



Parkinson's Policy Ambassador

Public policy is a crucial element in finding a cure for Parkinson's disease (PD). Grassroots citizen advocates are the most critical part of our policy program. Elected officials need to hear from their constituents, not just professional staff in Washington, D.C. People with Parkinson's, families, researchers and doctors all have important stories to share about Parkinson's.

The Parkinson's Policy Network is The Michael J. Fox Foundation's (MJFF) grassroots advocacy program, providing advocates with the training and resources to empower them to make their voices heard and build relationships with elected officials and their staff. The volunteer leaders of this network are our Policy Ambassadors. These Ambassadors will receive specialized training and work with MJFF Policy staff to become the "go to" resource for Congressional offices and provide critical information back to MJFF staff.

Role of Policy Ambassador

As some of MJFF's most engaged volunteers, Policy Ambassadors commit to building strong relationships with their members of Congress and to advocate in support of Parkinson's policy priorities. Ambassadors serve as liaisons between the Parkinson's community and their elected officials and staff. They work to ensure that Congress is aware of the policy needs of the Parkinson's community and responds to those needs.

While Policy Ambassadors are not compensated and serve as volunteer leaders, they do receive:

- Exclusive trainings (from experts within the field)
- Monthly policy updates
- MJFF staff support in communications and outreach to members of Congress, including talking points, materials and staff in arranging virtual meetings
- Timely calls to action and opportunities to be further engaged



Ambassadors are expected to:

- Contact members of Congress concerning important legislative issues in a timely manner
- Meet with members of Congress or their staff in their local area throughout the year, including office visits and town hall meetings
- Invite members of Congress to participate in local PD community events
- Promote MJFF policy priorities in their community, including support groups, public health fairs, etc.
- Participate in regular webinars by tuning in live or listening on demand
- Establish and maintain relationships with Congressional staff and legislators both locally and in Washington D.C.
- Sign up for elected official's email/mail communications
- Raise awareness of The Michael J. Fox Foundation's policy issues through social media and traditional media (e.g., letters to the editor)
- Act as 'community connector' for The Michael J. Fox Foundation, spreading the news about our Parkinson's Policy Network and teaching others how they can be involved
- Report back to The Michael J. Fox Foundation when you've completed an assigned task or held a meeting with your lawmaker
- Monitor your elected official's district activities and public events looking for opportunities to engage with them directly (e.g., town hall meetings)

Ambassador Ideal Skills or Qualifications

- Interest and understanding of public policy and politics
- Personal connection to Parkinson's — everyone has a story to share
- Basic knowledge of PD, our issues and Parkinson's research
- Strong public speaker
- Feels comfortable networking and developing relationships
- Takes instructions, happy to learn to new things
- Understanding that you are representing MJFF and can stay on our message
- Happy to develop future leaders
- No previous government or political experience necessary
- Basic computer skills and abilities