

Policy Planning & Implementation

How to Make a Policy Happen:

1. Identify a specific need.
2. Gather community support.
3. Approach a policy maker.
4. Continue raising public awareness.
5. Stay in contact with the sponsoring policy maker.
6. Attend meetings where the policy is introduced and discussed.
7. If policy is enacted, thank the supporters and the policy maker, then monitor the policy.

If policy is NOT enacted, review the process and analyze why it failed and what can be done differently to ensure success.

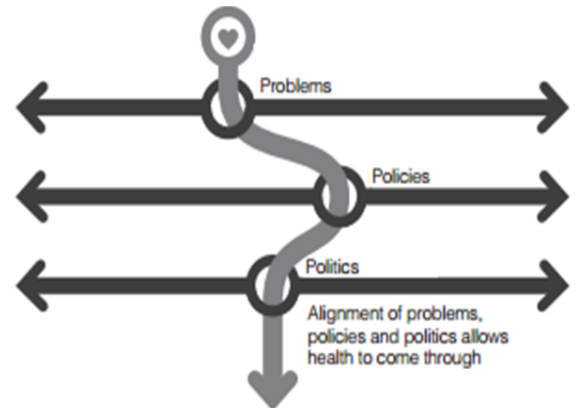
📖 Read more on [How to make a policy happen](#)

Policy 101

Policy making processes may vary by jurisdiction, but all successful policies include careful planning, community engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders (i.e. politicians and other government agency leaders and champions).

Public Health has a unique role in advocating and promoting the health of the community. Health policy planning and implementation requires Public Health capacity. Core elements for Public Health Legal Preparedness include:

- 🔗 *Essential Legal Authorities:* i.e. interventions such as smoking restrictions
- 🔗 *Competency of Public Health professionals:* i.e. technical assistance, trainings and certifications
- 🔗 *Information on Public Health Law:* i.e. Inventory of state and local public health laws and ordinances
- 🔗 *Coordination across jurisdictions and disciplines:* i.e. Partner disciplines such as law enforcement, emergency medical services, private business



Health in All Policies, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland, 2013.

Policy changes can also be “**Small p**” changes. “**Small p**” changes are changes that didn’t necessarily require legislative change but would still broadly and cumulatively improve the health of the community” (📖 [Promoting Healthy Public Policy through CBPR](#)). Whether you are working on a “Big P” or a “Small p” change, thorough planning, extensive considerations of all key players and getting the support of key champions who influence your target community’s opinions are fundamental activities in ensuring success.

📖 Read more on [WHO’s Practical Guide to Understanding the Legislative Process](#)

Engaging Traditional & Cultural Leaders

The governmental structures in the USAPI may have similarities with many western style governments, but the USAPI are close-knit communities that still have strong ties to its traditional methods of governance. For example in Palau and Yap, incorporated in their governmental structure is the Council of Chiefs, where traditional leaders hold influence and power. Since health policy changes tend to affect and intersect multi-sectors of the government, earning the blessing and support of traditional chiefs increases the chance of success for a health policy. Stakeholders are “individuals,

organizations that have a vested interest in the outcomes of the initiative. They are either affected by, or can have an effect on, the project. Anyone whose interests may be positively or negatively impacted by the project or anyone that may exert influence over the project or its results is a project stakeholder” (📖 [Canada’s LHIN, 2011](#)). As such, traditional and Cultural Leaders are important stakeholders in the USAPI. Part of setting the stage for a successful health policy is making sure all significant traditional political key players are actively engaged in the policy-making process. Working with traditional and cultural leaders is just one facet of engaging the community.





The language of public health is rich with value statements and aspirations that seek to embrace the collective good. The danger with these statements is that they will simply remain aspirations, with no public commitment beyond a general acknowledgment that they are important... Incorporating them within legislation is one way of ensuring to recast an Act from being simply reactive about health protection to being proactive, looking ahead to the structures and initiatives necessary to avoid problems and keep the community healthy.

-Public Health Law in the Pacific

Collaboration

Effective collaboration is key in the success of a public health policy. Multi-sectorial partnerships help align the agendas of different organizations in support of the policy you are trying to implement. According to the Ottawa Charter, "health promotion policy combines diverse but complementary approaches including legislation, fiscal measures, taxation and organizational

THE SPECTRUM OF PREVENTION¹



[Developing Effective Coalitions: An 8 Step Guide](#)

[Chronic Disease Programs](#) covers important sections on how to effectively work together:

- Working on Collaborative Projects
- Leveraging Resources
- Making Use of Your Partner's time
- Supporting Policy Changes
- Sharing and Using Data
- Evaluating Your Efforts

After Implementation...

Enforcement can sometimes be the next most challenging task once a policy is implemented. Whether the policy change is within an organization ("Small p") or nationally, ("Big P"), investing ample time to plan on the enforcing agency during policy drafting is important. Depending on the policy, an enforcing entity can be the local or national law enforcement, department supervisor or even fellow colleagues who can stress compliance through peer pressure and changing organizational culture and norms.

Intended & Unintended Consequences: Things to Consider

A policy has the potential to help or hurt a community, so it's important to bear in mind the potential impacts of the health policy. When working with the Pacific Island communities, careful considerations of the cultural and traditional practices and local customs are heavily emphasized.

The Policy Toolkit offers important things to consider when working on a health policy. Local businesses, National Holidays and Legislative Calendar, Scope of the Policy as well identification of influential community players are just some of the things that need to be considered.

NOTE: Depending on the resources and needs of the community, some of items on the PIHOA Toolkit may not be applicable. Likewise, some additional consideration/s may be needed that is/are not included in this list.

Example: In Hawaii, efforts to increase tax on sugar and sweetened beverages to address the obesity problem in the state, have been met with intense opposition from local industries. Opponents of the bill include the Maui sugar plantation industry who fear that increasing taxes would not only taint the long history and cultural ties of sugar plantation in the islands, but would also cause irreversible damage to business revenues.

Key Point: Always consider businesses that could negatively be affected by the proposed policy and anticipate opposition early in the drafting stages, in order to begin finding a common ground and potential areas of compromise.

Stories from the Pacific

[Insert successful stories or lessons learned from your jurisdiction about policy implementation, community engagement and collaboration]



[Insert picture & description]