

Be The Voice

**Tips for accessing resources that
can help you make changes or
impact your community.**



Information on:

- Types of Advocacy
- How to contact elected officials
- Agencies that help

Advocacy can be a powerful tool, when done effectively. It can influence others and provide a way to voice your opinion. Opinions can affect lives of individuals at local, state, and national levels.

Advocacy : The deliberate process, based on demonstrated evidence, to directly and indirectly influence decision makers, stakeholders, and relevant audiences to support and implement actions that contribute to the fulfillment of specific issues.

Steps to Successful Advocacy

There are several approaches you can use to advocate effectively.

- ◇ Focus on a specific issue. Know your issue. Stay current with information related to your specific issue.
- ◇ Develop a clear and compelling message. Know your issue and be prepared to support your argument.
- ◇ Determine your target audience. Identify the most appropriate place to address your issue.
- ◇ Determine how to portray your message. Visit decision makers face-to-face, phone call, email, or attend town hall meetings.
- ◇ Deliver your message effectively. Tell your audience what they are being asked to do and the positive impact to such actions. Remember to always be positive and polite.

Types of Advocacy

Individual Advocacy: Individual advocacy focuses on changing the situation of one person to protect his or her rights or to improve individual services. Some tips:

- Be sure to pay attention to letters and documents
- Note any deadlines for actions you can take
- Know your appeal rights – ask for information– if needed
- Get help when your actions have not been effective. Some helpful agencies are listed on pages 4 & 5.

Systems Advocacy: Systems advocacy is an effort to change policies, rules or laws which determine how services are provided. Systems advocacy works to change the situations of a whole group of people who share a similar problem, or to change a service system.

Systems advocacy can include:

- Programs that work on behalf of individuals or groups to ensure that they receive the benefits and services for which they are eligible and that organizations within the established service delivery system meet the collective needs of the community;
- Programs that attempt to gain public support for a particular issue of cause; or that seek to influence legislation, local ordinances or administrative rulings in order to benefit specific interest groups or achieve specific social, political, or environmental goals.

Legislative Advocacy: The practice of attempting to persuade legislators to adopt a particular stance on an issue.

Disability Advocacy

ARC of Racine

<http://www.thearcofracine.org/>

(262) 634-6303

The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities

<https://wi-bpdd.org/>

(608) 266-7826

Disability Rights Wisconsin

<http://www.disabilityrightswi.org/>

Milwaukee Office

414-773-4646

TTY: 888-758-6049

Toll Free: 800-708-3034

*Family Care and IRIS Ombudsman Program (Age 18-59)

Statewide helplines on specific issues:

Disability Drug Benefit Helpline (Medicare Part D):

800-926-4862

Disability Voting Rights Helpline:

800-928-8778

Your local **Independent Living Center, Society's Assets** can also assist people with advocacy as needed as well.

Society's Assets: 262-637-9128 or www.societysassets.org

Elder Advocacy Resources

AARP (Wisconsin)

<http://www.aarp.org/states/wi/> 886-448-3611

Staffed from 9am-5pm weekdays; Advocacy, Livable Communities, Health and Economic Security. National organization advocates on a variety of public issues.

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups

<http://www.cwag.org/> 800-366-2990

The Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, statewide membership organization that was founded in 1978. CWAGs' mission is to improve the quality of life for people of all ages through: Intergenerational Understanding and Leadership Development, Public Education, Legal and Legislative Advocacy and Public Policy Development.

GWAAR - Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc.

<http://www.gwaar.org/> 608-243-5670

The mission of the Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. is to deliver innovative support to aging lead agencies as we work together to protect the well-being of older people in Wisconsin. They are the AAA (Area Agency on Aging) for Racine County.

Ombudsman Program (Age 60+)

Wisconsin Board on Aging and Long Term Care

<http://longtermcare.state.wi.us> 800-815-0015

An Ombudsman is an advocate for long term care consumers who are aged 60 and over who reside in nursing homes, group homes or are participating in the various long term care programs.

Advocacy Resources

Tracking Legislation

Federal Legislation: <https://www.congress.gov/> or <https://govtrack.us/start>

State Legislation: find: www.legis.wisconsin.gov

Track: <https://notify.legis.wisconsin.gov/login?ReturnUrl=%2f>

Find Your Legislators

Federal - <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>

U.S. Government Official Website - Find contact information for: federal, state, local, or tribal governments and elected officials -

<https://www.usa.gov/agencies>

State - <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/> -Enter your home address in the “Find My Legislators” box.

Contacting Your Federal Legislators

U.S. Congress: All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which consists of a Senate and House of Representatives.

US Senate: <http://www.senate.gov/senators/contact>

US House of Representatives: <http://www.house.gov/representatives>

Email Congress – a service powered by the Sunlight Foundation - <https://emailcongress.us/>

How to Contact Your Legislator by Phone

Call Switchboard I-202-224-3121

Senate phone list - http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

House phone list - http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/mcapdir.aspx

Contacting Your State Legislators- Wisconsin Legislative Hotline (leave a message or indicate a position on legislation) I-800-362-9472 (toll-free) or in Madison 608-266-9960.

Email addresses: Senators - <http://legis.wisconsin.gov/2019/legislators/senate>

Representatives - <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2019/legislators/assembly>

Mailing Addresses:
(your local Senator)
P.O. Box 7882
Madison WI 53707-7882

Representatives whose last names begin with a letter from A to L:
P.O. Box 8952, Madison, WI 53708

Representatives whose last names begin with a letter from M to Z:
P.O. Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708

Governor
115 East Capitol
Madison WI 53702
(608) 266-1212; <http://evers.wi.gov/Pages/connect.aspx>

Contacting Your Racine County Government Resources

Visit the Racine County website to find a complete listing of Elected Officials, Racine County Board and Committee agendas and minutes, and contact numbers for all Racine County Departments.

<http://racinecounty.com/government>

Aging and Disability Resource Center of Racine County

<http://www.adrc.racinecounty.com/>

To provide older adults and people with physical or developmental/intellectual disabilities the resources needed to live with dignity and security, and achieve maximum independence and quality of life. The goal of the Aging and Disability Resource Center is to empower individuals to make informed choices and to streamline access to the right and appropriate services and supports.

Our vision is to promote “quality of life” by offering information, support and options.

Aging and Disability Resource Center of Racine County

**AGING AND DISABILITY
RESOURCE CENTER OF
RACINE COUNTY**

**14200 Washington Ave
Sturtevant, WI 53177**

**Phone: 262-833-8777
866-219-1043**

www.adrc.racinecounty.com

