

Developing Your Advocacy Game Plan

Jumping into advocacy for your issue means setting up a game plan with strategic prioritization and expertise. It is also important to set up the organizational infrastructure for advocacy engagement. Below are key steps in developing your advocacy game plan.

Establish An Advocacy Committee

An internal advocacy committee plays a critical role in issue prioritization and strategic direction.

- Advocacy committee members should have knowledge of your issue.
- Advocacy committee members should be prepared to react in a timely manner to strategic discussions and decision making.
- You should consider including some key stakeholders related to your issues and policies on the advocacy committee.
- It is helpful to diversify messengers for your issue by appointing advocacy committee members from various sectors and with various contacts and expertise.

Prioritize Key Policies

- **IMPACT:** Assess policy change opportunities that would have the greatest impact for your issue area.
- **POLITICAL VIABILITY:** Determine political environments that could support your policies.
- **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:** Survey and/or convene stakeholder groups to evaluate priorities.
- **LEADERSHIP:** Plan priorities with the advocacy committee and the Board.
- **INVESTIGATE MULTIPLE POLICY ARENAS:**
 - Municipal
 - State Legislature
 - State Rulemaking
 - US Congress
 - Federal Rulemaking
 - Municipal, State and/or Federal Advisory Boards, Study Commissions, Task Forces

Messaging

- Research data and support for your issue.

- Document case studies in support of your issue.
- Address opposing arguments and other barriers.
- Develop communications plan.
- Identify lead messengers.

Develop Advocacy Workplan

- Develop tasks and timelines related to outreach, education, communication, advocacy engagement, outcome evaluation and sustainability.

Determine Staffing

- Evaluate staffing options:
 - Advocacy Director
 - Advocacy Consultant
 - Lobbyist
 - Field Director/Grassroots Mobilizer

Evaluate Frequently

The priorities and tone of any political arena can change rapidly depending on anything from media coverage, market shifts and, of course, elections. It is important to frequently evaluate advocacy tasks and priorities within the dynamic environment.