

WELCOME TO THE

**Michigan Association
for Local Public Health's**

DAY AT THE CAPITOL
2026



Please check-in, grab some breakfast, and find a seat –
the program will begin at 9:05a.

Legislative Advocacy

An Overview



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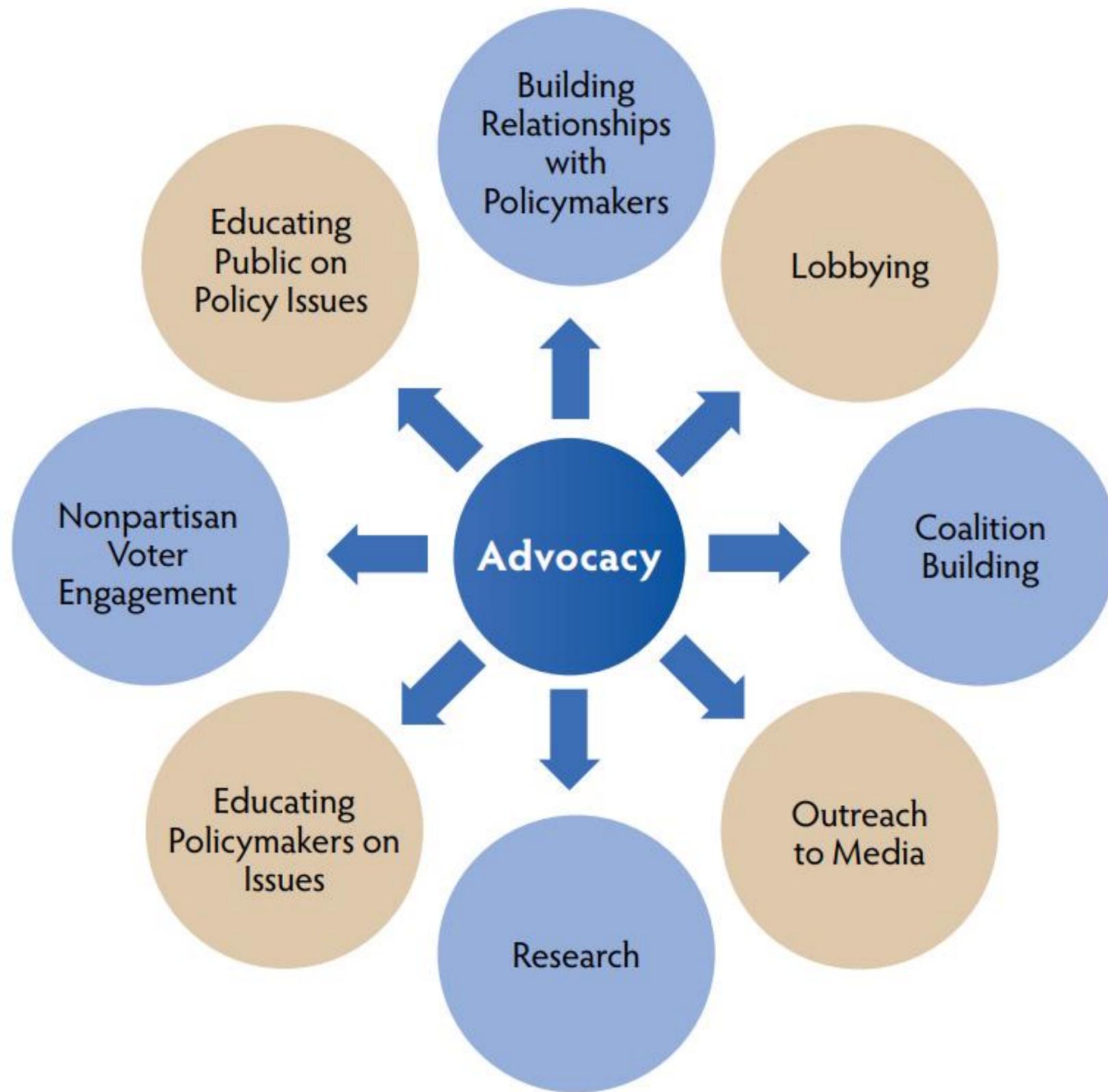
What Will We Cover?

- What is Advocacy?
- Is advocacy the same as lobbying?
- Can local public health lobby?
- What should I expect at my legislative visits?
- What should I say?
- Where can I find out more?

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy is simply identifying, embracing, and promoting a cause





Advocacy Activities

What is Lobbying?

According to the IRS...

An organization will be regarded as attempting to influence legislation if it contacts, or urges the public to contact, members or employees of a legislative body **for the purpose of proposing, supporting, or opposing legislation.**



Lobbying – Rules are Important

- Michigan’s Lobby Act defines “lobbying” as “communicating directly with an official in the executive branch of state government or an official in the legislative branch of state government **for the purpose of influencing legislative or administrative action.**”
- A “lobbyist” is an individual, business, committee, or any other organization or group of persons, whose expenditures (i.e., payments for labor or similar) for lobbying either:
 - (a) organization exceeds **\$3,175.00** in value in any 12-month period; or
 - (b) individual paid more than **\$800.00** for lobbying, in any 12-month period
- Thus, a local government entity that meets the definition of a lobbyist either based on its expenditures or by contracting with a lobbyist agent, as well as each employee that qualifies as a lobbyist agent, is subject to the Lobby Act’s registration and reporting requirements.

Lobbying – Rules are Important

- State and local government employees are not prohibited from lobbying state legislators under the Michigan Lobby Act.
- If an individual spends a significant amount of time lobbying on behalf of their employer, they have to register as a lobbyist agent, and the County would need to register as a lobbyist and report its expenditures.
- According to the Michigan Secretary of State, a **health officer is excluded from the definition of a lobbyist.** Thus, the health officer may lobby without having their salary reported as a lobbying expenditure. (Secretary of State Letter to Schindler, Sept. 3, 1981.)

Lobbying – Rules are Important

- Counties likely have specific requirements for employees engaging in activities to influence legislation or state policy.
- The terms and conditions of any grants or federal or state contracts may themselves prohibit use of funds for lobbying, or they may require compliance with federal regulations or cost principles that prohibit lobbying.
- **Please check with your supervisor or human resources department before engaging in these activities during work hours.**

Lobbying – Rules are Important



Ideas. Experience. Practical answers.



Lobbying and Other Political Activity by Government Employees in Michigan

The appropriate role for public health professionals in politics and policy-making is long debated. Some argue that public health professionals should avoid engaging in politics because politicization undermines the field, while others argue that politics are inextricable and therefore unavoidable in public health.¹ But even within the narrowest conception of public health practice, there are many ways in which politics and therefore advocacy are relevant to effectively assuring the public's health, ranging from seeking adequate funding for local health services to answering questions from community members about proposed ballot measures affecting health. Thus, beyond normative, ethical, and strategic questions about advocacy, public health departments and practitioners must consider the complex array of federal, state, and local laws that govern and limit public bodies' political activities and use of public resources. This fact sheet describes Michigan state laws and regulations that govern public bodies and employees with regard to several categories of activity: (1) lobbying of state government officials; (2) public employees' participation in political activities; and (3) use of public funds for political activities.

This fact sheet does not discuss federal law, but it is important to remember that federal restrictions on lobbying and other political activities are generally tied to federal funding. The terms and conditions of any grants or federal or state contracts may themselves prohibit use of funds for lobbying, or they may require compliance with federal regulations or cost principles that prohibit lobbying. Readers should be sure to consider all funding sources and applicable terms and conditions of any grant, whether federal, state, or other, to determine applicable laws. Readers should also review local laws since Michigan local governments may adopt ordinances or resolutions concerning lobbying as long as they are not more restrictive than the Lobby Act provisions.²

Lobbying State Officials



Why are We Doing This?

THE 10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

To achieve equity, the **Essential Public Health Services**² actively promote policies, systems, and overall community conditions that enable optimal health for all and seek to remove systemic and structural barriers that have resulted in health inequities. Such barriers include poverty, racism, gender discrimination, ableism, and other forms of oppression. Everyone should have a fair and just opportunity to achieve optimal health and well-being.



Policy Development

Create, champion, and implement policies, plans, and laws

² The 10 Essential Public Health Services. Public Health National Center for Innovations. Retrieved from <https://phnci.org/national-frameworks/10-eps>.

What Do I Say?

- You are a representative of **MALPH**, your employer, and your community
- Today's agenda includes **3 budget priorities** and **2 policy priorities**
- Explain how these priorities affect your work at the local level and your community
- Ask for their support
- Open the door for continued conversation



What's in My Packet?

Left Side (this stuff is for your reference)	Right Side (this stuff is to leave behind)
Agenda (map on the back)	What is Local Public Health? (x2)
Speaking Points	Day at the Capitol Leave-Behind (x4)
Best Practices for Legislative Visits	

- ✓ Additional copies of **What is Local Public Health?** brochure and **Leave-Behind** are available on the table
- ✓ **Backgrounders** on the three programs that are budget priorities are also available

Best Practices for Your Visit



Public health is non-partisan!

Appropriations Leadership

Senate	House
Sen. Sarah Anthony - Chair	Rep. Ann Bollin – Chair
Sen. Sean McCann – Vice-Chair	Rep. Matt Maddock – Vice-Chair
	Rep. Phil Green – Chair of DHHS Subcommittee

Tobacco Bill Sponsors

Senate	House
Sen. Sam Singh – SB 462	Rep. Jennifer Wortz – HB 5368, HB 5369
Sen. Paul Wojno – SB 463	Rep. Bradley Slagh – HB 5370
Sen. Joseph Bellino – SB 464, SB 465	Rep. Helena Scott – HB 5371
Sen. Mary Cavanaugh – SB 466	Rep. Stephanie Young – HB 5372

HB 5368 - 5372 are scheduled for a hearing on
Thursday, March 19.

MALPH will testify in support of these bills!



Questions?



Thank you!

What's Next:

Review your materials

Hometown Health Heroes Awards @ 11:30 am
in the Mackinac Room,
luncheon immediately following



DAY
AT THE
CAPITOL
2026

MALPH
MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION
— FOR LOCAL —
PUBLIC HEALTH



The Michigan Public Health Week Partnership will present the Hometown Health Heroes Awards at 11:30am.



Michigan Public Health Week Partnership

HOMETOWN HEALTH HERO AWARDS



Charles Stewart Mott
Department of Public Health
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

