



# Advocacy Week

FEBRUARY  
23-27

PROMOTE YOUR COUNSELOR IDENTITY

## Friday February 27<sup>th</sup> POLITICAL ADVOCACY

Advocate for a strong professional identity through unified education requirements for counselors by writing letters to key decision and policy makers. Write a letter to your state counseling licensure board, department of education, or government representatives advocating for the adoption of standardized education requirements that include graduation from a CACREP-accredited program to assist in licensure portability for counselors. Take your advocacy efforts one step further by writing a letter to the American Counseling Association's Governing Council asking for their public support of CACREP in promoting one national standard for the educational requirements of the counseling profession at the state and federal level.

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### Letter Guidelines

This document provides general guidelines for sending written requests to state-level leaders and policy makers who oversee counselor licensure and/or certification rules, regulations, and laws. These structured, yet flexible, guidelines can be used when communicating with decision makers such as counseling licensure board members, department of education staff, and state legislators. See the next page for assistance with finding contact information for your state's licensure board, education department, and government officials.

*[Insert date of letter]*

Individual or Organization Name  
Street Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Individual or Organization:

- ¶1. Introduce yourself and briefly state why you are writing. Be sure to identify yourself as a relevant stakeholder or constituent.
- ¶2. Tell the Individual/Organization directly what you are requesting of them.
- ¶3. Provide a supporting rationale for your request. Include facts, figures, and/or personal anecdotes (see [CACREP 2013 Annual Report](#) for CACREP facts and CACREP's Position Statement on Licensure Portability for Professional Counselors).



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¶4. Thank the Individual/Organization for their time in reading your letter and considering your request.

Sincerely,

Signature

Your Contact Information

### \*\*\*REMEMBER\*\*\*

- Be sure your letter is brief, clear, respectful, and direct.
- Stay focused on one pertinent issue; do not keep adding additional items or requests.
- Make sure to follow up after you send your letter until you get a response to your request.

**IMPORTANT:** Look up the current licensure or certification requirements in your state so that you can be specific with your request. Also, find out if any proposed changes are currently being considered regarding your state's counseling licensure or certification requirements. If so, assess the potential impact of the proposed changes and provide your feedback when possible.

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## TO WHOM/WHERE SHOULD I SEND MY LETTER?

The state leaders and/or organizations you should contact depend on your counseling program type or your specialization within the counseling profession. For example, if you are a clinical mental health counseling student, faculty member, or practitioner, you should most likely contact your state counseling licensure board and/or your state legislators. Likewise, students, faculty members, and practitioners specializing in school counseling should contact your state department of education [licensing/certification office] as well as your state legislators.

Use the resource links below to find contact information for the various authorities in your state. Make sure you know the key players involved and the official process for adopting or revising licensure/certification requirements for counselors in your state to ensure your advocacy efforts are directed to the appropriate decision makers.

- [State Professional Counselor Licensure Boards](http://www.counseling.org) (from [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org))
- [State School Counselor Certification/Licensure Agencies](http://www.counseling.org) (from [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org))
- [State Certification Requirements for School Counselors](http://www.schoolcounselor.org) (from [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org))
- [State Government Information](#)
- [Directory of State and Local Governments](#)