

## Advocacy vs. Lobbying | What's the Difference?

Advocacy is the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal. In fact, we're all advocates for some sort of issue if we've ever spoken in favor of a proposal or voted for a candidate. Lobbying, however, is attempting to influence a lawmaker, executive agency, or retirement system decision-maker on a public policy matter.

**Lobbying is a specific type of advocacy, one that triggers legal requirements.**



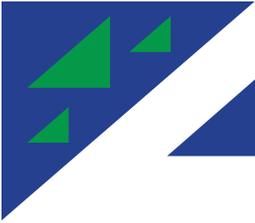
## Lobbying Has Triggers

In order for your advocacy to become lobbying, according to the Ohio Lobbying Handbook, there are three triggers that must each be triggered:

You must be **compensated** for the activity in question. Anything of value may count as compensation, including paid time off.

You must be in **direct communication** with a legislative **reportable person**. A reportable person includes members of the general assembly, the governor, heads of departments, or any of the people listed in Appendices C and D of the Ohio Lobbying Handbook. It does not include legislative aides.

You must spend **at least 5 percent of your compensated time** (i.e., 2 hours a week for a 40-hour work week) promoting, opposing, or otherwise influencing the passage, defeat, or modification of legislation. (This percentage is higher if you're trying to influence an executive agency or retirement system).



# Am I a Lobbyist?

This document was created based on information in the Ohio Lobbying Handbook and a presentation from the Ohio Joint Legislative Ethics Committee Office of the Legislative Inspector General. This isn't legal advice.

Are you attempting to influence a lawmaker?

| Yes

No

Are you being compensated for this activity?

| Yes

No

Are you in direct communication with the lawmaker, clerk, legal counsel, chiefs of staff, or any of the directors of various positions at the Ohio House or Senate?

| Yes

No

Are you spending five percent of your compensated time doing this activity?

| Yes

No

You might be a lobbyist. Contact the Office of the Legislative Inspector General at 614.7283.5100 or [www.ohiolobbying.com](http://www.ohiolobbying.com) to register or for more information.

You're not a lobbyist.  
You're an advocate.

Prevention Action Alliance is a 501(c)3 nonprofit in Columbus, Ohio that is dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of substance misuse and the promotion of mental health wellness. Learn more about Prevention Action Alliance at [preventionactionalliance.org](http://preventionactionalliance.org).

