

2026

COUNTY GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

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- 911 Funding and Statute Updates
- Adequate County Mental Health Funding
- Assist Counties to Conduct Timely Reassessments

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?

Each year, counties promote and advocate on the county 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 to achieve our priorities in 2026.



THIS TOOLKIT IS A GUIDE

This toolkit serves as a guide to help think through how your county can showcase the importance of the 2026 priorities to your legislators, the media and your constituents. To aid in those efforts, your county will receive materials to use in your 2026 priorities announcement activities, including:

- Priorities brochure
- Template press release
- Template resolution
- Localizable talking points

GET EXCITED – GET INVOLVED

The 2026 Priorities will be officially announced on January 29. 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 2026 county priorities.

CCAP is encouraging all counties to take an active role in announcing the 2026 priorities using at least three of the activities in this toolkit to create a buzz about your county and what is important to you, as well as the services you provide.

But announcing the 2026 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.

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

How Do I Get Started?

Counties can begin planning now to share the 2026 Legislative Priorities throughout January and February. Use the guiding questions below to organize your outreach strategy.

CHOOSE YOUR AUDIENCES

With whom will you share the 2026 priorities?

- **Legislators:** As the key decision-makers in advancing county-focused public policy, legislators should be a top priority for engagement. Direct conversations help reinforce why county priorities matter and how state actions affect local services.
- **Media:** Newspapers, television, radio, and online outlets can amplify your message and provide a platform to explain how the priorities align with your county's needs. Media engagement helps frame the conversation for the broader community.
- **Public:** Constituents, clients, local businesses, service organizations, county employees, and partner agencies want to understand how you are working to strengthen county government and improve quality of life.

CHOOSE YOUR ACTIVITIES

There are many ways to announce and promote the 2026 priorities at the county level. This planning guide highlights a range of options to help you reach your select audience. Many activities can reach multiple groups simultaneously.

Counties are encouraged to choose **at least three activities** to share the priorities. Examples include:

- Hosting legislative meetings, tours or roundtables
- Issuing a press release or writing an op-ed
- Sharing targeted social media posts
- Introducing a county board resolution

CHOOSE YOUR TIMING

CCAP encourages a coordinated statewide effort in January and early February, leading up to the Governors FY 2026-2027 budget address.

Begin preparing now by:

- Selecting dates for key events, such as legislative meetings or press engagements
- Scheduling conversations with local legislators and stakeholders
- Reaching out to local media to signal upcoming announcements or offer interviews

KNOW WHO YOU NEED

Successful communication depends on a team that can capture the details, provide real examples, and shape a compelling local story.

Identify county staff who can:

- Serve as subject matter experts and provide data or context for each priority
- Draft media materials, resolutions, talking points, or outreach language
- Support logistics for legislative meetings, roundtables, or public events

Announcing the 2026 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. This is especially important for your newly elected members who may not be familiar with the role of counties or the services you provide to your joint constituencies.
- **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 2026 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 it 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 2026 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

General Resources

The following resources offer practical tools, tips, and guidance to help your county plan and launch its initiatives. If you need assistance accessing materials, setting up virtual meetings, or organizing a press event, CCAP is here to help. Contact the CCAP Government Relations team at **PACountiesGR@pacounties.org** or reach out directly to:

- Frank Mazza, Director of Government Relations – **fmazza@pacounties.org**
- Sophie Eyer, Government Relations Associate – **seyer@pacounties.org**
- John Buffone, Director of Media & Public Relations – **jbuffone@pacounties.org**

COUNTY PRIORITIES WEBPAGE

The [Priorities webpage](#) serves as the one-stop-shop for priorities information and resources, including the brochure, talking points and sample materials.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION CENTER

Accessible at [pacounties.org](#) under the *Advocacy* tab, the [Legislative Action Center](#) consolidates key advocacy tools, including fact sheets, letters, talking points, and issue summaries. It also provides direct links to the Pennsylvania General Assembly website, where you can find contact information for House and Senate members and other commonwealth officials.

GRASSROOTS TOOLKIT

This [toolkit](#) 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.

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.

YOUTUBE (CCAP MEDIA)

Subscribe to [CCAP Media on YouTube](#) for updates and the latest videos showcasing the role of county government across communities in Pennsylvania.