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## 2022 YMCA ADVOCACY DAYS CHECKLIST

### **Step #1 – Grassroots Efforts via Your Advocacy Liaison**

- Identify your YMCA's Advocacy Liaison. Contact Belinda Heckler at [bheckler@ymcanys.org](mailto:bheckler@ymcanys.org) for assistance or more information.

### **Step #2 – General Background Research**

Think about the following questions:

- Who are my State Senators and Assemblymembers? ([HERE](#))
- What is their legislative record and general philosophy?
- What issues are they passionate about? Might they be inclined to support your advocacy efforts?
- Do they have a connection to your YMCA? Are they or have they been a member?
- What committees do my State Senators and Assemblymembers serve? ([HERE](#)) and ([HERE](#))
- What party do my State Senator and Assemblymember belong?

### **Step #3 – Message Development**

- Know your facts and what advocacy efforts have been done so far
- Make your message your own. How do the budget priorities provided by the Alliance help your YMCA specifically?
- Be positive but be clear about the struggles your programming will face if that state is unable to provide your YMCA assistance (cuts in programming, staff, growth to meet ever changing community needs)
- Tell your Y story

### **Step #4 – Message Delivery**

These tips apply to all communications — letters, phone calls, and meetings:

- Develop a thoughtful, well-argued message
- Ask your member to take a specific action
- Ask your member to respond to the request
- Make it clear what your priorities are
- Tell your legislators how you can be an ongoing resource
- Make your message targeted and forceful without being rude or threatening
- Tell the truth
- Be reasonable about opposing points of view
- Be prepared to answer questions about any opposing arguments

### **Step #5 - Meetings**

- Be prepared to deliver your message in five minutes.

- Each Zoom meeting attendee will be given the opportunity to speak about an item from the Alliance budget priority list (if they so wish to speak) and why it is important to your YMCA.
- As such, it is important to organize ahead of time who plans on speaking
- Do a round of introductions, name, title or your connection to the Y (CEO, Director of Programming, Member, Youth Advocate -mention what school district you are from and your grade
- Be Polite and respectful of the Legislator, staff members and your meeting attendees. Remember all these people are taking time to participate in your meeting.

**Step #6 – Take Action Campaign (February 1-10)**

- Get at as many as 10 people or more from each of your branch locations to send in the Alliance Take Action letter/email ([HERE](#))

**Step #7 – Social Media (February 2, 9, 16, 23)**

- Get as many people as possible from your YMCA to tweet, every Tuesday, using the Alliance’s scripted budget priority tweet ([HERE](#))

**Step #8 - Following Up (Week of February 22)**

- Send a thank you note to all the legislators you meet with a week after your meeting.

**Step #9 – Complete the Survey**

- Provide the Alliance with feedback from this year’s Virtual YMCA Advocacy Days (*coming soon!*)