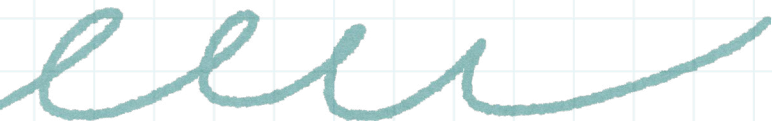
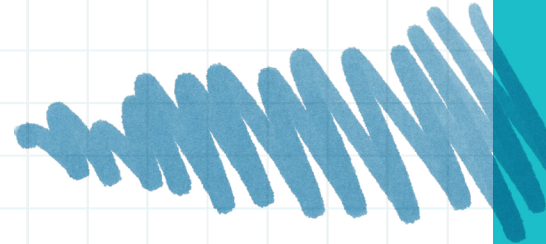




National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence

EMPOWER AND EDUCATE: ADVOCATING FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICES AND PREVENTION



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YOUR VOICE MATTERS.

As someone who cares about ending and preventing sexual violence, regardless of your profession or role, you hold unique and powerful insight into the needs of survivors and what works to prevent sexual violence in your communities. There are many ways that you can engage in public policy. This toolkit offers concrete information and tools to help support your advocacy efforts on behalf of survivors of sexual assault—whether you are new to the policy world, or have been involved for many years.

It is easy to feel overwhelmed by the prospect of reaching out to leaders and public policymakers and understanding governmental and administrative processes. Many people do not know who their elected representatives are—at the local, state, and federal level— and have not engaged in direct advocacy of any kind¹. Meeting with elected officials at all levels may feel daunting. However, as a community member and a voter, your voice is important and powerful at all levels of government.

Elected officials and administrative leaders are focused on how to meet their constituents' needs. In most cases, policymakers are responsive to learning about the policy-related priorities of individuals who live in their city, town, county, or legislative district. While they may not always agree with a constituent's point of view, the information and data shared by the people they represent is important for them to know as they make decisions that affect the community.

The voice of a constituent, or an organized group of constituents, can be powerful in educating leaders about the needs of their constituents. Your expertise and lived experience as an advocate for survivors of sexual assault and for sexual assault prevention is essential in shaping public policy.

If policy advocacy is new to you, we have included a glossary of terms and definitions (**Appendix A**) that you may encounter as you develop and build your public policy capacity.

¹Many states and cities have websites to assist in identifying who your policy makers are. One such website for state legislators across the country: <https://pluralpolicy.com/find-your-legislator/?address=916+west+lebanon+street+arlington+va>

Advocates and other employees of nonprofit organizations may be concerned with whether their advocacy for public policy change is legal and allowable. This is an important concern, and while there are rules, there is much you can do that is permissible.

There is an important distinction between lobbying and providing education about a particular issue. To lobby is to make a specific request to a policymaker to take a position on a bill, a regulation, or a budget appropriation. Individuals and organizations can educate policymakers about an issue without making a specific request for that policymaker to vote a certain way.

Education can be provided through individual **conversations**, sharing of **data and research** about the prevalence of sexual violence or how many **survivors are seeking services** from your organization. Providing testimony, written or oral, may also be considered education and not lobbying as long as the statement does not request support or opposition for a policy position.

That said, organizations with 501(c)(3) status can lobby, and it is appropriate in many cases to do so. However, annual lobbying limits must be recognized and followed. This will vary by state. You can find information about the lobbying regulations in your state, including when and whether you need to register as a lobbyist and the cost of lobbying registration [here](#). It is essential that you keep track of lobbying time and expenditures in the event you must report them at the end of the year.

The Alliance for Justice has created this helpful IRS Lobbying Flowchart that can help to guide you as you navigate how and when you engage in [public policy](#).

02 LOBBYING VS. EDUCATION

Key Points to Remember Regarding Lobbying

1. Federal funds can **never** be used for the purpose of lobbying.
2. 501(c)(3) organizations can never engage in political campaigns in which they support or oppose a candidate. This would be considered electioneering, which is a prohibited activity.
3. Nonprofits can engage in elections in non-partisan ways. The organization *Nonprofit Vote* has a list of permissible (and non-permissible) activities that allow you to ensure that sexual violence is part of an election conversation. Examples include: promoting voter education and registration or conducting a candidate questionnaire about their positions on policy issues important to you. Remember, activities should never give the appearance that you are promoting one candidate over another.
4. 501(c)(3) organizations can engage in efforts related to ballot measures. This work may be considered lobbying by the IRS but it is not considered electioneering. For more guidance on ballot measure activity by nonprofits, please see this excellent resource from [Bolder Advocacy](#).
5. You CAN lobby (within limitations) and you CAN educate policymakers about the issues you deeply understand and care about.
6. Individuals CAN meet with policy-makers and advocate for certain policy positions outside of their work time. When doing so, be clear that you are not representing an organization, and be sure not to use organizational resources (computer, phone). A list of lobbying related laws and regulations can be found in **Appendix B**.

WHAT IS PUBLIC POLICY?

Public policy is a system or framework of laws, regulations, and actions that are used by government entities to achieve economic and social goals. Public policy is established at all levels of government and therefore education and policy advocacy is possible in your town, city, county, state, and federal governmental levels.

Governments shape policies that impact communities in various ways. These include passing laws, issuing executive orders at federal, state, and local levels (such as city and town ordinances), establishing rules and regulations, approving ballot initiatives, applying court rulings, and making funding and budget decisions.

03
POLICY & ADVOCACY 101

Legislative advocacy can happen at multiple levels of government:

- ✓ City and town councils
- ✓ State legislatures
- ✓ Local school boards
- ✓ Tribal governments
- ✓ U.S. Congress

Examples Include:

A group of concerned parents working with the local school board to establish a right to afterschool programming for youth 13-27.

Local sexual assault programs providing testimony to the state legislative appropriations committee about the needs of sexual assault survivors and the cost to meet those needs.

Systems-level advocacy addresses the way in which our social institutions—education, criminal-legal, housing, health care, and others—respond to and impact survivors of sexual assault may be supportive and responsive, but may also create barriers and challenges. Your advocacy within these systems can move systems toward more survivor-centered approaches and responses.

Administrative advocacy can also happen in multiple ways:

- ✓ Governor's office
- ✓ State agencies, such as state departments of health, education, housing, and criminal justice
- ✓ Federal agencies, such as the Departments of Health & Human Services, Justice, Housing & Urban Development, and Education

Examples Include:

Your state/territory department of housing proposes new regulations outlining eligibility for emergency shelter, and sexual violence advocates attend the hearing to provide testimony on the needs of sexual assault survivors in shelter and submit their written testimony for the record.

Public policy is also made at the state and federal court level, where legal rulings are made that impact the way laws are interpreted. Legal decisions create legal precedents in the form of case law, which help courts determine how to rule on future court actions. Advocacy at this level can include the submission of or signing on to Amicus Briefs to support one side of the case or another, and provide education and information to the judiciary.

Legislative and policy-making processes will vary from state to state, in local jurisdictions, and in tribal communities. While the steps will differ depending on where you are seeking policy change, the public policy process can be generalized in this way:

Public Policy Process



Image retrieved 8/8/24:
<https://socialstudieshelp.com/ap-government-and-politics/exploring-public-policy-and-governance-key-processes-and-influences/>

Ideally, proposed policy change is a response to a problem or issue that requires attention. In the anti-sexual violence field, examples include the lack of funding to support survivor mental health services; barriers that prohibits sexual assault prevention and education from being allowed in schools; or the spread of the distribution of non-consensual deepfake sexual images.

Formulating a policy solution is often the most challenging part. It requires developing policies that advance the work to end sexual violence while minimizing harm to individuals and communities. Involving all impacted parties, communities, and stakeholders is essential to creating public policy that centers marginalized groups, benefiting all communities in the process.

Your meetings and engagement with policymakers has an impact on the policy adoption phase. As effective advocates for survivors of sexual assault and experts in violence prevention, you can shape and influence policy outcomes.

Effective Advocacy

Wherever policy is made, advocacy and education are possible.

Sexual assault survivor advocates play a critical role in helping policymakers understand survivors' issues and needs, the importance of prevention, and how racism, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination negatively affect survivors and hinder prevention efforts.

Survivors of sexual violence not only need access to culturally relevant services and support directly related to healing from sexual violence, their needs may involve housing stability, employment support, long term trauma therapy, access to public benefits, health care, child care, immigration relief, mental health and substance use disorder treatment, educational support, legal services, cash assistance and other components to support safety and healing.

If you work on behalf of survivors of sexual assault and toward sexual violence prevention, you are an expert in sexual violence and the needs of survivors and your communities. You have the experience and stories that will illustrate survivor needs, their barriers to accessing healing services, and the challenges in implementing prevention education and awareness. Advocacy and storytelling encourage movement beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach to developing policy solutions and help

policymakers take into account the unique needs in their own state and communities.

Advocacy is not a one-time activity. It is about building and maintaining relationships with elected officials, administrators, and other policymakers and their staff over time. Ideally, you want to establish yourself and your organization as a resource to policymakers and their staff for timely and accurate information.

Effective advocacy is rooted in mutual respect and trust. Even if you and a policymaker disagree on a position or strategy, you want them to trust your facts and your sources; ultimately this is the best foundation for educating and persuading policymakers. The cornerstone of any effective advocacy is sustained relationship building and management.

Through the public policy process, changes may be made at various steps along the way and you may not end up with the outcome you had originally hoped for.

This image that illustrates the legislative process is also cautionary about what can happen and why your voice is so important at all steps of the policymaking process:

Legislative Process, updated by Lisa with images from businessball.com



As legislator introduced the bill



As committee reported it



As House amended it



As Senate amended it



As passes into law



As implemented by state agency



What the budget allowed



What taxpayers really want

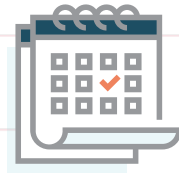
Meetings are an important way to meet policymakers, introduce them the work of your organization, and educate them about sexual violence services and prevention.

Much has changed about how we do our work in recent years and many of us have shifted much of our work online. This holds true to policymakers and their staff, too. Virtual meetings are still popular in terms of public health and convenience, especially when travel to meet in person is costly and prohibitive. It is still reasonable to request an in-person meeting if you are able, particularly when the policymaker may be visiting your community or has an office local to your organization.

Whether you meet virtually or in person, the same approach and strategy applies. If you do meet in person, be sure to follow current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines regarding masks, social distancing, and responding to an exposure of an infectious disease.

04

MEETING WITH POLICYMAKERS



REQUEST YOUR MEETING

Initiate your request for a meeting with the policymaker's office, through their scheduler if they have one. You can often find this information on their websites. For local governments and agencies, you might find contact information on their city.gov or county.gov website, or by searching the administrative office websites, such as the department of health. State lawmaker contact information is generally on the state legislative website (state.gov) and you can access U.S. Congress member information at senate.gov or house.gov. Members of Congress will list DC and district local offices typically at the bottom of their website or under "Contact" information. Most members have two or more offices in the state or district; you can visit the location that is most convenient to you.

If you are not sure who to contact, you may also call the office to ask them the best way to request a meeting. It could be via email, website form, or some other platform used by the office. We have included a Template Meeting Request letter in **Appendix C** to help you in crafting your invitation. Be sure to include the purpose of the meeting. If the person with whom you would like to meet is an elected official or an administrative leader, request the meeting with as much notice as possible, as their calendars are often scheduled weeks in advance. Scheduling a meeting can be a bureaucratic process; allow sufficient time for the scheduler to process your request.

Within three to five days of initiating your request, call the scheduler or office to confirm that it was received, if you have not heard back from them. Offices may receive numerous requests and it is easy for an email to be overlooked. Following up is key to securing a meeting.

If the policymaker is unavailable, the scheduler may connect you with a staffer who handles issues related to sexual violence; it is perfectly acceptable to meet with staff. If the scheduler does not offer an alternative contact and you do not know the staffer who handles these issues, you can call the office and ask who they recommend. It is often easier to get on a staffer's calendar and in most cases, they schedule their own meetings.

Prior to your meeting, send the staffer, policymaker and/or scheduler any materials that you wish them to have prior to the meeting. The more prepared they are, the more productive your meeting will be.



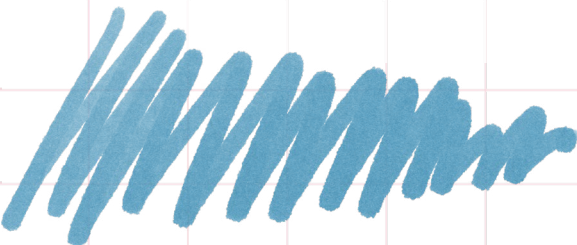
KNOW YOUR POLICYMAKER

One of the most important things you can do to prepare for advocacy meetings is to know who you are meeting with and where that policymaker stands on the issues important to you and your organization.

If the policymaker has a website you may be able to view their policy positions and platforms.

If your advocacy is with an administrative agency, policy positions may be available through the administrative leadership websites—such as the Governor or Mayor, or individual agency leadership—Secretary of Health and Human Services, Department of Education.

Make sure your team has all the information about the policymaker by creating a Policymaker Profile **(Appendix D)**.





DEVELOP YOUR TALKING POINTS

- ✓ **Share Organizational Statistics and Needs:** Present data on the people you serve, challenges with unmet needs, your prevention activities, and community partnerships. Emphasize the critical need for funding, directly linking it to the policymaker's constituents.
- ✓ **Use Personal and Survivor Stories:** Share your own story as an advocate, as well as survivor stories (with permission and no identifying information) to highlight the importance of services and prevention efforts.
- ✓ **Reference Research and National Resources:** Incorporate data and research from trusted sources like the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) and the National Alliance to End Sexual Violence (NAESV) policy papers to strengthen your message.
- ✓ **Align with Policy Priorities:** Ensure your message is consistent with your organization's policy priorities to maintain a clear and focused narrative.
- ✓ **Prepare Leave-Behind Materials:** Create a one-pager summarizing your priorities, key statistics, and the services your organization offers to leave with policymakers.



BUILD AND PREPARE YOUR TEAM

Consider who will participate in your meeting, what role each person will play, and how you will prepare.

Moderator: The moderator starts the meeting, facilitates introductions, and keeps the meeting on track.

Notetaker: Note taking should include documentation of the tenor of the meeting, any questions asked by the policymaker and/or staff, and noting any meeting follow-up that is requested or offered.

Survivor Activist: Consider including someone who has benefited from your programs and can speak from lived experience, which can be compelling to policymakers. However, it should only occur when a survivor proactively wishes to participate in this way.

Community Members: The inclusion of your community partners is an important way to demonstrate the collaborative nature of your work and the intersectional needs of survivors of sexual assault.

Preparation: Assign topics for each team member to discuss in the meeting.

Practice together what each will say and to ensure that the entire team understands the priorities of the meeting.

Use this **Meeting Planning Checklist** to coordinate and make sure your team is on the same page (**Appendix E**).



WHAT TO EXPECT

- ✓ **Even if** you are scheduled to meet with the policymaker, you might end up meeting with staff instead because of unforeseen schedule changes. Similarly, you may end up meeting with a different staffer than expected.
- ✓ **It is common** to meet with a staff member and not the policymaker themselves. Do not view a meeting with a staff member as a waste of time. Staff exercise significant influence on how a policymaker will vote or what decisions they will make and are often responsible for understanding policy and legislative details. These are the people who inform their bosses' understanding of an issue and how they ultimately will vote.
- ✓ **A meeting** could be brief and last less than 15 minutes depending on their schedule, how familiar they are with your organization, and how aligned they are with your policies. Generally anticipate no longer than a 25-30 minute meeting.
- ✓ **Staff** that you meet with may be young and early in their career. That does not mean they aren't knowledgeable or that they are the wrong person to be meeting with.
- ✓ **If you** are meeting with a busy policymaker or their staff, locations of meetings may change depending on their schedule. You may be asked to meet in a hallway or cafeteria.



MEETING TIPS

- ✓ **Do your research.** Know where the policymaker stands on your issue and make sure you have essential information that supports the reason for your meeting.
- ✓ **Develop objectives, talking points, and a meeting plan.** Know the name and or number of the bill, ordinance, funding source, or regulation you will be discussing.
- ✓ **Stay informed.** Be aware of recent high profile relevant events or recent significant policy changes in your field.
- ✓ **Prepare and organize** with your team, including community leaders outside of your organization and survivor activists.
- ✓ **Dress appropriately.** Usually business or business casual, even if you are meeting in a virtual space.
- ✓ **Allow** everyone to introduce themselves so everyone knows who is present. Mention if there are constituents in your group!
- ✓ **Begin** your meeting with a thank you—for previous support, for making the time to meet with you, etc. Always start on a positive note.
- ✓ **Stay** calm and in control of your words, body language, and emotions.
- ✓ **Speak** from your area of expertise and share personal stories. Storytelling puts real-life faces with facts and data.
- ✓ **Leave** time for the official to respond and to ask you questions.
- ✓ **If you are asked a question,** it is okay to say you do not know the answer. Do not make something up, guess or hedge. If you give incorrect information, you will undermine your credibility. Offer to find out the information and follow up.
- ✓ **End** on a positive note, even if the meeting was not ideal. If you have not found anything to agree on, you can agree to keep talking. Always thank them for their time.
- ✓ **Invite** the member/staffer to visit and tour your program or to speak at an upcoming event during Sexual Assault Awareness Month.
- ✓ **Make sure** you have the names and emails for the staff in attendance.
- ✓ **Follow up!**



AFTER YOUR MEETING

- ✓ **Share** your visit on social media—with the policymaker or staff's permission only!

For example: Thank you @SenatorABC for meeting with [insert program name] to talk about critical funding for survivors of sexual assault #SupportSurvivors #EndSA #BeAVoice.

- ✓ **Follow up** with any information you promised to share following the meeting, including invitations to upcoming events. Remember, advocacy and education is about building and sustaining a relationship. You want the official and staff to see you as a credible resource.

- ✓ **Send** a handwritten thank you note (**Appendix F**) to the policymaker; an email is fine for staff.

- ✓ **Keep track** of your meeting(s) by completing a Meeting Summary (**Appendix G**). If relevant, share your meeting summary with your State/Territory Sexual Assault Coalition or, if federal in nature, with NAESV. Your engagement with policymakers is important to the state and federal policy work that is happening. NAESV and your coalition will benefit from your insight and may be able to help support you in follow up with the policymaker.

There are many other ways to engage with policymakers and to engage in policy development, in addition to formally meeting with elected officials and administrative leadership. Relationship and trust building is a process, and your advocacy will be more effective if policymakers know about and understand the work that you do every day in your communities. There are many ways that policymakers can get to know you and that you can get to know them!

05

MORE WAYS TO ENGAGE!

WAYS TO ENGAGE

- ✓ **Offer** a tour of your organization.
- ✓ **Invite** them to speak at an event such as a fundraiser, or a sexual assault awareness month (SAAM) activity.
- ✓ **Engage** all candidates in a speaking event or a candidate questionnaire to better understand their position on issues important to you, if there are upcoming elections.
- ✓ **Plan** a roundtable or listening session of community members for them to join and listen.
- ✓ **Attend** town or city hall meetings.
- ✓ **Attend** legislative office hours.
- ✓ **Participate** in hearings or other listening sessions and opportunities to provide feedback.
- ✓ **Engage** them in volunteering for your program.
- ✓ **Use** social media to create awareness of an issue or need. You can even tag your local or federal legislators to share the information directly.

Other ways to engage in public policy in your community:


- ✓ **Vote!**
- ✓ **Help** survivors register to vote.
- ✓ **Educate** yourself about current policy issues related to sexual violence by engaging with your state/territory sexual assault coalition.
- ✓ **Follow** local, state, and federal news about policy issues, and about sexual assault cases.
- ✓ **Organize** community groups—such as youth, elders, and other vulnerable communities—where you can learn together about the needs in the community, and the solutions that community members have to offer.
- ✓ **Collaborate** with organizations that intersect with survivor lives—health care, education, employment, housing, immigration and organizations serving vulnerable populations.
- ✓ **Write** letters to the editor of your local paper to educate the broader community about the needs of survivors.

06

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Glossary of Terms



501(c)(3): A 501(c)(3) is a specific designation under the U.S. Internal Revenue Code for non profit organizations that are exempt from federal income tax. These organizations are typically charitable, religious, educational, scientific, or literary in nature. 501(c)(3) organizations are prohibited from engaging in political campaign activities and can only engage in limited lobbying activities. They cannot endorse or oppose political candidates, and their lobbying efforts must not constitute a substantial part of their activities.

Ballot Measure: A proposal that is placed on the ballot for voters to approve or reject. It is a way for citizens to directly participate in the legislative process by voting on specific issues, laws, or amendments. Ballot measures are also known as referendums, propositions, or initiatives, depending on the jurisdiction and type of measure.

Bill/Legislation/Law

A bill is a legislative proposal put before a governing body for consideration as a new law. A bill is often referred to as a piece of legislation during the time that it is being debated and revised.

Bills can originate from different sources, including legislators, the executive branch, or in some cases, individual citizens.

Once a bill has been passed by the legislative bodies and signed by the executive, it becomes a law.

Legislation also refers to the body of laws and legal rules that have been enacted by a legislative body.

Constituent: In a political context, it often refers to a person who lives in a particular electoral district and is represented by an elected official.

Electioneering: The act or practice of actively working for a political candidate or party during an election, especially by canvassing, campaigning, or otherwise trying to influence voters. It typically involves activities like distributing campaign materials, making speeches, or persuading people to vote for a particular candidate or political party.

Partisan/Non-partisan/Bi-Partisan: A partisan is a strong supporter of a party, cause, or person. Nonpartisan is not biased toward any group. Bipartisan refers to the agreement or cooperation of two political parties that usually oppose each other's policies.

Policymaker: A person responsible for or involved in the formulation, creation, and implementation of public policy, typically in a government or organization. Policymakers include elected officials, government leaders, and other individuals or groups who have the authority to make decisions that affect public laws, regulations, and practices.

[Click here for a glossary of frequently used terms in the sexual violence field.](#)

Appendix B

Rules Governing Lobbying Regulations

IRS Sec. 501(c)(3)

“Under the Internal Revenue Code, all section 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. Contributions to political campaign funds or public statements of position (verbal or written) made on behalf of the organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity. Violating this prohibition may result in denial or revocation of tax-exempt status and the imposition of certain excise taxes.

Certain activities or expenditures may not be prohibited depending on the facts and circumstances. For example, certain voter education activities (including presenting public forums and publishing voter education guides) conducted in a non-partisan manner do not constitute prohibited political campaign activity. In addition, other activities intended to encourage people to participate in the electoral process, such as voter registration and get-out-the-vote drives, would not be prohibited political campaign activity if conducted in a non-partisan manner.

On the other hand, voter education or registration activities with evidence of bias that (a) would favor one candidate over another; (b) oppose a candidate in some manner; or (c) have the effect of favoring a candidate or group of candidates, will constitute prohibited participation or intervention.”

[Source](#)

2002 Anti-Lobbying Act, 18 USC 1913:

No part of the money appropriated by any enactment of Congress shall, in the absence of express authorization by Congress, be used directly or indirectly to pay for any personal service, advertisement, telegram, telephone, letter, printed or written matter, or other device, intended or designed to influence in any manner a Member of Congress, a jurisdiction, or an official of any government, to favor, adopt, or oppose, by vote or otherwise, any legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriation, whether before or after the introduction of any bill, measure, or resolution proposing such legislation, law, ratification, policy, or appropriation; [Source](#)

Appendix B

Rules Governing Lobbying Regulations cont'd

Violence Against Women Act – 42 USC 13925(b)(10) reiterates compliance with the above Anti-Lobbying Act:

“(10) Prohibition on lobbying Any funds appropriated for the grant program shall be subject to the prohibition in section 1913 of title 18, relating to lobbying with appropriated moneys. [Source](#)

Lobbying Act as a condition for grantees of Office of Violence Against Women grant programs:

Certification regarding lobbying:” 1. LOBBYING As required by 31 U.S.C. § 1352, as implemented by 28 C.F.R. Part 69, the Applicant certifies and assures (to the extent applicable) the following: (a) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the Applicant, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making of any Federal grant, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, or the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal grant or cooperative agreement; (b) If the Applicant’s request for Federal funds is in excess of \$100,000, and any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Federal grant or cooperative agreement, the Applicant shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” in accordance with its (and any DOJ awarding agency’s) instructions; and (c) The Applicant shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subgrants and procurement contracts (and their subcontracts) funded with Federal award funds and shall ensure that any certifications or lobbying disclosures required of recipients of such subgrants and procurement contracts (or their subcontractors) are made and filed in accordance with 31 U.S.C. § 1352.” [Source](#)

Appendix C

Meeting Request Template

Dear [scheduler's name],

My name is [name] and I am a constituent of [policymaker name]; I am contacting you to request a meeting with the [policymaker name] on behalf of the [insert your organization]. My colleagues and I are interested in setting up a virtual/in person meeting with the member about [topic]

[example related to funding: the importance of funding rape crisis centers, supportive services for survivors of rape and sexual assault, and rape prevention in our community. These services have historically been underfunded, resulting in waiting lists, including [number] centers in [state, or at our program]. The prominence of public conversations about sexual harassment, assault, and rape have resulted in an increased demand for services and prevention programs that most centers [or, specifically our program] is/are unable to meet, forcing them to either turn away survivors in need or try to stretch their already limited funding even further.

[If the request for the meeting is not to discuss a specific funding request, instead include the topic—bill number, ordinance, and a description of the issue.]

[Describe your organization, your mission, and why this issue is important to you, and what education and information you can offer to the policymaker as they consider this issue]

As direct service providers, we are eager to meet with [policymaker name] and share what we are seeing in the community and how this issue is impacting our shared community. I can be reached at [number] or [email] to schedule a meeting; I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,
[Your Name]

Appendix D

Policymaker Profile Worksheet

NAME OF POLICYMAKER

ORGANIZATION

PARTY AFFILIATION, IF APPLICABLE

PERSONAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE
SUCH AS PAST WORK AND EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

LENGTH OF TIME IN CURRENT POSITION
INCLUDE ANY HISTORICAL INFORMATION ABOUT AREAS
OF POLICY INTEREST AND INFLUENCE

**PUBLIC POSITIONS THEY HAVE TAKEN
RELEVANT TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE**
RELATED SURVIVOR ISSUES SUCH AS HEALTH CARE,
HOUSING, AND IMMIGRATION

VALUES YOU MAY HAVE IN COMMON

**ORGANIZATIONS THAT THEY MAY HAVE
BEEN INVOLVED IN OR SUPPORTED**

**IDEAS FOR WHAT INFORMATION WOULD
BE USEFUL TO THEM AND HOW THEY
MAY BEST RECEIVE IT**

Appendix E

Meeting Planning Checklist

TO BE SHARED AMONG YOUR GROUP MEMBERS ATTENDING THE MEETING

TIME & LOCATION

MEETING WITH

NAME	
EMAIL	<input type="radio"/>
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
.....	
NAME	
EMAIL	<input type="radio"/>
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
.....	
NAME	
EMAIL	<input type="radio"/>
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
.....	
NAME	
EMAIL	<input type="radio"/>
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
.....	
NAME	
EMAIL	<input type="radio"/>
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	

LIST OF TEAM MEMBERS

i.e. leader, notetaker, topical designees, who will be sending information ahead of time, who will do follow up

NAME	
ROLE	
EMAIL	
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
.....	
NAME	
ROLE	
EMAIL	
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
.....	
NAME	
ROLE	
EMAIL	
CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	

Appendix F

Thank You Letter/Email

Dear [policymaker/or meeting participant],

Thank you for taking the time to meet with members of the [Your Organization] on [date] to discuss the importance of [topic of meeting]

[funding example: funding rape crisis centers in [state] and across the country [if federal]. Funding plays a vital role in ensuring that rape crisis centers in [state] can meet the needs of your constituents for sexual assault services and prevention programs. While the national conversation about rape and assault has opened many people's eyes to both the prevalence of assault and its impact on survivors, it has also drawn attention to the growing gap between the demand for, and availability of, services and prevention programs in our state/community.

As we discussed during our meeting...[summarize any commitment made by the member; answer any question asked during the meeting that you did not have an answer for at the time; and/or reference any materials you offered to send as follow-up].

Lastly, we would like to invite you to visit [a rape crisis center/our program] at your convenience. We would be happy to help schedule and facilitate a tour so that you and your staff can see first-hand the importance of the services that are made possible through your support.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your office to ensure we are meeting the needs of the residents of [state/district].

Best,
[Your Name]

Appendix G

Meeting Report/Documentation

If you are talking with state or local officials, this form could be helpful to keep for your records and to share with your state/territory sexual assault coalitions, so that they are aware of your activities and can offer support or follow up as needed. If you are advocating with members of the US Congress, it is helpful to share this information with NAESV for those same reasons.

DATE OF MEETING

YOUR ORGANIZATION NAME

YOUR NAME

YOUR EMAIL

NAME OF Policymaker and/or staff members with whom you met

EMAIL OF THE HIGHEST RANKING STAFF MEMBER AT THE MEETING

ISSUES DISCUSSED

QUESTIONS ASKED

TONE OF MEETING

FOLLOW UP NEEDED? 

By you, or recommended to your Coalition or NAESV?

Appendix H

Additional Resources

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)

<https://www.cdc.gov/nisvs/documentation/index.html>

Find Your Legislator

<https://pluralpolicy.com/find-your-legislator/>

Legislative Process (US Congress) video

<https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process>

NAESV Website

<https://endsexualviolence.org>

NonProfit Vote

<https://www.nonprofitvote.org/resource/staying-nonpartisan-permissible-election-activities-checklist-2/>

Schoolhouse Rock How a Bill Becomes a Law (dated in terms of diversity)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Otbml6WlQP0>



National Alliance to
End Sexual Violence

WEBSITE endsexualviolence.org

FACEBOOK facebook.com/endsexulviolence

INSTAGRAM instagram.com/_endsxlvioleence/

X x.com/endsxlvioleence

LINKEDIN linkedin.com/company/national-alliance-to-end-sexual-violence-naesv/

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