ADVOCACY ACCELERATOR

HILL DAY CHECKLIST

Whether it's for 15 board executives or 500 advocates, virtually or in-person, coordinating a Hill Day requires a lot of time and effort. But with the right strategy, it can be successful without being overwhelming.

To prepare you for success, CURA developed an 8-step checklist that can help you conduct a stress-free, seamless Hill Day.

(Pictured) Members of the Polycystic Kidney Disease Foundation Executive Leadership Team (ELT), Advocacy Champions Network, and Scientific Advisory Board and the CURA Government Relations Team during the 2024 PKDF ELT Hill Day



STEP 1

Logistics & Prep

- ○ **Identify the date for the Hill Day**

  If possible, avoid scheduling your Hill Day during congressional recess periods to increase the likelihood of securing meetings with lawmakers.

- ○ **Identify the host hotel (if applicable)**

  We recommend hotels within a quarter mile radius of Capitol Hill for convenience, but hotels surrounding D.C. may be more affordable.

- ○ **Outline your goals and solidify your policy priorities**
  - What bills are individuals going to advocate for? What's the ultimate goal of the advocacy day (e.g., are you trying to advance or stop legislation from moving through Congress)?
  - Develop a catchy name or theme for the Fly-In—**yes, it makes a difference!**

- ○ **Develop a calendar of internal deadlines and deliverables**

  Outline dates for the preparatory webinars/events, registration launch, etc.

STEP 2

Registration Promotion & Launch

- [ ] **Prepare save-the-date and promotional graphics**

  Prepare save-the-date graphics and content for promotional blog posts, social media posts and email newsletters. Include links to a pre-registration or an event teaser page.

- [ ] **Build and test your registration page**

  - Set up the registration platform with clear instructions, contact information and branded visuals. Test the user experience to ensure seamless sign-ups.
  - Add a feature to capture important advocate details like areas of interest, accessibility needs and advocacy experience (e.g., is this your first Hill Day?).

- [ ] **Open registration and promote**

  - Announce the official registration opening via email and social media. Include highlights like key speakers, agenda previews and legislative priorities/event goals.
  - Monitor sign-ups and adjust promotion strategies as needed to boost engagement. Schedule multiple registration reminder emails and social posts leading up to the event.

STEP 3

Advocacy Resources & Hill Packets

- [ ] **Develop concise leave-behinds and FAQs to be included in your Hill packets**

  Ensure materials are easy to understand while emphasizing key priorities.

- [ ] **Design advocacy toolkits**

  Once content is finalized, create toolkits for participants, including more detailed legislative briefs, social media guides and customizable letters.

STEP 4

Media Engagement Strategy

- [ ] **Engage lawmakers via social media**

  Create a hashtag for the Hill Day and ask that advocates take pictures and provide updates from their experiences on the Hill.

- [ ] **Draft a pre- or post-event press release**

  Include key metrics from the event and share with media outlets to highlight your organization's policy priorities and objectives.

STEP 5

State Delegation Planning

- **Identify and confirm state delegation leads**
  - Your state delegation leads should be experienced and/or the most engaged advocates who are willing to help facilitate and lead the meetings.
  - Provide state delegation leaders with training resources, state-specific issue briefs and instructions for mobilizing their teams.
- **Schedule virtual check-in(s) with delegation leads to review roles and answer key questions about the event**

STEP 6

Train Participants

- **Host pre-event preparatory webinars and/or in-person trainings**
  - Host 1-2 sessions to walk participants through the legislative priorities and Hill Day asks, storytelling tips and logistics for the day of the event.
  - Consider utilizing CURA's Advocacy Academy, which covers the basics of advocacy, so that you can spend more time educating your advocates on the Hill Day asks.

STEP 7

Schedule Meetings

- **Utilize a meetings scheduler for Hill Days involving 50+ advocates**

  We recommend scheduling platforms such as Advocacy Associates and Soapbox for larger Hill Days. They'll draft meeting correspondence, manage congressional appointments and provide meeting updates, so that you can dedicate your time to Hill Day logistics and planning.

STEP 8

Debrief, Follow-Up and Reporting

- **Collect feedback from participants via an online form**

  Did advocates feel the training and resources provided were beneficial for their success? Would they prefer an in-person Hill Day rather than a virtual event?
- **Follow up with the congressional offices**

  Ensure that the state delegation leaders, a delegated advocate or other personnel send thank you notes reiterating the asks to their select congressional offices.
- **Develop a detailed report to share with your executive team and other organizational staff**

  Include key metrics such as the number of congressional visits, Senate and House meetings, meetings with key Senate, House or committee leadership, etc.

Need support to advance your advocacy priorities or organize a successful Hill Day? Contact us!

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CURA STRATEGIES