

Advocacy Tips

BY BC PEOPLE FIRST SOCIETY

Advocating with Government Officials

Connecting with government officials helps self-advocates make sure decisions are informed by real experiences, leading to fairer policies and meaningful change. Here are some of our tips to help you get started!

Write Letters and Emails to Decision-Makers



Contact elected officials like MLAs, MPs, and Ministers.

- Share personal stories + clear asks
- Keep it short and focused
- Ask for a reply or a meeting

A strong, respectful message with a clear “ask” can go a long way.

Meet with Elected Officials



Request meetings with people like your local Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) or city councillor.

- Bring 1–2 key issues to focus on
- Practice what you want to say
- Go as a group when possible

Meeting together helps leaders understand your experiences directly.

Speak at City Council or Public Meetings



Many local governments allow public input.

- Sign up to speak at council meetings
- Share your lived experience
- Connect your story to a solution

This puts self-advocates’ voices on the public record.

Join Government Committees or Advisory Groups



Some governments invite community members to give input.

- Accessibility committees
- Advisory councils
- Planning groups





Respond to Public Consultations

Governments often ask for feedback on policies or plans.

- Fill out surveys
- Send written submissions
- Join engagement sessions

This is a key way policies get shaped before decisions are made.



Start or Sign Petitions

Petitions show public support for an issue.

- Paper or online petitions
- Share widely in your community

A large number of signatures can get attention from decision-makers.



Use Media and Public Awareness

Raise awareness to influence government action.

- Write opinion pieces or a blog post
- Contact journalists
- Use social media campaigns

Public pressure can lead to political change.



Build Relationships with Government Staff

It's not just elected officials - staff matter too.

- Policy advisors
- Ministry staff
- Local government workers

Ongoing relationships help your voice be heard over time.



Organize or Join Advocacy Campaigns

Work together for stronger impact.

- Rallies or events
- Awareness days
- Coalition work with organizations

Collective action makes it harder to ignore your message.

Good advocacy means sharing your story, saying what needs to change, and not giving up. Self-advocates should not just be consulted, we should be leading the conversation!

