

TIME LINE for PRESS EVENT

TWO to THREE WEEKS BEFORE

- Prepare / Update media contact list including contact name, phone and fax for:
 - Reporters you already know, especially political and human service reporters;
 - City desk and political editors at newspapers;
 - News directors at radio stations;
 - Assignment editors at TV stations;
 - Sympathetic columnists;
 - News wires (AP , Reuters);
 - African-American and Hispanic press;
 - Weekly / Community Newspapers.

- Identify and invite speakers and moderator
Our choice of speakers at any press event will be a crucial element to getting our message out on working families' issues:
 - Avoid press events featuring only people without disabilities.
 - People with disabilities and family members should be included as speakers in press conferences.
 - It's important to present to the public a picture of disability issues that mirrors our members and the communities in which we live. This can be done by featuring a diverse group of speakers at the press event in terms of disability, race, gender, age, background etc.
 - Including coalition allies as speakers can help demonstrate how your campaign affects the community's living standards and reflects their values.
 - Other speakers may include:
 - Statewide disability advocates;
 - Members' family, including children;
 - Community and Religious Leaders;
 - Civil Rights Leaders;
 - Retirees;
 - Local politicians

- Select Site
Fitting sites include:
 - Worksite;
 - Public, central gathering spot such as town square or park;

- Community center;
- School or civic auditorium;
- Local agency;
- Senator's or Congressperson's local office.

Remember that you will need to make extra preparations if you select a site needing:

- a sound system;
- a podium;
- seating;
- a police permit-

ONE WEEK BEFORE

- Prepare background packet for press and for speakers
 - Fact Sheets
 - Background Articles
- Make sure all speakers are confirmed
- Provide speakers with talking points, background packet, etc.
- Prepare or acquire any props for your event
 - Graphs
 - Banners and Signs
 - Blown-up photos
 - Video

DAY BEFORE

- Confirm that all media have been contacted by phone AND fax.
- Firm up any half-way commitments you've gotten from reporters over the last week.
- Call to make sure that you are on the Associated Press (AP) daybook in the office covering your area. Almost all the media see the daybook. The deadline is 24-hours before the event.
- Go over comprehensive checklist (see attached) for event and make sure everything is covered.

EVENT DAY

- Make early follow up calls to TV stations to talk to that day's assignment editor. TV stations rotate their assignment editors along shifts. The assignment editor you talked to in the afternoon or evening last week may not be on for the day of your event. Make sure you've spoken with that day's editor. Many TV stations have their assignment meetings at 9:00 am. Start your calls at 8:00 a.m.
- Have a spokesperson available to do radio interviews before and after the event.
- Arrive early to set-up site.
- Have a press sign-in sheet at the event.
- Meet and greet all press and provide them with a packet containing:
 - Press release;
 - Press statement;
 - Background packet (including articles, fact sheets etc.);
 - Agenda, including all speakers' titles and organizational affiliations.
- Have someone assigned to take photographs and, perhaps, video.
- Following the press event, FAX the release and statement to any reporters who didn't attend.

AFTER THE EVENT

- Call key reporters who didn't attend the event, or who didn't do an immediate story. Meet with them if possible.
- Gather press clips.
- Recruit members and community leaders to write letters to the editor.
- Prepare op-eds for the local paper.
- Book spokespersons onto TV and radio shows.

CHECKLIST for PRESS EVENT

_____ Site Preparation

- Banners
- Props
- Sound System
- Podium
- Seating if necessary
- Police permit, if necessary

_____ Speakers are prepared and have agenda

_____ Press sign-in sheet available

_____ Press packets available including:

- Press Release
- Press statement
- Fact sheets
- Background articles
- Agenda

_____ All media has been contacted by fax and phone

_____ Photographer booked

_____ Spokespersons available for radio / TV interviews