

## How to Get Started

### Encourage residents to:

- Write letters to policy makers
- Stay informed about housing policies
- Boast about the good things happening in their communities
- Invite legislators to your site

### Encourage staff to:

- Assess property and resident needs and inform legislators
- Provide information to residents and their family and friends to help advocate
- Keep a pulse on what is going on in the Legislature that affects affordable housing
- Educate residents about Advocacy
- Recognize property and resident successes
- Make known that confidential reporting measures are in place
- Create an engaged environment

Activities for Residents, Families and Friends  
Are the Keys to Success



**PAHMA** is a western Pennsylvania non-profit organization founded in 1986 that educates and supports the affordable housing industry.

Members of **PAHMA** are owners and management agents of affordable housing.

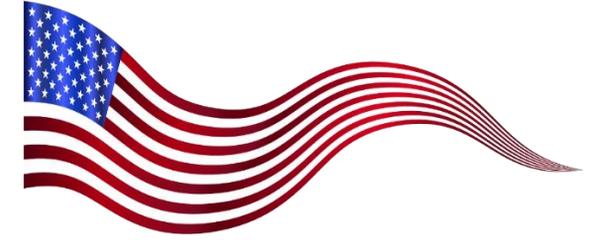
We are excited to kick off **PAHMA's** Advocacy Pledge, which is one of several **PAHMA** initiatives.

Advocacy is important in family sites, and in the senior buildings.

We hope you will join us and come **SOARR** with **PAHMA**!

For more information about **PAHMA**, please visit our web site at

[www.pahma.org](http://www.pahma.org)



**I will help be a voice for  
Affordable Housing**

**I will....**

*Speak up* about the need for affordable housing

*Offer* to host a site visit

*Attend* a town hall meeting

*Raise Awareness* of our housing industry

*Recognize your site* on social media

**SOARR** with PAHMA

And Help Make Legislators Aware  
of the Need for Affordable  
Housing



## What is Advocacy??

**Advocacy** is public support for, or recommendation of, a particular cause. It is an activity by an individual or group which aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social systems. Advocacy can include many activities that a person or organization undertakes such as: media campaigns, public speaking, publishing research, or conducting a poll.

### Types of Advocacy:

1. **Letter Writing Campaign** – involves residents and staff working together to bring the subject of affordable housing to the forefront of local legislators.
2. **Town Hall Meeting** – involves attending a local legislator’s town hall meeting to meet and advocate for housing needs.
3. **Host a Property Tour** – involves inviting local legislators to your community to show the benefits and the needs that the community is meeting for their population.
4. **Social Media** – includes posting positive information on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and creating hashtag posts to your property.

## Effects of Advocacy

- Residents get full subsidy for their units
- Residents get safe, decent & affordable housing
- More housing is approved so more people can participate
- Legislators protect the interests of our residents
- Legislators become engaged in the affordable housing initiatives in their districts
- Staff is able to better meet the needs of the residents and the property

### Things to Learn, Know and Do

- Know who your legislators are and when they are in your area
- Take pictures of resident activities
- Document resident successes using property assets (i.e. computers etc).
- Use social media to share pictures and success stories
- Every August, many lawmakers return to their district; Take that opportunity to invite them for a visit, hold an open house...Seize the moment to get to know them and them to know you

## Advocacy – It’s not hard to get involved

**Establish Parameters** What is your message? Who are your lawmakers? What type of activity is right for your property? Answering these questions will help set you up for success and to develop an effective activity.

**Make it Simple and Easy** Utilize straight forward materials for resident participation, such as petitions and form letters. The goal is to create a quick activity that will demonstrate the importance of affordable housing.

**Make it Your Own** There is no “one size fits all” activity. You know your property and your residents best.

**Determine Your Strengths** The best strategy for outreach is to play up your strengths. Make the most of existing dynamics by engaging your “resident leaders” to help get other residents involved.

**Communicate the “Why”** Establish a personal connection to encourage participation. Try questions like “why is affordable housing important to you?”