

# Advocate

Advocacy is the act of showing public support with the aim to influence decisions in political, economic, and social institutions. Advocacy outreach has been shown to help with the recruitment of individuals for events, gaining public support and participation, and ultimately influencing public policy in your community.

Advocacy can be an explicit goal for your event but even if it is not, remember that the information you present can shape the minds of those who enact policy in your community. Make sure your information is accurate and properly reflects the need in your area. Using reliable data - like the Michigan Campaign to End Homelessness' 2019 annual report - will ensure your audience has the most accurate regional information.

Want to include specific advocacy asks in your event? In addition to any local advocacy work being done, consider incorporating information about [MCAH's 2019-2020 legislative priorities](#):

- Increasing access to affordable housing by permanently funding the [Michigan Housing & Community Development Fund](#)
- Decreasing barriers to affordable housing by creating [source of income protections](#)
- Funding Homelessness Services

For more information about how to incorporate these into your activities, contact Laurel Burchfield ([lburchfield@mihomeless.org](mailto:lburchfield@mihomeless.org)).

## Suggested Activities

There are many activities that can engage decision makers in your community during Homeless Awareness Month. Consider the following:

- In Michigan, official proclamations have been secured by MCAH for more than 20 years from the Governor and/or the legislature. This can be easily replicated at the local level (see Communications section) and is a good way to raise awareness in your community and increase engagement with decision-makers
- Assist homeless and low-income individuals in registering to vote
  - Michiganders can now register to vote up to and including election day! By encouraging civic engagement, you are empowering them to use their voice and the power of their vote to support candidates who can enact change for Michigan's homeless response system and those experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity
  - MCAH is leading state efforts to encourage [voter registration, education, and candidate engagement](#) and we play a role in national efforts to increase voter participation like [Our Homes, Our Votes](#) and [Every One Votes](#)
- Encourage grassroots participation in advocating for solutions to housing insecurity and homelessness by helping people in your community:
  - write their elected officials about the importance of programs for individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness and at risk of experiencing homelessness.



- discuss the issues surrounding homelessness and then write their opinions in Letters to the Editor in their local, state, and national newspapers; and
- join MCAH's Legislative Action Committee (LAC). LAC is a vehicle for volunteers to help shape policy on issues of homelessness in Michigan. [Sign up](#) for our eNewsletter to join LAC and receive updates on MCAH legislative activities.

## Resources

- MCAH Advocate website - <https://mihomeless.org/index.php/advocate/>
- LAC eNewsletter - <https://mihomeless.org/#subscribe>
- LAC Meetings recordings available on [MCAH's YouTube Channel](#)
- State and Federal representatives
  - Michigan House of Representatives Website: [Find Your Representative](#)
  - Michigan Senate's Website: [Find Your Senator](#)
  - GovTrack Website: [US Congress](#)

