

All Politics is Local

Strategy Session:

Building Our Political Strength Influencing Behavioral Health Reform



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FOR BEHAVIORAL
HEALTHCARE

Goals & Objectives

- Building long-lasting relationships with your state legislators.
 - Grasstops/leadership level
 - Grassroots/engaging staff
- Make the link between your relationship locally with state legislators and action on Beacon Hill
- How we can influence the behavioral health reform initiative and continue to influence Chapter 257 Rates



Why we are here today



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- **Unprecedented attention on behavioral health by policymakers**
- **Administration Focused on Behavioral Health System**
 - EOHHS announced plans for significant reform in outpatient behavioral health system
 - Continued focus on Chapter 257 rate setting system
- **High turnover of the Legislature**
 - 50% + of the House of Representatives have served in office less than 5 years in office
 - 30 new members this session
- **Relationships are critical**
 - ABH member leadership must work to build close relationships with their lawmakers

SOME BACKGROUND

The Process
The Environment



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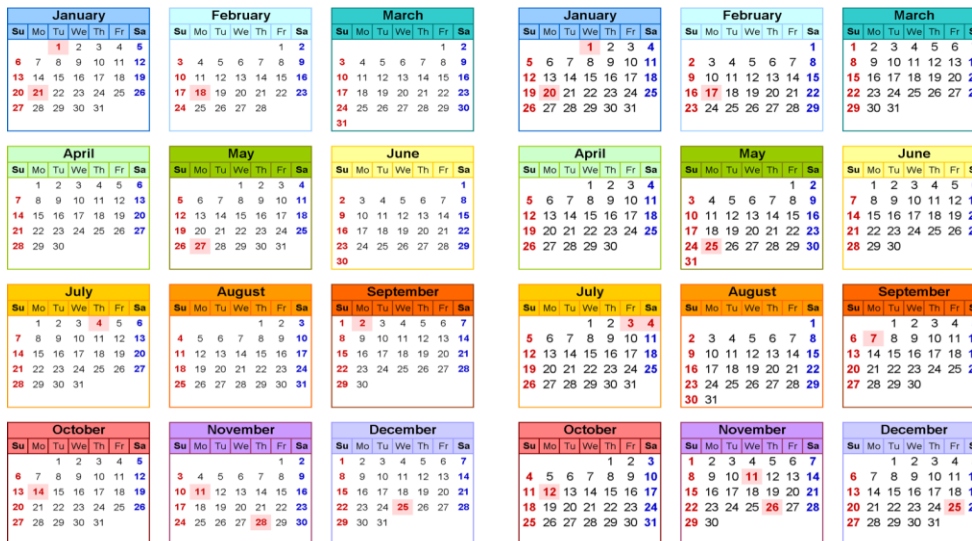
Your State Legislature

2-year session

January (odd year) to December (even year)

2019

2020



Federal Holidays 2019

Jan 1	New Year's Day	Jul 4	Independence Day	Nov 28	Thanksgiving Day
Jan 21	Martin Luther King Day	Sep 2	Labor Day	Dec 25	Christmas Day
Feb 18	Presidents' Day	Oct 14	Columbus Day		
May 27	Memorial Day	Nov 11	Veterans Day		

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Federal Holidays 2020

Jan 1	New Year's Day	Jul 3	Independence Day (obs.)	Nov 11	Veterans Day
Jan 20	Martin Luther King Day	Jul 4	Independence Day	Nov 28	Thanksgiving Day
Feb 17	Presidents' Day	Sep 7	Labor Day	Dec 25	Christmas Day
May 25	Memorial Day	Oct 12	Columbus Day		

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The Legislative Funnel

Members of the Legislature

Committees

Ways & Means Committee

Leadership Team

**Governor/ Administration,
Speaker & Senate President**



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The Legislative Environment

- **Countless number of issues**
 - 5,000+ bills
 - \$40 billion budget
- **Legislators are generalists**
 - We must educate members and their staff on issues
- **Legislators are good snapshots of their district**
- **There are a lot of great causes**

The Legislative Environment

- **Legislators have multiple influences on their decision making process**
- **Decisions impact YOU!**
 - Virtually every issue that effects behavioral health providers is impacted by the decisions made by your elected officials.

What we need to build

3 TIERS of SUPPORT FROM LEGISLATORS in YOUR SERVICE AREA

Informed – 200

Make sure every legislator has a baseline awareness of your issues – educate them. They should know who the behavioral health providers are in their district. Easiest

Advocates - 50

Work to cultivate your area legislators to “Advocate” at the State House for your cause. Harder

Champions – 5-10

Try to make a legislator a “Champion” of your issue – that this becomes one of their major legislative priorities – they expend their capital for our issues. Hardest!

Paths to becoming an Advocate/Champion for our Issues

The District

i.e. Cape – district ravaged by opioid epidemic – Rep. Randy Hunt becomes outspoken

Background/ prior career

Frmmr. Sen. Jen Flanagan trained as a mental health counselor

Family/Personal Experience

Someone educated them

Sen. Mike Rodrigues – mental health and substance disorder advocates reached out, built a relationship and made him an advocate

ABH

- **Provider CEO and immediate leadership team**

- Grasstops
- Build high-level relationships
- Get to point of text and cell phone
- OPED in regional/local paper
- Letters To Editor
- Site visit
- Social media
- Local chambers, boards and groups

- **Employees**

- Grassroots
- Mass communications
- The ‘ground’ troops
- Get to point of legislator “I hear a lot from my constituents”

Grassroots Lobbying



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Rules of Grassroots Lobbying

- **ABC**
 - Accurate
 - Brief
 - Concise
- The **more personal** the type of contact, the **more impact**
- Tell a story, **make it real**
- The squeaky wheel gets the grease



Make it real

- Personal stories
- Paint a picture with a story

The more personal the contact the more impact it has:

- Postcard
- Email
- Write
- **Phone**
- **Visit**

Using your 46,000 employees for Grassroots lobbying



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The Rules:

- Be clear with what you are trying to accomplish.
 - Pass a bill, get more funding, change a regulation
- Be clear on one action step you want them to take.
- Make the communication clear – to the advocate and legislator.
 - Email campaigns ~250 words

GrassTOPS Lobbying



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Rules of GrassTOPS Lobbying

Quality over Quantity

1. Relationship has been/is developed
2. See the legislator in various settings
3. Cell phone/text one another
4. Family friend, involved in association, youth sports, etc

The sphere of influence

- Chamber of Commerce or Rotary
- Local health foundation or association
- Community events of foundations
- You are on a local Board or Foundation
- Attend campaign fundraisers

- Start with you and your executive leadership team

Rules of GrassTOPS Lobbying

Quality over Quantity

1. The contact will have more impact
2. Be tactical about outreach
 - Call on cell phone on Monday AM vs generic email form
3. It's a 2-way street

You don't wait until the house has burnt down to call the fire department . . .



Influencing Behavioral Health Reform and Chapter 257 Implementation

Our goal

- Frame the debate
- Develop consistent message and talking points
- Use numerous modes and tactics to shape the dialogue and influence the outcome
- Influence the influencers – Administration, Key legislators, Chairs of Committees, opinion leaders

Influencing both the Legislature and Administration

- Build a campaign around influencing the initiative
- Hold regional meetings with your legislative delegation
- Site visits at your programs
- Rally at State House
- Day on Hill/ Lobby Day
- Twitter campaign
- Grassroots/ VoterVoice email campaign
- OPEDs in each of the 32 regional daily papers
- OPEDs in the regional/local online papers
- Letters to the Editor in local papers



Have Legislators Visit Your Program



THE most effective and influential thing you can do.

- Have a small group of program leaders give a tour and describe the program and how it makes a difference.
- Have different people describe different aspects of the program.
- After the tour, have a brief meeting with the legislators, emphasizing the key messaging about the importance of what you do and who you serve.
- Talk about what more good could be done with better resources.

All Politics is Local

2019-2020

- At the May 2020 ABH Annual Meeting we will announce our All Politics is Local Winner!
- The winner will have conducted the most site visits from September 1st 2019 to May 1st 2020 at their programs.
- Email me and send me your photos! Also post on social with #allpoliticsislocal

It's a marathon



Not a sprint

