



# **LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY TRAINING 2.0**

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Preparation for  
State House Advocacy Day on May 16

**January 2024**

**The Children's League of Massachusetts**

**Boston, MA**



CHILDREN'S  
LEAGUE  
OF MASSACHUSETTS

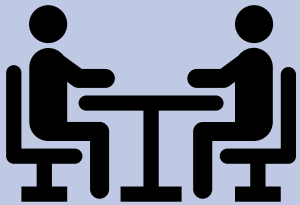


**A driven non-profit organization that advocates  
for transformational public policy**

# Meeting Objectives



Understand the  
**legislative process**



Discuss legislative  
**advocacy strategies**

# Why Advocate?



- Strength in numbers
- YOU are the expert on these issues
- Personal stories have the most impact
- Legislators are elected to represent you
- Create lasting positive changes

# How?: Advocacy Framework

## CLM Advocacy Buckets

Legislation

Budget

Administrative





# When to Advocate with Who?



## MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

# The Massachusetts Legislature

## SENATE



- President of the Senate:  
*Karen E. Spilka*
- 40 members
- Represent districts of ~159,000

## HOUSE



- Speaker of the House:  
*Ronald Mariano*
- 160 members
- Represent districts of ~40,000

# Massachusetts Legislature Basics

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- Two-year legislative cycle
- Each session approx. 8,000 bills are filed
- Know the legislators for your organization's district (as well as for your home address)







**Does anyone have an example of how knowing a legislator in their organization's district was helpful?**

# Bill Movement



**1) Committee -  
Public Hearing &  
Report (1st  
Reading)**

**2) Floor Debate &  
Vote (2<sup>nd</sup> Reading)**

**3) Standing  
Committee on Bills  
in Third Reading**

**4) Vote (3<sup>rd</sup> Reading)**

**5) 2<sup>nd</sup> Branch (&  
Conference Committee  
*if needed*)**

**6) Governor**

# Take Action Overview – Who & When

1<sup>st</sup> Reading: Intro.  
Out of Committee

2<sup>nd</sup> Reading: before  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Debate

3<sup>rd</sup>  
Reading: Chamber's  
final vote

## **Committees** (assignment until Feb. 7)

- Lobby directly before they report out on a bill
- Testify at public hearings

## **Your Legislators** (regularly)

- Build/maintain your relationships
- Ask them to be a bill sponsor (until committee report)
- Prepare them for floor debates

## **Governor's Office** (to ensure sign-off; strong budget too)

- Advocate for her final signature





**Questions?  
Comments?**

# Important Committees

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**\*\*PUSH FOR FAVORABLE  
REPORT\*\***

- **Joint Committee on Children, Families & Persons with Disabilities**
- Senate Committee on Juvenile and Emerging Adult Justice
- Joint Committee on Education
- Joint Committee on the Judiciary
- House and Senate Committees on Ways & Means
- Committee on Steering and Policy



# Public Hearings



- Convened February - November
- Remote public participation available

**\*\*ADVOCATE AT THE  
HEARING\*\***

# Preparing Testimony



1

Connect to legislator  
with intro.

2

Present challenges  
being faced with  
compelling  
evidence; include a  
personal story to  
illustrate your point  
if possible

3

Explain how the bill is  
the (or part of the)  
solution

**Can someone describe how it was to testify either at the State House or via Zoom?**



# Final Steps



**\*\*ADVOCATE VIA  
PHONE CALLS, EMAILS  
AND MEETINGS\*\***




- Floor Debates
- After Standing Committee in the Third Reading Review & Final Vote
- 2nd Branch – same full process
- Returns to Original Chamber
- Conference Committee (if needed)
- Governor

# Conference Committee

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**Conference Committee** creates **Conference Report**

**Original Chamber** votes

- Favorable  **Second Chamber** votes
  - Favorable  **Governor** votes
  - Unfavorable  back to **Conference Committee**

**\*\*ADVOCATE & LOBBY COMMITTEE MEMBERS\*\***



# Governor's Vote

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1. Sign
2. Veto
3. Amend
4. Do Nothing
  - When **Legislature is in session**: it **becomes law** within ten days
  - When **Legislature is not in session**: "Pocket Veto"



**\*\*ADVOCATE WITH  
GOVERNOR & HER STAFF  
FOR BILL PASSAGE\*\***

# Advocacy Stamina

Many bills need to be filed many years before they even make it to consideration on the floor.



Will someone please share a story of how they ***didn't give up*** on a bill and ultimately saw it pass after multiple sessions?

# Comments? Questions?



# ADVOCACY

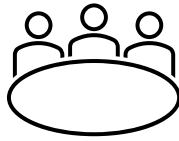
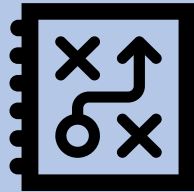


**Elevate the voice of an individual, group, or organization, generally with policymakers or the public.**

**Draw awareness to and educate others about a topic or issue with the intent of causing action**

# Key Legislative Advocacy Strategies

**Planning:** coordinate  
with similarly situated  
organizations

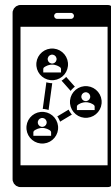


## **Direct Outreach to Legislators:**

meetings, phone  
calls, emails, & public  
hearings

## **Other Outreach:**

such as social media,  
website, and press

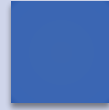




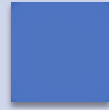
## **Coalition Building**



## **Public Education**



Coordinate/attend meetings, conferences (press or other) & events, e.g., legislative briefings



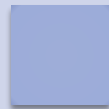
Direct outreach campaigns, e.g., asks & testimony



Work with other coalitions on shared interests, e.g., juvenile justice and poverty



Create/share reports, surveys, press releases, fact sheets



Support voter/candidate engagement in election cycles

# **#1 Leg. Advocacy Strategy: Connect with Legislators!**

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## **WHY:**

- **Legislators are elected to serve us**
- **Build/maintain the relationship**
- **Educate & Influence them**
  - **You're the expert**
  - **They have power to make decisions that affect you and those you/your organization serve**



# #1 Leg. Advocacy Strategy: Connect with Legislators!

## HOW - Overview:

- **Meet with your legislator in person**
- **Write, call, or email**
- **Write testimony or testify live at a public hearing (sign on to CLM's written testimony)**
- **Invite legislators to speak with your organization**
- **Be part of CLM & Join a CLM Task Force/Coalition** (we host meetings, briefings, & Hill Days)



# #1 Leg. Advocacy Strategy: Connect with Legislators!

## HOW - Details:

1. Be **prompt** and **patient** – legislators may be late or interrupted
2. Bring up your personal/professional **connection** to the legislator & the issue(s) at hand
3. Share a **fact sheet/resource**
4. Stick to **key points** – you may only have 10-30 minutes
5. **Follow up** to any questions

# Tips to Tailor Messaging

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Identify appropriate audience



Use people-first language



Use data and graphics (fact sheets)



Have an elevator pitch: Express who you are and why your issue matters to your audience



Follow up with supportive info



Send thank you cards & emails after meetings/victories





**Can someone please tell us about a meeting they had with a legislator that they enjoyed?**

# ADVOCACY RESOURCES



**Communications and Public  
Policy Specialist Insights**

# Advocacy Resources: Action Alerts Newsletters, Bulletins

## ACT TODAY TO GET INVOLVED!

### Call on Congress to Reauthorize the Federal Adoption Opportunities Program

This legislation would extend this program through 2027 and also reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), an important source of federal prevention funding.

Per the December 14th deadline, please sign on to this letter by the end of today. You can read the letter and sign on your organization by [clicking here](#).

### Tell Congress to Support the Child Tax Credit

Negotiations are underway for a major end-of-the-year tax package. Call or email your Senators to advocate for the much-needed expansion of the Child Tax Credit. [Click here](#) to learn how to easily reach out to your Senator.



## Legislative Advocacy & Outreach Templates for CLM's 2023-2024 Policy Agenda

### What's Happening?

Massachusetts Legislative Committees have until February 7th to move bills forward this legislative session. If bills on CLM's policy agenda are reported out favorably by Committees, our bills are one step closer to moving onto the floor and getting voted through the House and Senate.

### **Can we count on you to contact legislators before the deadline on February 7th?**

It is now time to urge Committees to provide favorable reports on our bills! See below for our outreach strategy and templates/legislative scripts you can use to contact key legislators.

### Our League's Outreach Strategy

By using our [outreach templates](#) containing legislative scripts, you will be able to easily support our League's advocacy by doing the following:

#### **1) Push Committee leadership to favorably report our bills out of the Committee**

- You can contact the Committee Chairs using the email templates and information [here](#)

#### **2) Check to see if your legislator is on the Committee when contacting Committee leadership**

- Reaching out to your legislators on the Committee can go a long way, as your legislator can also encourage Committee leaders to prioritize our bills

#### **3) Advocate for bills per CLM Task Force/Coalition**

- We provided templates highlighting bills per Task Force/Coalition if you wish to particularly push for bills pertaining to a certain issue area

[Access Legislative Outreach Templates](#)

# Advocacy Resource: Fact Sheets, Blog Posts and Reports



DECEMBER 14, 2022

## Home Visiting Programs: A Lifeline of Support for New and Expecting Families

For many, pregnancy can be a joyous experience even amidst the undeniable stress that comes with starting a family. New parents who are lucky enough to be surrounded by friends and family receive support to navigate the unfamiliarity that comes with giving birth and raising a child. For others, preg...

READ MORE 

## WHERE DO WE BELONG?

Profiles of “High Acuity” Adolescents in Congregate Care and The System’s Struggle to Meet Their Needs



March 2023



PROMOTING THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES THROUGH PUBLIC POLICY

**An Act to Eliminate Disproportionality and Inequities for At-Risk Children**  
[S.120](#) (Sen. Moran) & [H.153](#) (Rep. Donato)

### THE PROBLEM

#### The Child Welfare System is Deeply Inequitable

Decades of [research](#) has proven that disparities occur at every decision-making point in the child welfare process. Yet, Massachusetts state agencies lack consistency and cohesion when tracking data on disproportionality. Many child-serving agencies don't have vital data reporting mechanisms in place, which makes it impossible to collect, compare, and analyze data across systems. Furthermore, it is not enough to have identified and quantified these problems – we must hold ourselves accountable to correct these inequities. With the well-being and healthy development of the Commonwealth's children and youth at risk, the stakes could not be higher.

### Data-Driven Research

#### Persistent Racial Disproportionality is Evident Across the Sector

Per the Department of Children and Families (DCF)'s [FY '22 Annual Report](#), Black, Indigenous, and children of color are significantly overrepresented within Massachusetts' child welfare sector.

### Quick Facts:

#### Open DCF Cases

Rates compared to white children:

- Hispanic/Latinx: 2.9x
- Black: 2.4x



#### Protective Intakes (51A) Screening

Rates compared to white children:

- Hispanic/Latinx: 2.3x



#### Out-of-Home Placements

Rates compared to white children:

- Hispanic/Latinx: 2.5x
- Black: 2.4x
- Native American: 2.1x



#### Aging Out of Foster Care

Rates compared to white children:

- Hispanic/Latinx: 1.2x
- Asian: 1.5x
- Black: 1.5x
- Pacific Islander: 1.2x
- Native American: 2x





# Advocacy Resource: Social Media Blasts (use #mapoli)



Children's League of Massachusetts

Published by Loomly · September 14, 2023 ·

CLM endorses the Parentage Act (S.947 / H.1713), which would update Massachusetts' outdated parentage law so that it is clear, equitable, and provides legal protection for all families, including LGBTQ+ families!

Learn more about this important legislation here: <https://massterlist.com/.../massachusetts-law-doesnt.../>

Massachusetts Parentage Act Coalition #mapoli



MASSTERLIST.COM

Massachusetts law doesn't always recognize parental rights for same-sex, non-traditional mothers and fathers - MASSterList



The Children's League of Massachusetts

299 followers

8mo ·

Thank you for joining us, [Bay State Community Services, Inc.](#)! It was wonderful to have your expertise with us at the State House.



Bay State Community Services, Inc.

2,280 followers

8mo ·

On Wednesday, May 3rd, Bay State Community Services' Executive Director, Daurice Cox, attended the [The Children's League of Massachusetts](#)' State House Advocacy Day on Beacon Hill. Daurice joined alongside the many oth ...see more





# CLM – Join our calls for action!

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- Create/present/sign on to **testimony** for hearings
- Create/sign on to **letters** to legislators and the Governor
- **Spread the message** (fact sheets, newsletters, social media, blog posts, surveys)

## STAY CONNECTED:

Join a CLM Task Force and/or Coalition

CLM Newsletters, Action Alert, Social Media Campaigns

Check CLM's website and Member's Portal

# Event-Specific Resources

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## Materials

Fact Sheets & Bill Information (website)

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Action Alerts (Emails/Member Portal)

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## Trainings

Budget Training (Feb. 9, 2024)

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State House Advocacy - Know-Before-You-Go (May 10, 2024)

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***\*\* What else would you like to learn? \*\****

**WHAT ADVOCACY  
STRATEGY HAS BEEN  
IMPACTFUL FOR YOUR  
EFFORTS?**

# Questions?





# LOBBYING GUIDE

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# Key Definitions

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- **Advocacy:** *drawing awareness to/educating* the public about a topic or issue, with an aim to cause political action.
- **Lobbying:** *influencing the actions of decision makers involved in making policy, such as members of government, in relation to a specific topic or piece of legislation.*
- **Grassroots or Coalition Advocacy/Lobbying:** individuals/groups working together to advocate/lobby



# Nonpartisan Advocacy for Nonprofits

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**Nonprofits can interact with legislators and anyone through *nonpartisan advocacy* without any lobbying limits!**

- Educate & inform the public and decisionmakers
- Advocate on an *issue*  
(not tied to specific legislation)
- Conduct candidate forums/education  
with *all* candidates
- Send questionnaires to each candidate
- Voter education and registration



# Nonprofits Can, and *Should*, Lobby!

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**Direct Lobbying:** expressing your ask on specific legislation with a legislator or government official

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## Three Elements:

**Direct** written or oral communication to a legislator, legislative staff, or other government official working on legislation

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That reflects a **viewpoint** (for or against) to influence their position

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**Specific legislation**, such as, introduced bills, legislative proposals not yet introduced, budget bills, and ballot measures

# Any more comments/questions?







COUNTING  
DOWN  
TO STATE HOUSE  
ADVOCACY DAY!  
~~MAY 16, 2024~~





# Let's Continue the Conversation!

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