State Advocacy: Getting Started in Your State
An important way of advocating for CMV is through your state legislature. What can you do?

First, and most important.

Find and get to know your State legislative representative(s) – the ones that go to the State Capital, not DC.

- If you don’t know who they are, go to your state legislature’s website and find out. (You may have on rep – most have a rep in the House and the Senate, depends on your state.)

- Figure out if they live near you or have an office near you.

- If they have staffers or interns, learn their names and introduce yourself as a constituent.

- Subscribe to their newsletters.

- Like them on Facebook.

- Go to their town hall or community meetings.

- Introduce yourself. Volunteer to help with something if you can. Make yourself valuable to them. A couple hours of knocking doors or manning a booth can earn you a LOT!

While you’re doing that, familiarize yourself with simple facts about CMV that you can share with legislators.

- Fact sheets are available on the National CMV Foundation website at: NationalCMV.org

Familiarize yourself with legislation passed in other states.

- A tally of states with legislation and links to other states’ legislation are available on the National CMV Foundation website at: NationalCMV.org

General **DOs** and **DON’Ts**.

- **DO** share your story. Tell them about your child and their struggles.

- **DO** talk about any early intervention your child received and how important and helpful it was.

- **DO NOT** complain about the services your child did or did not receive or mention malpractice or liability.

- **DO NOT** talk about legislating anti-viral treatments, this may cause medical professionals to fight the bill.

- **DO** focus on that if you had known about CMV, you would have changed your behavior during your pregnancy (not shared food and drinks, etc.).
The best first steps anyone can make involve building relationships and building a strong team of CMV advocates. The Utah legislation wouldn’t have been possible without a strong team. These relationships not only helped us to draft legislation that was passable from the beginning, but we really had buy-in from stakeholders before we even proposed something. As a result, as the Utah bill has been implemented, we’ve seen long-term ownership not only of the programs resulting from the bill, but ownership of CMV advocacy in our state.”

Sara Menlove Doutre, Utah House Bill 0081

Learn more at www.NationalCMV.org