

Advocacy in the Legislative Process – How to be Effective

New Mexico

The legislative process relies on you:

Our legislative body is made up of real people elected into office by you. The legislators need and want to hear from their constituents. They rely on constituents for information.

How the legislative bodies work:

The Legislative Session begins the 3rd Tuesday of January. Interim committees are made up of both senators and representatives. They meet in-between Sessions while standing committees meet during the Session. The Session runs for 60 days on odd years & 30 days on even years. Committee meetings are formal but open to the public and have set times for public comment. These meetings can also be watched online via webcasting.

Find your legislator:

Find your senator or representative at the New Mexico Legislature website by zip code or address. Find contact information for legislators on the website or in the Legislative Almanac, a free tabloid like newspaper published annually. The almanac is available at the east entrance to the Round House in Santa Fe. It can also be downloaded from the NM Rural Electric Cooperatives website. Please note that it is a very large file to download however.

To become law, legislation must go through these steps:

1. Bills are drafted with input from interested parties. They are sponsored by legislators, given a number and assigned to a standing committee.
2. Assigned committees hear each bill and either pass, or do not recommend the bill.
3. If passed by all committees, the bill moves on to the Senate or House respectively, considered again for a pass, no pass, or no recommendation.
4. If the bill passes the House or Senate, it moves back to the next series of committee hearings where it is considered again for a pass, no pass or no recommendation.
5. If the bill passes its 2nd round, it moves on to the House or Senate, respectively.
6. If the bill passes both the Senate AND the House it will go to the Governor to be signed.
7. If the bill is signed by the Governor, it becomes law.

Use **Bill Finder** or **My Roundhouse** to follow a bill. The Legislative Council Service researches information regarding proposed bills and provides interpreter services.

Remember:

- Get to know your legislator and get them to know you and what is important to you! The best time to do this is before or after the session. Invite them to meet with you.
- **Numbers count!** Get the people who are affected by the legislation to call, write, or email. Call the Capital switchboard and ask to be transferred if you are unsure of the direct phone number. Legislators also pay attention to Twitter feeds, e.g. **#nmlegis**.
- If a bill is on the Governor's desk, contact their office to urge signing or not, of a bill.
- Tell your own story and how your situation will be impacted by this bill. Organize and write your group's point of view in a 1-3 minute script or fact sheet. This should be 1-page, 1-sided, and only on one issue. Be clear in your language, do not use jargon, and include contact information.
- The Disability Coalition hosts an annual pre-legislative Session forum, as well as regular legislative reports throughout the Session. Contact Disability Rights NM (DRNM) to be added to the email list.



New Mexico Legislature

www.nmlegis.gov

#nmlegis

Find your Legislator
nmlegis.gov/lcs/legislator_search.aspx

Bill Finder
nmlegis.gov/lcs/billfinder/bill_finder.aspx

My Roundhouse
nmlegis.gov/lcs/roundhouse/
Live Webcasting
nmlegis.gov/lcs/webcast/default_session.aspx

Capitol Switchboard
505-986-4300

Office of the Governor
505-476-2200
www.governor.state.nm.us

Legislative Council
505-986-4600

DRNM
505-256-3100

**NM Capital building
"The Round House"**
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
FREE parking garage:
420 Galisteo St.

Questions?

Call the CDD
Information Network
1-800-552-8195
or visit our website at
www.cdd.unm.edu/infonet
Informational Tip
Sheets:
www.cdd.unm.edu/infonet/tip-sheets.html