

Advocacy in Action:

Engaging Elected Officials

Advocating for your nonprofit's mission requires more than just identifying issues—it takes strategic outreach to the right people, particularly elected officials who can influence policy and funding decisions. To maximize your nonprofit's impact, it's crucial to communicate clearly, present data-driven solutions, and use multiple advocacy channels to engage lawmakers effectively.

The following steps provide actionable guidance for engaging elected officials, building relationships, and advocating for your nonprofit's needs. By tailoring your approach, leveraging key stakeholders, and using strategic communication, you can create a strong, unified voice.

Be Specific & Solution-Oriented

- **Define the Issue:** Clearly outline the problem (e.g., funding freeze) and its impact on your community and programs.
- **Present the Data:** Provide compelling data that shows how many people or programs are affected.
- **Offer Solutions:** Propose actionable solutions, such as reinstating funding, emergency relief, or alternative support mechanisms.

Use Multiple Advocacy Channels

- **Direct Engagement:** Schedule personal meetings (virtual or in-person) to build relationships and engage lawmakers directly.
- **Broaden Support:** Use phone calls and emails to demonstrate widespread concern and keep officials informed of your nonprofit's priorities.
- **Collaborate with Others:** Strengthen your message through petitions, coalition letters, and partnerships with other nonprofits, amplifying your voice and showing unified support.

- **Raise Awareness:** Leverage public relations efforts like op-eds, press releases, and community events to highlight your mission and attract decision-maker attention.

Leverage Board Members & Major Stakeholders

- **Influential Advocacy:** Encourage your board members, business leaders, and major donors to actively engage in advocacy efforts.
- **Amplify the Message:** When key stakeholders speak up, elected officials are more likely to listen and act.