State Advocacy Toolkit

A Guide to EMS Physician Advocacy

State Advocacy How-To

Advocacy for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Physicians and Professionals at the state level involves efforts to promote policies, regulations, and resources that support the profession and ensure the highest quality of pre-hospital care.

Here's a general guide on how to engage in state advocacy for EMS professionals:

UNDERSTAND THE ISSUES.

Stay informed about the current issues and challenges facing EMS professionals and the out-of-hospital emergency medical care community in your state. This may include scope of practice, licensure requirements, reimbursement rates, dispensing of medical care and medicine, and working conditions.

RESEARCH STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

Familiarize yourself with existing state laws and regulations related to EMS professionals, out-of-hospital emergency medical care, and health care. Understand what changes or improvements are needed to better support the profession and workplace environment.

MONITOR LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS.

Stay vigilant and monitor proposed legislation and regulations in your state related to EMS professionals and the health care industry at-large. Be prepared to respond quickly to new developments in policy, legislation and regulations and adjust your advocacy strategy accordingly.

COLLABORATE WITH PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Research and work with EMS associations and professional organizations to strengthen your advocacy efforts. These groups often have experience in navigating legislative processes, have distilled their messaging points and can provide valuable support.

CREATE A CLEAR MESSAGE.

Develop a concise and compelling message that outlines the 2-3 key issues and changes you are advocating for. Make sure your message is easy to understand and resonates with a broad audience.

ENGAGE WITH LEGISLATORS.

Schedule meetings with state legislators to discuss the issues facing EMS professionals and ask if there is any legislation they have seen that could impact your industry. Be prepared to present your case, share relevant data and statistics, and explain how proposed changes will positively impact both EMS professionals and the community they represent.

EDUCATE DECISION-MAKERS.

Provide educational materials to legislators, staff, and other decision-makers in the legislative and executive branch about new developments and specific policies that could impact the industry and community. This could include informational packets, studies, and testimonials from EMS professionals illustrating the importance of each issue, and the impact it could have on EMS professionals and patients.

PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC HEARINGS.

Attend public hearings where EMS-related issues are being discussed and participate in state-led stakeholder engagement opportunities to offer a frontline perspective. Provide testimony and share updates, success stories, and calls to action. Engage with legislators and other stakeholders online.

CELEBRATE SUCCESSES AND STAY PERSISTENT.

Acknowledge and celebrate any successes or positive changes that result from your advocacy efforts. However, also be prepared for a potentially lengthy process, and stay persistent in your pursuit for EMS professionals.

Remember that effective advocacy requires a combination of passion, knowledge, and strategic communication. By working together and staying engaged, you can make a meaningful impact on the policies that affect EMS professionals in your state.

In-Person Visit

Meeting with a legislator or their staff proves highly effective for addressing particular concerns or legislative priorities. It's important to acknowledge the potential difficulty in securing a meeting with members due to their demanding schedules as public servants. Nevertheless, connecting with a staff member who specialties in your specific area of interest, like the health legislative assistant, can be equally beneficial and initiate a meaningful dialogue with the member.

Here's a general guide on how to prepare and what to expect for an in-person visit:

Contact the Office in Advance: Reach out to the member's scheduler beforehand to request a meeting with the member and/or the staffer specializing in your issue. You can do this by phone or email.

Prepare Your Talking Points: Specify your visit's purpose, stating who you represent and highlighting one to two specific issues. Clearly outline key points for the meeting, prioritizing the most critical issues to maximize your limited time.

Know Your Audience: Research the legislator or staffer thoroughly to understand their background, positions, and relevant information. Tailor your talking points to align with their interests and priorities.

Be Punctual: Arrive on time for your scheduled appointment. Punctuality demonstrates respect for the individual's time and professionalism. Be patient if the member is late, cannot attend, or if the meeting gets interrupted.

Prepare an Agenda and Bring Supporting Materials: Create an agenda to keep the conversation focused and prepare supporting documents, statistics, and materials for your talking points. Bring visual aids and leave behind collateral illustrating key points concisely to strengthen your case.

Be Concise and Focused: During the meeting, communicate clearly and concisely. Stick to the main points and avoid going off-topic to ensure a productive discussion. Outline how you or the group you represent can assist the member and their staff in achieving common goals.

Anticipate the Conversation: Know the counterarguments, anticipate questions or potential push-back, and prepare thoughtful, compelling responses.

Listen Actively: Allow the legislator or staffer to share their perspectives and ask questions. Active listening fosters a more collaborative and constructive conversation.

Follow Up: After the meeting, send a thank-you email expressing appreciation for the member and/or staff's time. Take this opportunity to reiterate key points, recap agenda items, restate any requests, and provide additional information promised during the meeting.

Stay Informed: Keep yourself informed about any developments related to the issues discussed. This knowledge will be helpful for future interactions.

What to Wear

Business Attire: Wear business professional or business casual attire. For men, this may include a suit and tie or dress shirt with dress pants. Women may opt for a business suit, blouse with dress pants or a skirt, or a professional dress.

Appropriate Footwear: Choose closed-toe shoes that are polished and in good condition. Avoid overly casual or worn-out footwear.

Conservative Colors: Stick to neutral colors such as black, navy, gray, or beige. These colors convey a sense of professionalism and seriousness.

Well-Groomed Appearance: Ensure your overall appearance is neat and well-groomed. This includes clean and polished shoes, well-kept hair, and overall good personal hygiene.

Written Correspondence

Effective written communications are particularly impactful in the initial stages of the legislative process, offering a prime opportunity to shape future interactions.

Many legislators prioritize the review of feedback from constituents, and most offices maintain regular counts, often on a weekly or even daily basis, of the input received on specific issues.

Email Template

Subject: Urgent: Support Needed for EMS professionals Advocacy Efforts in [Your State]

Dear [Recipient's Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am writing to bring your attention to a matter of great importance for the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) professionals in [State]. As a dedicated [Your City/State] resident, advocate for and provider of quality out-of-hospital emergency medical care, I am reaching out to request your support for [State Initiative].

The EMS community provides the treatment and transport of people in crisis health situations that may be life threatening, including in a wide variety of situations from car accidents to drownings to incidents of heart attack. EMS is much more than a ride to the hospital, it is a system of coordinated response and emergency medical care, involving multiple people and agencies. A comprehensive EMS system is ready every day for every kind of emergency.

[Provide a brief overview of the specific issues or challenges facing EMS professionals in your state. Include any relevant statistics, personal stories, or policy changes (legislation or regulations) to emphasize the urgency and significance of the matter.]

[Include any additional specific actions or requests based on the unique needs of your advocacy efforts.]I believe that, with your support, we can make a meaningful impact on the policies affecting our local Emergency Medical Services (EMS). If you have any questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
[Your Full Name]
[Your Contact Information]

Phone Calls

Making phone calls is an effective method for expressing your concerns, especially in the crucial days or hours preceding essential votes. While connecting with your representative directly may be unlikely, the legislative staffers are well-informed about the member's stance on specific issues and will convey your concerns to them.

If you don't know a member's phone number, you can go to https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials and enter your home address to find your elected officials and their contact information.

Phone Call Template

Introduction:

"Hello, my name is [Your Name], and I'm a concerned resident of [Your State]. I'm calling today because I believe we can make a positive impact on the health and well-being of our community by addressing some pressing issues facing Emergency Medical Services (EMS) professionals, out-of-hospital medical care providers and the communities we serve. I hope I can have a moment of your time to discuss these crucial matters."

Body:

1. Express the Issue
2. Provide Supporting Information
3. Highlight the Importance
4. Request Support
5. Address Potential Concerns

Conclusion:

"Thank you for taking the time to listen to my concerns. I encourage you to explore this issue further and consider supporting initiatives that enhance the working conditions and support for our local EMS professionals. If you have any questions or need additional information, I'd be happy to provide it. Our community's health and safety depend on the dedication of our EMS, and your support can make a significant difference."

Remember to personalize the script based on the specific issues facing your state and the political preferences of the person you are speaking to.

Social Media

Using social media to connect with elected officials and engage in digital advocacy is a powerful tool for constituents. Platforms like X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook offer instant and direct communication with elected representatives. Consistent messaging and timely calls to action on critical issues can yield significant results.

Remember to mention if you're a constituent and update your profile to follow elected officials. Engaging with legislators on social media during recess periods can be particularly effective, as they are more likely to use their accounts personally at these times. This approach enhances digital advocacy effectiveness and fosters direct communication between constituents and elected representatives.

Social Media Post Template

Reaching out to [@YourLocalRepresentative] to advocate for [Express Issue] to help support our EMS workers. Their dedication is vital to our communities, and I believe it's crucial to ensure they receive the acknowledgment and resources they deserve. 🚑👏 #SupportEMS #Advocacy #CommunityFirstResponder

Find Us on Social Media

Follow NAEMSP's social media accounts and share content that resonates with you and your network:

NAEMSP Official Social Media

- @NAEMSP
- @NAEMSP

Hashtags

- #NAEMSP2024
- #SupportEMS
- #SaveALife

Call To Action

THE SITUATION

Provide a brief overview of the specific issues or challenges facing EMS professionals in your state and the impact they could have on the community. Use compelling language to convey the urgency of the matter.

OUR CALL TO ACTION

We believe that, as advocates for healthcare excellence, we can make a difference in the lives of our EMS professionals and the community they serve.

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE

Stay Informed: Familiarize yourself with the challenges our EMS professionals are currently facing in [Your State].

Engage with Legislators: Reach out to local representatives, urging them to support policies that improve working conditions, recognition, and resources for our EMS professionals.

Spread the Word: Utilize your networks and social media platforms to raise awareness about the challenges EMS professionals are encountering. Use the hashtag [#INSERTHASHTAG] to unify our efforts.

Participate in Advocacy Events: Attend any local advocacy events or public hearings related to EMS issues. Your presence and voice matter.

Encourage Others: Share this call to action with your colleagues, friends, and family. The more people involved, the stronger our advocacy efforts become.

Email Template

Subject: Urgent Call to Action: Support Needed for EMS professional Advocacy in [Your State]

Dear [Organization/Association] Members,

I hope this message finds you well. As dedicated members of our community, we understand the critical role that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) play in providing life-saving care during emergencies. Right now, our local EMS professionals are facing challenges that require our collective support.

Body

The Situation
Our Call to Action
Here's how you can engage

Conclusion

Together, We Can Make a Difference: By coming together as a united front, we can ensure that our EMS professionals have the support and resources needed to continue their invaluable service to our community.

Thank you for your time and dedication to the well-being of our community. If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to reach out to [Your Contact Information]. Let's show our EMS professionals that they have a community behind them!

Best regards,
[Your Full Name]
[Your Title]
[Your Organization/Association]

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