



Email Template to Local Officials

Subject: Meeting Request: [Nonprofit Name] and Services for Individuals with I/DD

Dear [Official's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. My name is [Your Name], and I am the [Your Title] at [Nonprofit Name], an organization dedicated to supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in our community.

We have been serving [Location] for [X years], providing crucial services such as [list key services, e.g., job training, healthcare support, family counseling, etc.]. We believe that local government plays an essential role in shaping inclusive and supportive policies for the I/DD community, and we would greatly value the opportunity to discuss how we can collaborate to improve services and resources for individuals with I/DD in our area.

I would like to request a meeting with you to introduce our organization, share insights from the work we are doing, and explore ways we can work together to address the needs of the I/DD community. Please let me know if you are available for a meeting in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Arc Chapter]

[Your Phone Number]

[Your Email Address]



Formal Letter Template to Local Officials

[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Nonprofit Name]
[Your Address]
[City, State, ZIP]
[Email Address]
[Phone Number]

[Date]

[Official's Name]
[Official's Title]
[Office Address]
[City, State, ZIP]

Dear [Official's Name],

I am writing to introduce you to [Nonprofit Name], a nonprofit organization committed to improving the quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in [Location]. For [X] years, we have provided essential services, including [list services], that empower individuals with I/DD to lead fulfilling lives.

As local leaders, you have a tremendous impact on the policies and programs that serve vulnerable populations, including those with I/DD. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss the challenges faced by this community and explore ways in which we can work together to ensure that individuals with I/DD have access to the resources and support they need.

I kindly request a meeting at your earliest convenience to share more about the work we do and to discuss how we can collaborate to address the needs of the I/DD community in our area.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to the possibility of working together to make [Location] a more inclusive and supportive place for individuals with I/DD.

Sincerely,
[Your Name]
[Your Title]
[Nonprofit Name]



Phone Script to Request a Meeting with Local Officials

Introduction:

"Hello, this is [Your Name], and I'm calling from [Nonprofit Name], an organization that serves individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in [Location]. May I speak with [Official's Name] or someone in charge of their scheduling?"

If transferred:

"Good [morning/afternoon], [Official's Name]. My name is [Your Name], and I am [Your Title] at [Nonprofit Name]. We provide essential services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, such as [list key services], and we are very passionate about advocating for inclusive policies for this community."

Purpose:

"I'm reaching out to request a meeting with you to introduce our organization and discuss how we can work together to improve services for the I/DD community in [Location]. We believe local government plays a critical role in creating inclusive environments for people with disabilities, and we would appreciate the opportunity to share insights from our work."

Scheduling:

"Would it be possible to schedule a brief meeting sometime in the next few weeks? We are flexible and would be happy to meet at a time that works best for you."

Conclusion:

"Thank you for considering this request. We look forward to the opportunity to meet and discuss ways we can support the I/DD community together. I will follow up with an email to confirm the details. Have a great day!"



TIPS FOR MEETING:

Here are tips for an effective meeting with local government officials when advocating for your I/DD nonprofit. These will help you engage the officials, build rapport, and clearly convey your message to inspire action.

1. Be Well-Prepared

- **Research the Official:** Know the official's background, interests, and any past involvement with disability-related issues. This helps you tailor your message and find common ground.
- **Set Clear Objectives:** Before the meeting, define what you want to achieve (e.g., increased funding, policy change, support for a specific initiative).
- **Bring Supporting Materials:** Have fact sheets, brochures, or reports ready to leave behind. Ensure materials are clear, visually appealing, and concise.

2. Share Personal Stories

- **Tell Human-Centered Stories:** Personal stories from individuals or families impacted by I/DD are powerful. Share real-life examples that highlight the struggles and successes of those in your community. This makes the issue relatable and emotionally compelling.
- **Include Success Stories:** Balance challenges with success stories that show how your nonprofit's work has made a difference in people's lives. This demonstrates the effectiveness of your programs and the potential for positive outcomes with more support.

3. Present Clear, Local Data

- **Use Relevant Statistics:** Back up your arguments with local data on the I/DD community (e.g., how many people are affected, service gaps, waitlists for care). Data should be up-to-date and specific to the official's jurisdiction.
- **Highlight Impact:** Use data to illustrate how current policies or funding levels affect individuals with I/DD, their families, and the community at large. Show how addressing these gaps can lead to positive outcomes for the broader community (e.g., economic benefits of inclusive employment).

4. Be Solution-Oriented

- **Propose Concrete Solutions:** Don't just present problems; offer realistic solutions. Suggest specific actions the official can take, such as sponsoring a bill, advocating for funding, or supporting a community task force.
- **Offer Collaboration:** Position your nonprofit as a partner. Show how you can help the local government implement or improve services, offer expertise, or provide community engagement support.

5. Keep It Focused and Clear

- **Prioritize Key Points:** Stay focused on 2-3 key issues that you want to address. Avoid overwhelming the official with too much information.
- **Stay On Time:** Respect the official's time. Stick to the agreed-upon agenda and aim to keep the meeting within the scheduled timeframe (typically 30-60 minutes).

6. Engage in a Two-Way Dialogue



- Encourage Questions and Feedback: Invite the official to ask questions or share their thoughts. This fosters a more collaborative conversation.
- Be Open to Their Ideas: Listen to the official's perspective and be flexible. They may offer alternative solutions or pathways to achieving your goals.

7. Demonstrate Community Support

- Show Broad Community Backing: If you've gathered signatures from a petition or endorsements from community leaders, bring them to the meeting. Demonstrating widespread support strengthens your case.
- Mention Partnerships: Highlight collaborations with other nonprofits, businesses, or local agencies to show that your nonprofit is part of a larger movement.

8. Use Visual Aids if Possible

- Infographics or Charts: Visual aids such as charts, infographics, or photos can help clarify complex issues or make data more accessible.
- Showcase Successes: If appropriate, share short videos or photos of your nonprofit's work in action. Visuals can leave a lasting impression.

9. Be Respectful and Professional

- Maintain a Positive, Respectful Tone: Even if discussing challenges, keep the conversation respectful and solution-focused. Avoid confrontation or placing blame.
- Show Gratitude: Thank the official for their time and willingness to engage on this issue. Public officials are busy, and expressing gratitude for their efforts helps build rapport.

10. Provide a Clear Call to Action

- Make Specific Requests: Don't leave the meeting without asking for something concrete. Whether it's scheduling a follow-up meeting, endorsing a policy, or attending an event, make your request clear.
- Leave Room for Follow-Up: End the meeting by outlining next steps. Offer to send additional information or set up a follow-up meeting to continue the conversation.

11. Follow Up After the Meeting

- Send a Thank-You Email: Within 24-48 hours of the meeting, send a thank-you email to express appreciation and restate any commitments made during the meeting.
- Include Additional Information: If the official asked for more data or materials, be sure to provide it promptly. Keep the lines of communication open and follow up on any next steps discussed.



Meeting Agenda: Introduction of [Nonprofit Name] to [Official's Name]

Date: [Insert Date]

Time: [Insert Time]

Location: [Insert Location or Virtual Meeting Link]

Attendees:

[Your Name], [Your Title], [Nonprofit Name]

[Names of Key Team Members or Board Members]

[Official's Name], [Title]

[Other Attendees from Local Government]

1. Welcome and Introductions (5 minutes)

Purpose: Set a warm, professional tone and establish rapport.

Welcome and thank the official(s) for their time.

Introduce yourself and your team members.

Invite the official(s) to introduce themselves or their team if necessary.

2. Overview of [Nonprofit Name] (10 minutes)

Purpose: Provide a clear, concise introduction to your nonprofit's mission, services, and impact.

Mission: Briefly explain your nonprofit's mission and why it's important to the I/DD community in [Location].

Services and Programs: Highlight key programs and services (e.g., job training, housing assistance, family support, healthcare services).

Impact: Share data and success stories to demonstrate the effectiveness of your work (e.g., number of individuals served, measurable outcomes, community benefits).

Collaboration with Local Partners: Mention any existing partnerships with local businesses, schools, or organizations to demonstrate your nonprofit's community involvement.

3. Identifying Community Needs (10 minutes)

Purpose: Discuss the specific needs of the I/DD community in [Location] and frame your nonprofit's role in addressing them.

Present local data or case studies that illustrate the challenges individuals with I/DD face in areas such as education, employment, housing, and healthcare.

Explain how your nonprofit is uniquely positioned to address these challenges.



Discuss gaps in current services or support that local government policies could help fill.

4. Policy Advocacy and Collaboration (10 minutes)

Purpose: Propose ways to work together with local government to better serve individuals with I/DD.

Policy Suggestions: Share specific policy proposals or areas where the local government could improve support for the I/DD community (e.g., funding for services, inclusive employment programs, accessible housing).

Collaboration Opportunities: Discuss how your nonprofit and the local government can collaborate on community events, awareness campaigns, or other initiatives that support individuals with I/DD.

Requests for Support: Clearly state what support you are seeking from the official(s), such as advocacy for funding, co-sponsorship of programs, or participation in an upcoming event.

5. Q&A and Open Discussion (10 minutes)

Purpose: Allow for a two-way conversation where the official(s) can ask questions, share their perspectives, and offer feedback.

Invite the official(s) to ask questions about your nonprofit's work.

Ask for their input on ways to strengthen services for individuals with I/DD in the community.

Discuss any challenges the local government faces in supporting the I/DD community and explore potential solutions.

6. Next Steps and Follow-up (5 minutes)

Purpose: Conclude the meeting with clear action points and a commitment to follow up.

Summarize the key points discussed and the proposed next steps.

Confirm any commitments made during the meeting (e.g., attending an event, reviewing a policy proposal, scheduling a follow-up meeting).

Thank the official(s) for their time and express enthusiasm for continuing the conversation.

Provide your contact information for further communication.

Additional Notes:

Handouts: Consider providing a brief handout or fact sheet summarizing your nonprofit's work, including key data, impact stories, and policy priorities.

Follow-up: Send a follow-up email thanking the official(s) for their time and outlining any next steps discussed during the meeting.