

A FEW POINTERS ON SUBMITTING EFFECTIVE PUBLIC COMMENT

(Regardless of what the issue might be or what side you are on.)

The purpose of a public comment period is to allow input from interested parties on all sides of important public policy questions. The following tips will help ensure that your submission has the impact you desire.

1. Show respect

Public comments that ridicule, berate or belittle those who hold a different opinion will not be given serious consideration by policy makers. Use respectful language. Advocate for your position rather than arguing why another opinion is wrong.

2. Be specific

Wherever possible, provide specific examples. This can be very helpful for policy makers trying to understand the concern you are expressing. (For example, don't just say electric defibrillators can save lives, share how having one available did save someone's life.)

3. Acknowledge impact

Remember that you are trying to persuade policy makers whose job is to ensure that administrative rules implement fair public policies. They must ensure the rules balance the interests of those who will be protected with those who are being regulated, those who must bear any costs, and anyone else who may be affected. Recognize what impact the position you are advocating would have on others and explain why policy makers should still come out on your side. (For example, instead of stating why it might be important for all stores to have defibrillators, recognize how much they cost and explain why you think they are important enough to make stores pay for them.)



**Make Your Voice Heard.
Make Your Opinion Count.**

4. Avoid jargon or technical terminology

Before the process is complete, many people will review the proposed rules and public comments. Don't assume everyone reading the comments will have the same deep background or expertise in the subject area. Technical terminology or jargon may cause confusion or misinterpretation of your argument.

5. Tell your story

If you take the time to submit a public comment, take the time to make it count. You may have a personal story to tell, historical knowledge to share, an unusual perspective to share, a particular argument to make, or you may just want to be sure policy makers know exactly where you stand. Whatever it is, it is important that policy makers hear from you before policy decisions are made and administrative rules are adopted.

**GOOD PUBLIC POLICY DEPENDS ON GOOD PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, AND
GOOD PUBLIC COMMENTS HELP ENSURE GOOD ADMINISTRATIVE RULES**

WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!