

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



Congratulations! Whether you are starting a government affairs committee or strengthening existing efforts, you are taking significant steps towards being a trusted and influential voice on all things real estate in your community. Policies that impact our industry are being developed every day at the city, county, state and national level. Having an effective government affairs committee will empower your association to help meaningfully shape those policies.

Learn More at
IdahoREALTORS.com



Visit our website for additional tips, links, and resources for creating your own local government affairs committees.

Basics and Necessities

Put simply, government affairs is the process of establishing and maintaining relationships with public officials and staff to positively influence the public decisions of legislative (i.e. city councils, county commissions, state legislatures) or regulatory bodies (city building department, planning and zoning, municipal agencies, state or federal agencies).

SELECT A CHAIR

The chair is responsible for planning, setting the agenda, conducting meetings, maintaining records and information, delegating assignments and responsibilities.

APPOINT MEMBERS

The number of committee members largely depends on the size of your association. Ideally, having 6 – 8 committee members (not including the chair) is a good size to cover city and county officials and agendas. Previous political experience is not required, but a passion for the industry and desire to learn are. Select individuals who are familiar with the association's practices and history, hardworking, and willing to engage and participate.

LEARN ABOUT THE ISSUES

Access information on diverse topics and issues from NAR.*

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TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Be patient. Few things in politics happen overnight. Ideas take time and must be cultivated through open and transparent processes that encourage public input.
- Never take it personally. Decision makers are constantly balancing competing interests and differing opinions. You and they may disagree, but don't be disagreeable. Remember to always be gracious and foster relationships for today and tomorrow.

PICK A DAY AND TIME TO MEET AS A COMMITTEE

Whether it is monthly or bi-weekly the key is to meet regularly on a day that allows you to review as much of the information from different levels of government before their meetings.

START A SOCIAL MEDIA, TEXT OR EMAIL THREAD FOR THE COMMITTEE

Do this to help them stay connected and organized.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Learn the system first. To be successful you must take the time to learn and understand the history, processes and culture of the system you are trying to influence.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE ROLE

- Develop a government affairs strategy that includes a mission statement, priority list of political issues facing your association and realistic goals;
- Identify and advise association leadership on opportunities (and risk) stemming from pending policy, regulatory proposals/initiatives;
- Represent the local association (as directed by the association president) in key public forums;
- Educate government officials about your industry and members;
- Advance the position and policies of REALTORS®; and
- Advise local association leadership and your association executive on all things involving local governments and agencies.



Next Steps

Now that you have established a committee or want to revamp your current approach the committee should start by:

- **IDENTIFYING** the elected officials at the city and county levels (mayor, city council, county commissioners, school board members etc.), planning and zoning officials and appropriate staff within your association's jurisdiction;
- **CREATING** a spreadsheet of all the city, county and administrative officials and staff, including contact information like: email addresses, phone numbers; official and organizational websites and social media pages. Assign a member of the committee to update the spreadsheet as necessary to make sure information is current;
- **DEVELOPING** a calendar of the days, times, and locations for all public meetings. Public meetings usually happen with regularity. Visit the website of the government entity for details;
- **ASSIGNING** a member of the committee to serve as a liaison to one or multiple elected officials within their neighborhood, community or precinct. Make sure the REALTOR® is a constituent of the elected official—that is the REALTOR® can vote in that person's election;
- **SUBSCRIBING** – Make sure at least one member of your committee subscribes to available newsletters from the municipality, county or political subdivisions and any personal or official newsletters and social media sites for the elected officials. The REALTOR® should report updates to the committee during meetings;
- **PLANNING** ahead by reviewing the posted agendas for public meetings in advances; and
- **PARTICIPATING** in all public meetings by making sure at least one member of the committee or association is in attendance and taking notes to report back to the committee.

CONTACT Idaho REALTORS®

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