

ADVOCACY TRAINING FROM THE OAFP



Advocacy doesn't have to take a lot of time and can make a big difference to the policies that affect your practices and patients.

STEPS TO BECOMING A STRONG ADVOCATE

- 01** If you haven't already, register to vote. [Find information here.](#)
- 02** Find out who your elected officials are by [going here](#) and putting in your address in the lower right hand corner.
- 03** Stay active with the OAFP to keep up to date on issues and to receive tips about the legislative process. The OAFP provides legislative updates periodically throughout the year and will send alerts asking for action as needed.
- 04** Make contact with your legislators. This can be done a variety of ways. It isn't necessary to do all things or have constant contact. The idea is for it to be often enough they remember you and might even seek your advice.
 - Email them, introduce yourself and offer yourself as a constituent resource on health matters.
 - Continue to have contact without an agenda. For example, if you read their column in the local paper or online, send them an email with a response or questions.
 - Send an email asking what they expect to be the big health issues in the coming session.
 - Respond to their posts on social media or tag them in posts you make about issues that are important to you.
 - Send them a birthday card.
 - Say hi in person if they host a town hall meeting or coffee gathering. Or visit the capitol and see them in action if time allows.
 - Make phone calls or send emails when legislative issues are pressing.
 - Thank them for actions you appreciate. Know that legislators may not always agree with you but it's important to thank them when they do. This can help you in the future as well when you may not agree.
- 05** Respond to alerts asking for calls and emails to legislators when bills are moving that will help or hurt your practices and patients. Because you already have a relationship with your legislators, they are more likely to listen to your requests.
- 06** Attend OAFP trainings and meetings and AAFP legislative meetings as you are able.
- 07** You may also decide you would like to make political contributions to your local legislators. Contributions are not seen as a way to influence a legislator's voting but instead are a way to help good candidates obtain and keep office if you so desire.

ADVOCACY DURING A PANDEMIC

This will not be much different than your normal busy times of life. You may just rely much more on email and social media to make connections. You also can watch proceedings online much of the time during session, which runs February through May. Committee meetings and floor action are streamed online on the State House and Senate pages.