HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR YOUR RIGHTS

PARTICIPATE IN ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC COMMENT

According to the Public Comment Project "In accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, federal agencies are legally required to respond to every unique, fact-based comment. These responses are published, along with the final rule or action, in the Federal Register. If the agency does not respond to such a comment, or does respond but does so in a way that may be considered "*random and unpredictable*," the commenter has cause to take the agency to court for violating procedural law." Advocate for yourself by offering public comments!



ENGAGE WITH YOUR COMMUNITY AND CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

- Collaborate with community groups and agencies to raise awareness and advocate for protection of civil liberties. Collection action can be a powerful tool in influencing policy and safeguarding rights.
- Read ACLU's "How to Organize" resource for recommendations on organizing in your community

WRITE YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

- State and Local Official governments can serve as a counterbalance to federal policies. Find your State Representatives using this link: https://www.house.mi.gov/
- ACLU's writing tips guide and Social Impact's Effective advocacy writing guide contains several important elements and tips for writing your elected officials.

STAY INFORMED

- It's important to stay informed on policy changes and court cases,
- Use credible news outlets with information.
- To follow bills you can visit your state legislature's website (https://www.legislature.mi.gov/), where most have searchable databases containing summaries of current legislation, bill sponsors, and voting history.
- Track State Supreme Court Cases through ACLU's interactive "find your court" map.

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LEAD OR ATTEND A PROTEST

The First Amendment protects your right to assemble and express your views through protest. However, police and other government officials are allowed to place narrow restrictions on exercising your rights making it important for you to know you rights. Joining local or national organizations with values and missions similar to your own may also be a way to join movements to express your voice. Read the Activist Handbook "How to organise a protest" step-by-step guide to learn more.



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

- Familiarize yourself with your constitutional rights and how to exercise them. Educate yourself through civil rights organizations that provide guidance on protecting your freedoms. Read ACLU's "Know Your Rights" document which outlines your basic rights under the U.S. constitution and civil rights laws.
- Also, stay informed with new legislation. Several civil rights organizations continually put out supportive materials to help you feel supported. Check out HAND's instagram: @handetroit for resources!

RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE:

LEARN MORE

- Toolkit: Legislative Advocacy
- How do I Advocate for Policy Change?
- Advocacy 101: Types, Examples, and Principles
- How to comment on proposed rules and other rulemaking documents
- ACLU's "Know Your Rights"
- ACLU's find your court case interactive map
- ACLU's How to Take Action on Inauguration Day and Beyond
- Activist Handbook "How to organise a protest" step-by-step guide
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center: Know Your Rights Toolkit
- CLASP: The Power of Public Comments
- Public Comment Project: How Public Comment Works