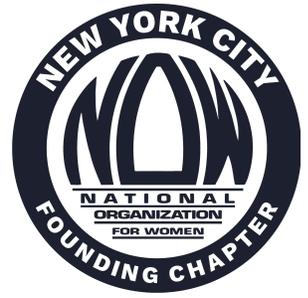


Activist Toolkit



FIGHT BACK NOW

The National Organization for Women - New York



We are mobilizing activists statewide to hold the line on our hard-won rights.

The National Organization for Women-New York City is organizing across our state and city to resist the Trump agenda, by uniting progressive people within their own communities who are prioritizing social justice and women's rights. This toolkit is designed to help activists engage with each other and with their representatives. Those in key congressional districts will lay the groundwork for change in 2020.

Get activated! Follow action alerts from NOW-NYC and other organizations you care about. Sign-up for our email updates at nownyc.org

Get To Know Your Representatives

Learn more about your elected officials

- **Google** backgrounds, political ties and affiliations, voting record, and current activities.
- **Review** their biographies and backgrounds on their websites.
- **Check out their social media** pages and past interviews, as well as any press coverage.
- **Set up Google alerts** with your legislators' names.

Who are my representatives' donors and supporters?

- [OpenSecrets](#)
- [Follow the Money](#)

Where do my representatives stand on key issues?

- [VoteSmart](#)
- [Ballotpedia](#)

How do I connect with my representatives?

- When Congress is not in session, your representative will be in your district and should make time to meet. Check out the Congressional calendar [here](#).
- Sign up for your representatives' email lists.
- Follow them on social media.
- Save their numbers in your phone! Call their office to find out about upcoming events or town hall meetings.

Calling your Representatives:

- Get the name(s) for the staff member(s) who work on your issue.
- Highlight that you are a constituent.
- Make it personal - tell your story.
- Focus on ONE issue per call so you can get specific.
- Take notes and report back to NOW.

Example

“Hello, my name is _____, and I am a constituent. Recently, the Violence Against Women Act has come under attack by the Trump administration, and I am calling on Representative _____ to support fully funding VAWA. It has revolutionized the way the country combats gender violence. With 1 in 3 women facing physical or sexual violence in their lifetime, we cannot afford to lose even one dollar of support. Thank you.”



Find Your Representatives

Federal

The White House

202-456-1414

[Email](#) • [Website](#)

Sen. Chuck Schumer

202-224-6542

212-486-4430

[Email](#) • [Website](#)

Sen. Kirsten

Gillibrand

202-224-4451

212-688-6262

[Email](#) • [Website](#)

[US Representatives](#)

NY State

Governor Andrew Cuomo

518-474-8390

[Email](#) • [Website](#)

[NY State Senators](#)

[NY State Assembly Members](#)

Local

[Mayor de Blasio](#)

Borough Presidents:

[Manhattan](#)

[Brooklyn](#)

[Bronx](#)

[Queens](#)

[Staten Island](#)

[NYC Council Members](#)

**Search for Your
County Executive /
County Legislators
online**

Resources

Call Scripts & Transcripts

nownyc.org/actions

5calls.org

[Deedsnotwords.com](https://deedsnotwords.com)

Guides

[Indivisible Guide](#)

[Flippable](#)

[Resistance Manual Resource Guide](#)

[Our States](#)



Remember, we're already making change!

We took back the House in the midterms, and now we need to take back our democracy. Meet your reps, reach out to other advocates, and use these tools to get it done!

Ending Violence Against Women

Here's a real live example of how you can help!

Minutes after President Trump was sworn in, the White House website was wiped clean of research and reports on rape, sexual assault, and domestic violence. We must not forget Trump's unapologetic comments about grabbing women and the dozen sexual assault allegations against him. This is not normal for a Commander-in-Chief.

In year one of the Trump administration, we launched our Take Rape Seriously NOW campaign to proactively defend the vital programs of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) that implement prevention programs and survivor services. We will not let the Trump administration obliterate these programs on our watch!

[Learn more](#) about VAWA NOW!

Steps to Save VAWA:

1. **Sign our petition** [here](#) to protect VAWA, and share the petition on social media using #DefendVAWA, #VAWA4ALL
2. **Share SurvivorStoriesNOW.org**, our [digital report](#) that documents the real stories of survivors and the real need for VAWA.
3. **Contact or meet with your representatives** to urge their support for VAWA's reauthorization (H.R. 6545).

There's More You Can Do!

Write a Letter to the Editor or an Op-Ed

Words are sometimes the most effective tools at our disposal. Write about an issue that you want to address with your neighbors, like the potential defunding of VAWA, and get it published!

Why Write An Op-Ed?

An op-ed can have a targeted audience or can be written for the general public. Op-eds are usually written by organizations, activists, experts, opinion leaders, or private citizens. The goal of an op-ed is to present a clear, dynamic opinion on an issue that has the capability to inform and engage the reader.

When and Why to Write a Letter to the Editor:

A letter to the editor (LTE) is a response to an article or column posted in a magazine. An LTE can come from various sources- private citizens, activists, other journalists, or experts in the issues discussed in the original article. However, LTE's are often most effective when they are crafted by those who have a unique perspective or breadth of knowledge about the subject expressed in the original article.

Though LTE's often take the opposing side of the narrative presented in the original article, they can also be spaces to reaffirm a piece of writing that supports your viewpoint and add more context to the position presented.

Here are some [dos & don'ts](#) to get you started on your op-ed or LTE.

[Read NOW-NYC President Sonia Ossorio's op-ed about VAWA in the Huffington Post.](#)

Make a greater impact – Regularly visit our [NOW-NYC action](#) page to find out about more actions you can take.

Lobby Your Elected Leaders

Lobbying may sound intimidating, but all it means is setting up a meeting about an issue that matters to you. Meeting as a group with your legislators is one of the strongest forms of civic engagement.

Set up a meeting with your elected official:

- **Call your legislator's local district office** and ask the scheduler to set up a meeting with you. Tell them you are a constituent and what you would like to discuss.

Prepare for Your Meeting With Your Legislator:

- Gather a group of people who live in your district (if possible - if not, on your own is fine, too) to attend a meeting and represent your district and interests.
- Have talking points ready.
- Come with stories and experiences - personal narratives are the best way to make sure your voice and concerns are heard.
- Bring along materials you may want to leave with your official. For example - our [report](#) on how VAWA impacts survivors.
- Take notes.
- Get contact info and follow up with your representative afterwards.
- Exchange business cards. Be sure to get an official's or staffer's card!
- Follow up with us! Email contact@nownyc.org and tell us about the advocacy work you're doing. By sharing information, we begin to build our campaign for or against this elected official in their next election!

Lobbying 101

Do

- Know the issue and the counter arguments.
- Meet with supporters and adversaries.
- Make a specific “ask”.
- Follow-up.
- Record, Track, and Report.

Don't

- Provide inaccurate information.
- Turn down a meeting with staff.
- Be disrespectful.



Protest

If you feel you are not getting through to your legislators, protesting is always an option!

In order for your protest to be effective:

- Ensure your protest has a clear mission and end goal.
- Have bold, simple signs that communicate your message clearly so the media and public understand what issue your demonstration addresses.
- Get permits in advance - although sometimes it is possible to simply get out there with some signs.
- Decide what format you want for your protest and plan for the day.
- Recruit a solid team of volunteers and get your social media ready.
- Make sure to invite the press.
- Even if the press isn't there - make your own press - live stream or find ways to share what you are doing on social media.
- Email us at contact@nownyc.org to learn more!

Whatever you choose to do, always...**amplify your message!**

NOW-NYC is here to be your megaphone.

Share what you're doing on social media, email us, and send us your photos and videos so we can share your work widely and build our resistance together!

Facebook	#nownyc
Twitter	#TakeRapeSeriously
Instagram	#DefendVAWA

Make a Commitment

I will Speak Up. Rise Up. Act NOW.

As a NOW-NYC member, I commit to take action to:

1. Advance equality and justice for all people.
2. Hold our elected leaders accountable and demand they denounce racism, sexism, and bigotry.
3. Stand up for reproductive justice and access to healthcare.
4. Protect free speech and preserve our right to speak out and protest.
5. Challenge the economic inequality that drives our division.
6. Take Rape Seriously and dismantle toxic masculinity and rape culture.
7. Elect pro-women's rights and pro-choice leaders.
8. Challenge the forces that deny climate change & scientific evidence.
9. Dare to speak the truth and challenge myself to learn, listen, speak up, and engage as an activist, ally, and witness.
10. Ensure New York remains an inclusive safe haven for women, girls, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, immigrants, those with disabilities, and all people.

nownyc.org