

This *How To* sheet is about how to work with government. Working with government is one way that self advocacy groups can make change happen.



1. They Need You!

Governments need to work with people with disabilities because:

- You have the skills and knowledge they need.
- You can help them to do a better job.
- They learn from you about the issues faced by people with disabilities.
- You can help to make life better for people with disabilities.

2. Why Work with Government?

Your self advocacy group should work with government because your group can:

- Teach them about self advocacy.
- Work together to make change happen.
- Get and give advice.
- Talk about the important issues.
- Build a relationship and a friendship.
- Ask for information and support.
- Teach them about living with a disability.





3. Find the Right Person

There are lots of different people in government you can work with, including:

Government Ministers

Ministers are the people in charge of government departments such as:

- Disability
- Health
- Transport
- Pensions
- Social Services
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)
- Housing



Local Politicians

It is a good idea to get to know your local politician. Your local politician can:

- Give advice to your group.
- Help you to meet with a Minister.
- Let other politicians know about your group and your issues.





You could also get in touch with:

Government Advisors

Advisors are paid to give advice to politicians.

Public servants

Public servants are paid government workers.

Local Councilors

Local councilors can help you with local issues in the area where you live or where your group meets.

Government Contact List

To find an Australian Government Minister or local politician call:

Federal Government: Australian Parliament: (02) 6277 7111

Where you live	State and Territory Governments	Local Councils
Canberra	(02) 6205 0439	
Northern Territory	(08) 8999 5511	(08) 8944 9688
New South Wales	(02) 9230 2111	(02) 9242 4000
Queensland	13 74 68	1300 542 700
South Australia	13 23 24	(08) 8224 2000
Tasmania	(03) 6212 2300	(03) 6233 5966
Victoria	(03) 9651 8911	(03) 9667 5555
Western Australia	(08) 9222 7222	(08) 9222 7222



4. Preparing for the meeting

STEP 1 Who and Why

Decide who you want to meet or work with and why. You might want to meet to:

- Ask for advice.
- Share ideas and information.
- Talk about the issues you care about.
- Talk about self advocacy.
- Learn from each other.

STEP 2 Make Contact

So, you have decided who you want to meet. Now you need to contact them. You should:

- Write, email, or ring their office to ask for a meeting.
- Tell them about your group and why you want to meet.
- Be ready to answer any questions about the meeting.



STEP 3 Before the Meeting

The next step is to plan for the meeting. You will need to:

- List 2 or 3 things you want to talk about in the meeting.
- Decide who will go to the meeting.
- Pick someone to take notes at the meeting.
- Practice what you are going to say before you go to the meeting.

★ HOT TIPS

- Role play the meeting before you go.
- Make sure you know the address, the meeting time and how long the meeting will go for.
- Prepare a short information sheet about your group to give out at the meeting.
- Take your notes with you.
- Get to the meeting 10 mins early.



STEP 4 In the Meeting

After all your hard work you are finally at the meeting! You should:

- Introduce everyone.
- Talk about your group and give them a copy of your group information sheet.
- Share some of ***your stories*** to help them understand your life experiences.
- Raise the ***issues*** or ***ideas*** you want to talk about.
- Ask for ***advice*** about the issues and ideas.
- Be ***friendly*** and ***listen*** to what they say.
- Offer to ***work together*** to make change happen.
- Invite them to visit your group.
- ***Thank them*** for their time and tell them you look forward to working together.





How to...

Work with Government

STEP 5 Stay in Touch



DON'T GIVE UP

If you want to work with government it is important to stay in touch after the first meeting. To do this you should:

- Send a **thank you** note or email after the meeting to thank them for their support.
- Add them to your **mailing list** and send them regular updates about your group.
- **Invite** them to any events or celebrations you are planning.
- Ask to be **added to their mailing list** and go along to any events they are planning.
- **Get to know** other members of their team.



HOT TIPS

Don't give up!!!!

Stay in contact and remember it is important to build a good relationship.

Never forget that they can learn from you!

GOOD LUCK!