
ADVOCACY TOOL KIT

Florida Health Information Management Association



An Affiliate of the AHIMA

Prepared by:
FHIMA Industry Leadership Team, Advocacy Committee & Legislative Committee

Welcome to the FHIMA Advocacy Tool Kit

The Tool Kit is designed to address advocacy and government relations at the federal, state, and local level. It will describe advocacy and advocacy elements while also providing important resources and links to helpful information. Not only can you learn about advocacy, you can find your federally elected legislators and the President.

(<https://secure.ahima.org/login/default.aspx?appletid=AdvocacyAssistant>)

The purpose of the Advocacy Tool Kit is to strengthen FHIMA's advocacy initiatives with federal and state legislatures, administrative agencies, and most importantly, the communities in which we live.

Further, the kit's objective is to educate FHIMA members in the tools and approaches to advocacy and government relations that can be used on an individual, group, or employer basis.

What Is Advocacy?

Webster's New College Dictionary defines advocacy as "Active support, as of a cause." When you boil down what we do on a public policy basis, we support causes. The cause may be the enactment of legislation or the defeat of legislation. In short, we are "Advocates", or:

1. "One who supports or defends a cause."
2. "One who pleads on another's behalf."

Florida Statutes (11.045) defines lobbying as "influencing or attempting to influence legislative action or non-action through oral or written communication or an attempt to obtain goodwill of a member or employee of the Legislature."

Aspects of Advocacy

Who	What	When	Where	How
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader • Peers • Employees • Administration • Physicians • Clinical Leaders • Government Relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HIM Knowledge • Skill Sets • Education • Credentials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily at work • On-going with local legislators • Annually at FHIMA Hill Day • Annually at AHIMA Hill Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace • Government Offices • Advocacy Offices – FHA • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know your profession • Get involved with local association and FHIMA • Be willing to speak out • Tool Kit

Why We Should Advocate?

The United States of America is a representative democracy, which means that we elect individuals to represent our interests. Many of us take advantage of and exercise our constitutional right to vote, but then feel that we have done our duty. Well, in our great society, our duty does not stop at the voting booth. When we limit our participation to just voting, we leave our elected officials in a vacuum. We have a right and a duty to inform our elected officials of how we feel about certain issues. If they do not learn from those who voted them into office, they will receive their information from individuals, groups, or other elected officials who may not have your best interests at heart. For our representative democracy to work properly and in the best interests of all, we must inform our elected representatives about our views. We must all become advocates.

FHIMA Advocacy Tool Kit

Communication Guidelines

FHIMA's Advocacy at Home Campaign

In an effort to increase our advocacy effectiveness at the national and local level, we have developed this resource to help you be advocates for health information management. The work AHIMA does in Washington is only a small part of the advocacy equation. Our efforts in and around Florida are essential to the progress made by our national and state associations. With major changes occurring on all levels, both national and state, we are asking you to contact your elected officials, schedule a meeting to introduce yourself and FHIMA.

FHIMA Advocacy Tool Kit Mission

1. The members of FHIMA desire to establish a collaborative relationship with our senators and representatives on all legislative matters pertaining to health information management in the state of Florida.
2. FHIMA is asking that our members be consulted for input on any matters that pertain to health records or data management and collection requirements in our state.
3. FHIMA is calling for recognition of HIM professionals as the experts in data quality, records management and confidentiality and privacy.
4. A long-term goal of FHIMA is consideration of legislation requiring the RHIA or RHIT credentials for all individuals managing medical records departments throughout the state in all healthcare settings, including state agencies.

Communication Guidelines with Senators and Representatives

We are providing you with the guidance and materials needed to embark upon your advocacy journey. Effective advocacy does not have an end-point. The goal is building lasting relationships. Contained in this document are specific directions and resources for establishing your first contact with your elected officials and directions on how to manage beyond your initial meeting. It will also provide you with the information on the latest issues that we are confronting as health information technology, electronic health records, ICD-10 and coding consistency, privacy and nondiscrimination, security, health information management workforce and more.

Who We Are

The Florida Health Information Management Association (FHIMA), consisting of over 3,305 health information management professional members in 9 regions, is a component state association of the national American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). AHIMA has over 50,000 members who work throughout the healthcare industry. HIM professionals serve in a broad range of roles that involve planning, organizing, and managing clinical information resources-content, integrity, accessibility, use and protection of patient data. AHIMA is committed to advancing the HIM profession in an increasingly electronic and global environment through leadership in advocacy, education, certification and lifelong learning.

Health Information Management (HIM) Professional in the Workplace

HIM professionals hold many diverse roles, yet share a common purpose: providing reliable and valid information that drives the healthcare industry. HIM professionals are uniquely qualified to administer information systems, manage medical records, code and classify data for reimbursement, analyze information necessary for decision support, protect patient privacy and provide information security, enhance the quality and uses for data within healthcare, and consult and comply with standards and regulations regarding health information.

Credentials & Education

To ensure its members meet professional standards of excellence, AHIMA issues credentials in a variety of HIM areas and requires continuing education to maintain those certifications. In Florida there are 3 HIM (4 year baccalaureate) programs, 16 HIT (2 year associate) programs, and 5 certificate programs. Certification credentials that can be attained in the HIM profession are as follows:

- ❖ RHIA (Registered Health Information Administrator) - Baccalaureate programs train at the managerial level to develop, implement and manage healthcare data collection and reporting systems.
- ❖ RHIT(Registered Health Information Technician) - Associate programs emphasize skills in health data collection, quality, monitoring both electronic and paper medical records, and adhering to legal and regulatory standards.
- ❖ CCS, CCS-P, CHP, CHS, CHPS are Coding credentials obtained through accredited certificate programs.
- ❖ Master's level programs focus on enterprise-wide administration, research, and strategic planning.

Workforce

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, each year an estimated 6,000 new HIM positions need to be filled due to industry growth and attrition. Currently only 2,000 new professionals are entering the profession each year. The Bureau predicts a 37% growth in the number of HIM workers by 2012. Technology will continue to play an increasingly important role in healthcare and drive the need for HIM professionals who are properly educated and positioned to work with the electronic health record.

The Missing Piece

FHIMA is committed to working collaboratively with partner organizations such as the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), Florida Hospital Association (FHA), Agency for Healthcare Administration (AHCA), Department of Health (DOH), and other related organizations. Our knowledge, experience, skills, and commitment to innovative management, completes the healthcare puzzle.

Partnership with Senators & Representatives

The members of FHIMA desire to establish a collaborative relationship with our senators and representatives on all legislative matters pertaining to Health Information Management. HIM professionals possess expertise in the areas of data quality, records management and confidentiality and privacy which will provide knowledge and guidance as the healthcare puzzle is assembled.

Getting to Know Your Legislators

A key to successful advocacy is to know your legislators and establishing a relationship with them. Doing your homework before contacting an elected official will help you craft your advocacy strategy and avoid political pitfalls. As a first step, be sure you know the following about the legislators you plan to contact:

- ❖ Political party Affiliation
- ❖ Legislative Committees on which they serve
- ❖ Leadership positions they hold in the Legislature
- ❖ Voting records on the issues that concern you

- ❖ Personal facts, such as their profession, education, organizational affiliations and civic work in the community.

If you do not know your state representatives, look in the government section of your local telephone book or log in to the AHIMA Advocacy Assistant at (<https://secure.ahima.org/login/default.aspx?appletid=AdvocacyAssistant>)

In addition, you probably know someone who does. These people may be able to offer helpful insights into legislators' areas of interest and how to best present your issue. Your legislators are also your neighbors. You may share many of the same interests and concerns, so make a strong effort to build on the common ground you both hold.

Here are some tips for building a relationship with your legislators:

- ❖ Introduce yourself to candidates and legislators at public events, such as campaign appearances and the legislative delegation meetings held each year to gain citizens' input. Give the legislator your name and contact information and let the legislator know your areas of interest and expertise.
- ❖ Start making your legislative contacts at the local level. Arrange a meeting at your legislators' local offices well in advance of the legislative session.
- ❖ Ask the legislator to address the FHIMA Board of Directors.
- ❖ Invite your elected officials to present at regional and state FHIMA meetings.
- ❖ Stay in touch. One way of doing this is to send items of interest, such as a newspaper clipping of a FHIMA success story.
- ❖ Develop a relationship with the legislator's professional staff members, especially the legislative aide (LA) who will have the lead on your issues.
- ❖ Legislative staff members face an incredible amount of issues that they are obliged to understand. They always appreciate people who are credible resources and who can respond to requests for help in a timely manner.
- ❖ Attend legislative delegation meetings. Try to get on the agenda to educate legislators about issues of concern to FHIMA and the benefits that our profession provides to the community.
- ❖ Offer your assistance in helping answer requests for information or complaints they have received involving health information management and services.
- ❖ Develop success stories that demonstrate the good work of your organization. If a particular program or service was made possible because of a certain law and/or funding from the Legislature, include this information.

Elected Official Speaking Points

“While the physicians, nurses and healthcare team are taking care of you and your loved ones, HIM professionals are the ones taking care of your information...from ensuring it is protected, private, captured, stored, and made available when you need it...to coding your information for payment by your insurance company...we are there to manage the entire process and more”

HIM’s Role in the Electronic Health Record World

- ❖ The goal of FHIMA is to present and eliminate barriers.
- ❖ Guardians of the information whether paper, electronic, or both.
- ❖ We have the knowledge to effectively transfer from paper to electronic
- ❖ Legislative, regulatory and operational requirements for electronic medical records are the same as for paper medical records, we are the experts to provide consistent compliance.
- ❖ We must collaborate with an IT perspective by partnering with other professional associations such as HIMSS

Record Processing and Fees

The release of information process is quickly becoming electronic however our commitment to maintaining privacy through release of information authorizations remains the same. Our members commit the same, if not more time to ensuring patient privacy is protected.

Involvement with Health Information Exchange (HIE)

HIM professionals can provide guidance on how to effectively implement HIE programs while protecting patient information.

Meaningful Use

In the ambiguity of this new rule, HIM can provide clarification and guidance to our healthcare providers meet requirements and to legislators on how to implement this rule to provide the optimal care for our patients.

HIPAA

From authorizations, to access, to amendments, to restrictions, and to breach notification, HIM professionals are the experts to ensure information is protected and released only in accordance with the law.

Universal Patient Authorization

FHIMA has been at the table with the state's Legal Work Group during this rule development process. We are willing to help and provide guidance on the development of this rule and its implications to the HIM professional's process for release of information.

Tips for a Successful Visit

- ❖ Don't be late!
- ❖ Address legislator properly "Congressman, Senator, Mr., Ms...."
- ❖ Introduce yourself and announce your affiliation with FHIMA.
- ❖ Speak clearly and don't rush, cover what you can.
- ❖ Keep it short and simple, avoid details unless asked.
- ❖ Be open for contrary ideas, learn from them!
- ❖ Offer to help, find out what FHIMA can do for them or their constituents.
- ❖ Be individuals, find an area of commonality, identify with them and get them interested.
- ❖ Bring your own HIM knowledge and expertise into the conversation.
- ❖ Don't be afraid to share what you know, YOU are the experts!!

BONUS: Make it fun, this is our time to represent!!!!



Sample Email or Letter To Member Requesting a Courtesy Meeting

The Honorable Senator Ken Pruitt Room
400 Senate Office Building
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL
32399-1100

Dear Senator Pruitt:

I am writing to inquire about your availability for a meeting to discuss the Florida Health Information Management Association (FHIMA) and those issues important to our more than 2700 members. The Health Subcommittee, of which you are a member, maintains primary jurisdiction over the issues relevant to health information management professionals.

FHIMA is the Florida component state association of our national organization, the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA). As experts in clinical data and information management, the 45,000 professional members of AHIMA are vital to the healthcare industry. The unique knowledge and skills that AHIMA members possess are critical for classifying and analyzing health information, transitioning from paper to computer-based medical records, and enhancing data quality—all accomplished while maintaining patient confidentiality and information security. With a 75-year tradition of advancing quality healthcare through quality information, AHIMA is also instrumental in developing industry standards, advocating relevant legislation, and providing education in health information.

I will contact your office on (give 5-7 days) to discuss your availability. We look forward to working with you on those issues affecting health information management professionals. In the meantime, if I can provide you with any information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (your phone number).

Sincerely,

Your Name
Your Title

GLOSSARY OF LEGISLATIVE TERMS

Amendment

Formal proposal to change the language of a bill after it has been introduced.

Appropriation

The amount of money set aside for a specific purpose and designated from a specific source such as the General Fund, Environmental License Plate Fund, etc.

Approved by the Governor

Signature of the Governor on a bill passed by the Legislature.

Assembly

The lower house of the California Legislature, consisting of 80 members, elected from districts apportioned on the basis of population, who serve two-year terms.

Bill

A proposed law introduced in the Assembly or Senate and identified with a number.

Bill Analysis

A document that must be prepared by committee staff prior to hearing the bill in committee. It explains how a bill would change current law and sometimes mentions support and opposition from major interest groups.

Chamber

The Assembly or Senate chamber where Floor Sessions are held.

Chapter

After a bill has been signed by the Governor, the Secretary of State assigns the bill a Chapter Number, such as Chapter 1235, Statutes of 1993, which is subsequently used to refer to the measure rather than the bill number.

Coauthor

Any member of either house, with the agreement of the author of a bill, may add his or her name on that member's bill as coauthor, usually indicating support for the proposal.

Codes

Bound volumes of law organized by subject matter. The code to be changed by a bill is referred to at the top of the bill.

Concurrence

One house approving a bill as amended in the other house. If the author is unwilling to move the bill as amended by the other house, the author requests nonconcurrence in the bill and asks for the information of a conference committee.

Concurrent Resolution

A measure introduced in one house which, if approved, must be sent to the other house for approval. The Governor's signature is not required. These measures usually involve the business of the Legislature.

Conference Committee

Usually composed of three legislators (two from the majority party; one from the minority party) from each house who meet in public session to forge one version of similar Senate and Assembly bills. The final conference committee version must be approved by both Assembly and Senate. Assembly conferences are chosen by the Speaker; Senate conferences are chosen by the Senate Rules Committee.

Consent Calendar

A group of noncontroversial bills passed by a committee or the full Assembly or Senate on one vote.

Constituent

Citizen residing within the district of a legislator.

Constitutional Amendment

A resolution affecting the Constitution, adopted by the Legislature or presented by initiative, requiring an affirmative vote of the electorate to become effective.

Daily File

Publication produced by the Assembly and Senate respectively for each day those houses are in session. The publication provides information about bills to be considered at upcoming committee hearings and bills eligible for consideration during the next scheduled Floor Session. Pursuant to Jt. Rule 62(a), any bill to be heard in committee must be noticed in the Daily file for four days, including weekend days. The Daily File also contains useful information about committee assignments and the legislative calendar.

Daily History

Produced by the Assembly and Senate respectively the day after each house has met. The History lists specific actions taken on legislation. Any measure acted upon in that house the previous day is listed in numerical order.

Daily Journal

Produced by the Assembly and Senate respectively the day after a Floor Session. Contains roll call votes on bills heard in policy committees and bills considered on the floor and other official action taken by the body. Any official messages from the Governor are also included. A Member may seek approval to publish a letter in the Journal on a specific legislative matter.

Do Pass

The affirmative recommendation made by a committee in sending a bill to the floor for final vote; do pass as amended - passage recommended providing certain changes are made.

Enacting Clause

By statutory provision, each proposed law must be preceded by the phrase the People of the State of California do enact as follows.

Enrolled Bill

Whenever a bill passes both houses of the Legislature, it is ordered enrolled. In enrollment, the bill is again proofread for accuracy and then delivered to the Governor. The enrolled bill contains the complete text of the bill with the dates of passage certified by the Secretary of State and the Chief Clerk of the Assembly.

Extraordinary Session

A special legislative session called by the Governor to address only those issues specified in the proclamation. Measures introduced in these sessions are numbered chronologically with a lower case x after the number (i.e.,28x); they take effect immediately upon being signed by the Governor.

First Reading

Each bill introduced must be read three times before the final passage. The first reading of a bill occurs when the measure is introduced.

Fiscal Committee

The Ways and Means Committee in the Assembly and the Appropriations Committee in the Senate to which all fiscal bills are referred if they are approved by policy committees. If the fiscal committee approves a bill, it then moves to the floor.

Floor

The Assembly or Senate chambers.

Hearing

A committee meeting convened for the purpose of gathering information on a specific subject or considering specific legislative measures.

Inactive File

The portion of the Daily File containing legislation that is ready for floor consideration, but, for a variety of reasons, is dead or dormant. An author may move a bill to the inactive file and subsequently move it off the inactive file at a later date. During the final weeks of the legislative session, measures may be moved there by the leadership as a method of encouraging authors to take up their bills promptly.

Initiative

A method of legislating that requires a vote of the people instead of a vote of the legislature for a measure to become law.

To qualify for a statewide ballot, statutory initiatives must receive 384,974 signatures and constitutional amendment initiatives must receive 615,958 signatures.

Interim

The period of time between the end of the legislative year and the beginning of the next legislative year. The legislative year ends on August 31 in even-numbered years and September 15 in odd-numbered years.

Item Veto

The Governor's refusal to approve a portion or item of a bill; however, the remainder of the bill is approved.

Joint Resolution

Expresses an opinion about an issue pertaining to the federal government; forwarded to Congress for its information. Requires the approval of both Assembly and Senate but does not require the signature of the Governor to take effect.

Law

Rule of conduct determined by the people through their elected representatives, or by direct vote.

Legislative Counsel's Digest

The digest is a brief summary of the changes the proposed bill would make to current law. The digest is found on the front of each printed bill.

On File

A bill on the second or third reading file of the Assembly or Senate Daily File.

Policy Committee

Each house of the legislature has a number of committees referred to as "policy" committees. As bills are introduced in each house the Rules committee assigns each to a policy committee. The policy committee sets up public hearings on the bills, conducts hearings and following such testimony, votes on whether or not to recommend passage of the bill to the floor of the respective house. Other actions a policy committee may take include amending a bill and re-referring it to the same or another committee for additional hearings.

President of the Senate

The State Constitution designates the Lieutenant Governor as President of the Senate, allowing him to preside over the Senate and cast a vote only in the event of a 20-20 tie. The Lt.

Governor's role is largely ceremonial because he has not cast a tie breaking vote since 1975 and, in practice, does not preside over the Senate.

Reading

Presentation of a bill before either house by the reading of the title thereof; a stage in the enactment of a measure. A bill, until passed, is either in process of first, second or third reading, no matter how many times it has actually been read.

Resolution

An opinion expressed by one or both houses which does not have the force of law. Concurrent resolutions are voted on by both houses but do not require the Governor's signature; joint resolutions are voted on by both houses.

Roll Call

A vote of a committee or the full Assembly or Senate. Committee roll calls are conducted by the committee secretary who calls each member's name in alphabetical order with the Chair's name last. Assembly roll calls are conducted electronically with each member pushing a button from his/her assigned seat. Senate roll calls are conducted by the Reading Clerk who reads each Senator's name in alphabetical order.

Second Reading

Each bill introduced must be read three times before final passage. Second reading occurs after a bill has been reported from committee.

Section

Portion of the codes, cited in each bill which proposes to amend, create, or replace same.

Senate

The upper house of the California Legislature, consisting of 40 members elected from districts apportioned on the basis of population, one-half of whom are elected or re-elected every two years for four-year terms.

Session

Period during which the Legislature meets: Regular - the biennial session at which all classes of legislation may be considered; Extraordinary - special session, called by, and limited to matters specified by the Governor; Daily - each day's meeting; Joint - meeting of the two houses together.

Speaker

Highest ranking member of the Assembly; elected by all Assemblymembers at the beginning of each two-year legislative session.

Statutes

Compilation of all enacted bills, chaptered by the Secretary of State in the order in which they became law, and prepared in book form by the State Printer.

Third Reading

Each bill introduced must be read three times before final passage. Third reading occurs when the measure is about to be taken up on the floor of either house for final passage.

Third Reading Analysis

A summary of a measure ready for floor consideration. Contains most recent amendments and information regarding how members voted on the measure when it was heard in committees. Senate floor analyses also list support or opposition information on interest groups and government agencies.

Title

A brief italicized paragraph, identifying the subject matter and preceding the contents of a measure.

Unfinished Business

That portion of the Daily File that contains measures awaiting Senate or Assembly concurrence in amendments taken in the other house. Also contains measures vetoed by the Governor for a 60-day period after the veto. The house where the vetoed bill originated has 60 days to attempt to override.

Urgency Clause

A bill which contains an urgency clause takes effect upon the Governor's signature. A vote on the urgency clause must precede a vote on the bill and requires a 2/3 vote for passage.

Veto

The Governor's refusal to approve a measure sent to him by the Legislature.

Vote

There are two categories of votes: majority and two-thirds.

Majority Vote: A vote of more than half of the legislative body considering a measure. The full Assembly requires a majority vote of 41 and the full Senate requires 21, based on their memberships of 80 and 40 respectively.

Two-Thirds (2/3): A vote of at least 2/3 of the legislative body considering a measure. The full Assembly requires a 2/3 vote of 54 and the full Senate requires 27, based on their memberships of 80 and 40 respectively.