vital steps in the process of ensuring these rights are respected.

- **2020** – Utilized social media to educate the public on when a demonstration becomes an unlawful assembly:
  - Described community responsibilities when a gathering is deemed unlawful.
- **2021** – Multiple outside firms reviewed the city's response to planned demonstrations and several changes were implemented based on their recommendations.
- **2022** – Began modeling policy and procedure on other major cities:
  - Focused on Washington D.C. because of its experience with demonstrations
- **2023** – Created a new policy for first amendment response:
  - Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU) is comprised of officers specifically trained to handle large scale demonstrations or acts of disorderly behavior.
  - The Community Engagement Bureau (CEB) attempts to foster relationships with leaders from any group planning a demonstration. CEB communicates with supervisors in CDU before, during and after demonstrations.
  - Process allows both demonstrators and law enforcement to outline goals and create lines of communication.