

Federal Lobbying Restrictions

What You Need to Know if You Receive Federal Funding

Applicants should be aware that award recipients are prohibited from using grants or funds from any federal agency[†] to engage in any lobbying activity.[‡] The newly revised policy reinforces and expands restrictions on lobbying activities. The expanded language restricts:

- Lobbying local governments and officials.
- Lobbying for or against executive or administrative actions by federal and state agencies.
- Lobbying activities related to the Prevention and Public Health Fund of the Affordable Care Act.

[†] For example: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

[‡] Additional Requirements 12 (AR-12), June 2012

What You Can Do

As long as you take a balanced approach, and do not call for action on a specific bill, policy, or administrative order, you can:

- Educate people on health risks, choices, consequences and policy solutions.
- Conduct research on policy alternatives and impacts.
- Broadly share objective evidence of pros and cons so people can form their own opinions about policy options.
- Offer technical advice to public officials if they ask for it in writing.
- Compile and share best practices and success stories.
- Track and evaluate the implementation of policy actions.
- Work with private sector organizations to achieve systems changes that do not require government actions.

State agencies can work directly on policy matters with other state agencies.

Local government agencies can work directly on policy matters with other local government agencies.

Employees of non-government groups or agencies that receive federal funds can work on a range of policy activities (for example, highlighting public health evidence, collecting and analyzing data, building coalitions, and leadership training).

What You Can't Do

If you receive federal funds, you can't:

- Mobilize the public to contact government officials to support or oppose pending bills, administrative actions or regulations.
- Ask a federal, state, county or local official to support or oppose pending bills, administrative actions or regulations.
- Present materials only to allies or a selective audience on public policies that require legislation or executive action.
- Develop or share materials that meet all three of these conditions:
 - 1) The materials reference specific legislation or administrative order; and
 - 2) The materials reflect a point of view on the legislation or order; and
 - 3) The materials contain an overt call to action.
- Encourage the public or other entities to support or oppose specific actions pending before the U.S. Congress, government executives, or state or local government bodies.
- Advocate for keeping or increasing your own federal funding.



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