



5 Tips for Advocacy—More Than Passing a Bill or Budget

When a bill is passed, usually regulations are written to spell out how the different parts of the law will be put into practice. You don't have to be an expert to have a say in this part of the process. You just need to know where to find information and how to be involved.

- 1. Find your resources.** You don't have to be an expert to have an impact, you just need to know where to look for information when you need it.
 - **Legislators.** Lawmakers who sponsored a bill and their staff have a stake in the successful implementation of legislation.
 - **Advocacy organizations.** Advocacy organizations can help you know where, when, and how to influence decisions.
 - **Washington Administrative Code (WAC).** The WAC is the record of all the rules that are created to implement Washington State laws. <http://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/>
- 2. Learn who makes decisions.** State agencies implement state laws. Find out which state agency is responsible for the law you care about by reading the legislation—or asking your resources for help.
- 3. Build relationships.** Once you know who at a particular agency has responsibility for the issue you care about, introduce yourself. Relationships matter. Many agencies have a Rule Coordinator. See a list of rules coordinators here: <http://leg.wa.gov/CodeReviser/Documents/RClst.htm>
- 4. Speak up.** There are multiple ways to provide input and share your expertise as bills and budget items are implemented.
 - **Submit public comments.** Most new rules to implement laws are first published in draft form and allow time for public comment. You can usually comment online or at public hearings.
 - **Join Advisory Boards.** Many agencies have advisory boards or committees to provide input into specific areas of work. Ask agency staff, legislators, and organizations you trust to find out what boards and committees exist, and how to get nominated or appointed to serve.
- 5. Know the timeline.** Some decision deadlines are written into laws. Others are established by the agency in charge of putting the law into practice. Part of your advocacy might include trying to get timelines *sped up* to ensure communities benefit from legislation in a timely way, or *slowed down* to allow for consultation and community input.

For more information contact Children's Alliance.

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