Advocacy Toolbox -- Decision Tree

You've identified a problem. There ought to be a law, right? Well, maybe there already is and it has never been implemented, maybe it's not being enforced, maybe there is no money in the budget to implement it, or maybe there isn't a law. How do you find out?

To help answer that question, we've designed this Decision Tree.

Answering the questions, in order, will help you identify the action step needed and connect you with the resources to make it happen, both in the Health Advocacy Toolbox and elsewhere.

If you need help researching these questions, go to Research tips for the Decision Tree.

Most of the examples on this page concern health care, but the principles apply to other issue areas as well.

1. **Bookmark this page**. Many of the questions will lead you off this site. Links here will open in a new Tab. Once you get the answer, come back here and move to the next step.

2. Is your issue **governmental or private**? To help decide, go to Government or private

3. If your issue involves government, is your issue appropriate for **federal, state and/or local government** involvement? Go to Federal, state or local

4. If yours is a state issue, **maybe there is a law** on your issue. To find out, go to Is there a law?
If there isn't a law and you feel that there should be, go to our Legislative Advocacy page.

5. If the problem is that there is **no money in the budget** for the program or issue, go to our Budget page.

6. Does the law direct an **agency to draft regulations**? If so, go to our Regulations page.

7. If there is a law, maybe it **isn't being enforced**. Go to our Enforcement page.

8. If the program **isn't being implemented or implemented well**, you need to advocate with the agency responsible. Go to our Administrative Advocacy page.

9. Maybe your issue is very ambitious and **a law won't solve the problem**. For example, no law will solve the stigma of accessing mental health care or create universal health care (at least not yet). You need to move public opinion. Go to our Changing public opinion page.

If none of these seem to make sense, you can Search our site, go to the Recommended Reading List, Enforcement, or Research and data to find resources to address your issue.