

# 2022

# COUNTY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES PLANNING GUIDE

The legislative priorities elected each fall by CCAP members are not just CCAP priorities – they are truly county priorities. And what better way to share county priorities than by having *counties* take an active role in announcing them to the public, to the media and to legislators?

Over the past year, counties promoted and advocated on the 2021 priorities in a variety of ways, such as adopting resolutions, posting on social media, meeting with legislators and working with local media. The need for county input and advocacy at the Capitol remains critical as we look ahead to 2022.

## GET EXCITED – GET INVOLVED

Members will choose their 2022 county legislative priorities during the CCAP Fall Conference. From that point, every county has an opportunity to get involved and take ownership of their priorities, harnessing our collective power to achieve our common goals. This guide is full of tips and tricks on how to begin thinking through sharing the 2022 county priorities.

**CCAP is encouraging all counties to take an active role in announcing the 2022 priorities using at least three of the activities in this planning guide to create a buzz about your county and what is important to you, as well as the services you provide.**

But announcing the 2022 county priorities is just the first step. With all 67 counties working together, counties will continue their collective efforts to advance those priorities throughout the year, building on the interest generated across the commonwealth to add others to take action with them.

### November 21, 2021

CCAP policy committees meet at the CCAP Fall Conference to develop their 2022 work plans. Immediately following, CCAP members choose the 2022 county legislative priorities at the Committee of the Whole.

### November 23, 2021

2022 county legislative priorities are revealed at the closing general session of the CCAP Fall Conference.

### December 2021

Begin planning your county's activities to announce the 2022 county legislative priorities. We encourage you to choose three of the activities listed in this planning guide to engage legislators, the media, the public and county staff.

### Early January 2022

Your county will receive materials including fact sheets, a sample news release/editorial, talking points and other tools to use in your 2022 priorities announcement activities.

### January — February 2022

It's time to execute your county's chosen 2022 priorities announcement activities! Let CCAP know how you will be sharing the priorities by contacting [PACountiesGR@pacounties.org](mailto:PACountiesGR@pacounties.org).

### Throughout 2022

CCAP will be engaging legislators, the administration and their staff at the Capitol as the General Assembly enters the second half of the 2021-2022 legislative session, and looking for opportunities to leverage media attention and other communications about the 2022 priorities. County efforts will also remain very important throughout the year, and CCAP will be sure to highlight other opportunities for counties to engage all of their audiences on key policy and priority issues.

**To inspire action, decision makers must hear the county story from all corners of Pennsylvania.**

# What Can You Do Now?

You can begin taking steps now to plan for how you will share the priorities and what they mean to your county throughout January and February.

## CHOOSE YOUR AUDIENCES

With whom will you share the 2022 priorities?

- **Legislators** are key decision makers who can advance the policies that are important to counties.
- **Media** – from newsprint to television to radio – can provide a forum for you to tell your story and why the counties' priorities are *your* priorities.
- **Public** – your constituents, your clients, local businesses and organizations, county staff and other partners want to know how you are taking action to improve the county and the well-being of its citizens.

## CHOOSE YOUR ACTIVITIES

How will you share the 2022 priorities? This guide contains ideas and suggestions for reaching your chosen audiences; some of the suggested activities may even serve a dual purpose in reaching multiple audiences at once. We encourage each county to choose at least **three** activities to announce your priorities.

## CHOOSE YOUR TIMING

When will you share the 2022 priorities? CCAP is focusing on January and early February for a concentrated effort across the state for counties to announce their priorities, in the lead up to the Governor's FY 2022-2023 budget address. You can start now to pick dates for events (such as legislative meetings) and issue invitations, reach out to your local media representatives and build anticipation for your activities.

## KNOW WHO YOU NEED

Who will help you craft your local story and what the 2022 priorities mean to your county? Identify the county staff who are subject matter experts that you will turn to if you need local information on a particular issue, such as human services, taxes or county budgets. Other staff may be able to assist in drafting a local media release or editorial, preparing a county resolution, posting social media messaging, or setting up a legislative roundtable. Get them involved early so you can hit the ground running once the 2022 priorities are selected.

## CONTACT CCAP FOR ASSISTANCE

Have questions or need additional information? A list of additional resources can be found in this planning guide, or you can contact Melissa Gates, CCAP Government Relations Manager, [mgates@pacounties.org](mailto:mgates@pacounties.org) or John Buffone, CCAP Director of Media and Public Relations, [jbuffone@pacounties.org](mailto:jbuffone@pacounties.org), for further assistance.

## LET CCAP KNOW WHICH ACTIVITIES YOU ARE CHOOSING AND WHEN YOU PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THEM

Let us know how you will be sharing the priorities by contacting [PACountiesGR@pacounties.org](mailto:PACountiesGR@pacounties.org).

# Announcing the 2022 County Priorities

## TO YOUR LEGISLATORS

Your legislative delegation can introduce and cosponsor bills that advance county priorities, and they have important votes in the House and Senate. Your education and advocacy will help legislators to be effective advocates on behalf of your county, and help to create a critical mass of legislators talking about county issues at the Capitol.

- Discuss with your legislative delegation – Pick up the phone or schedule a meeting with your legislators to discuss the priorities and what they mean to the communities in which you both serve.
- Educate your legislators on local impact – Consider inviting your legislators on a tour of county facilities to demonstrate current county processes and the services you provide.
- Localize your story – Enlist your county's subject matter experts to provide clear, succinct information, including relevant stories and statistics that are meaningful to your audience.

## TO THE MEDIA

An effective media strategy can build understanding about the role and responsibilities of county government to a wide variety of audiences at once, and create positive coverage for your county and the 2022 priorities. Numerous options exist for you to tell your story.

- Send a news release to local media – If your county does not already have a list of editorial board contacts for local newspapers, begin compiling contact information.
- Send an editorial to your local news outlets – Identify key county staff who will be responsible for producing the final version of your editorial and sending to local newspapers.
- Use your local radio/tv connections – Schedule time to ask for individual meetings with key media representatives to educate them on the issues and tell your story.
- Hold a press conference – Identify speakers, customize information to showcase your county stories and invite the media to help spread the amazing work of your county.

## TO THE PUBLIC

Sharing the priorities in a way that is relevant to your community will bring a better understanding of who your county is and the services you provide to your residents.

- Discuss during your commissioners' meeting – Consider upcoming agenda items to which you could tie the 2022 priorities.
- Adopt a county resolution – Select a meeting at which you would like to adopt your resolution and customize the resolution with county specific data and information.
- Use your communications and social media platforms – Identify key county staff who can incorporate information prominently on your county's website, social media accounts, emails, newsletters and other constituent communications.
- Enlist other voices – Identify partners, community stakeholders and those affected by issues surrounding the legislative priorities who may add information and a human touch as another voice to help tell your story.

# General Resources

The below links are full of helpful information, tips and tricks to get your initiatives started. If you have any questions about available materials or how to set up a virtual meeting or press event, CCAP can help! Contact a member of the CCAP Government Relations team or send a note to [PACountiesGR@pacounties.org](mailto:PACountiesGR@pacounties.org).

**[County Priorities Webpage](#)**. Each year the CCAP membership selects several issues that rise to the top of the legislative agenda for that year. The Priorities webpage hosts resources including fact sheets, talking points, sample social media posts and even a specialized planning guide that can be used for grassroots activities with legislators.

**[Legislative Action Center](#)**. The CCAP Legislative Action Center, located at [www.pacounties.org](http://www.pacounties.org) under the Advocacy menu tab, serves as a hub for different advocacy material links and resources including fact sheets, talking points, sample letters and background information. The Legislative Action Center also serves as a reference page to link you out to the General Assembly website. You can find contact information for Pennsylvania House and Senate members as well as other commonwealth employees.

**[Grassroots Tool Kit](#)**. This tool kit holds a host of good tips and tricks, from strategies for effective communication to human services advocacy advice. It also features a crash course in the Pennsylvania legislative process.

**[Guidelines for Organizing Legislative Visits](#)**. This quick one-pager helps to guide the process of setting up meetings in the county. These could be a sit-down meeting in an office or a guided tour of a county facility. Organizing meetings is more than just logistics, but also careful consideration and preparation of the goal of the meeting.

***Articles on Special Topics***. Often articles related to tips, tricks and best practices are featured in the CCAP magazine, *County News*. For quick access, they also can be found on the Legislative Action Center. Some topics include legislative engagement, messaging and speaking skills, connecting with media, and how to explain what counties do.

***Twitter (@PACountiesGR)*** While social media certainly is not for everyone, it is a great way to find and share information quickly and broadly. Consider following CCAP on Twitter (@PACountiesGR) to stay in the know about different county and legislative happenings in real time.

