BOLDER ADVOCACY
An initiative of Alliance for Justice

ACT! Quick
ADVOCACY CAPACITY TOOL

What is the PURPOSE of ACT! Quick?

ACT! Quick is a short version of Alliance for Justice's Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT) found at www.bolderadvocacy.org/act. ACT! Quick is designed to:

- Provide a quick diagnosis of the strengths and gaps in organizations' knowledge, skills, and practices, and identify areas for strengthening,
- Inform users about the scope of their organizational advocacy capacity,
- Facilitate discussion and begin a journey towards strengthening advocacy capacity, and
- Assess progress in building advocacy capacity.

When should this tool be used instead of the full ACT?

- To look at organizational advocacy capacity when 15 minutes is all that can be spared,
- To take a quick overall assessment and view detailed questions in specific areas that you choose,
- To introduce advocacy capacity assessment before taking the full ACT, and
- For multiple organizations to assess and discuss their advocacy capacity at meetings when time is limited.

How can I/we get more information on selected advocacy capacity areas?

- With the electronic ACT! Quick, you can click on the question number for any of the 18 indicators if you would like a deeper assessment of your organization's advocacy capacity. This will take you to an additional 5–7 questions to consider for that indicator.
- Check out the full Advocacy Capacity Tool at bolderadvocacy.org/act for a detailed diagnosis.

Is scoring high in all of the ACT! Quick organizational capacities our goal?

No, the purpose of the tool is to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas to strengthen, so be honest in your answers. *No organization is expected to have it all! Relying on partners for certain capacities can be the best strategy.*

Who might fill out ACT! Quick?

- The executive director or advocacy director
- Some or all of the staff *together*
- Some or all of the staff *individually*
- The board of directors
- Coalitions or other multi-group advocacy teams
- Participants in trainings

After using ACT! Quick, how are numerical results obtained?

Online ACT! Quick users will get an automatic score of 0–4 for each of the 18 indicators, as well as the number of times "Rely on Partners" was chosen. They will also receive an average score for each of the four sections.

PDF users can use the accompanying ACT! Quick Results chart to determine their scores.

How can the ACT! Quick results be used to strengthen our advocacy capacity?

At the end of ACT! Quick you will have the opportunity to choose areas in which you would like to strengthen organizational advocacy capacity. We suggest repeating ACT! Quick in 3, 6 or 12 months to assess your progress.

How can I/we learn more about using ACT! or ACT! Quick to build our advocacy capacity?

Please contact us via e-mail or telephone (see information at the bottom of this page) for free technical assistance, and to schedule in person trainings or webinars. *Visit bolderadvocacy.org to learn about PowerCheck for community organizing and the IACT for international advocacy.*

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ACT! Quick is a short version of Alliance for Justice's Advocacy Capacity Tool (ACT) and is designed to provide a quick diagnosis of the strengths and gaps in organizations' advocacy skills, knowledge, and practices, and identify areas for strengthening. The electronic versions of ACT and ACT! Quick provide automatic results.
For definitions of the **underlined text**, visit: bolderadvocacy.org/act/advocacy-capacity-tool-glossary.

		VERY STRONG/ ALWAYS	MODERATELY STRONG/ USUALLY	SOMEWHAT STRONG/ SOMETIMES	NOT STRONG/ RARELY/ NEVER	RELY ON PARTNERS
I.	**ADVOCACY GOALS, PLANS, AND STRATEGIES**					
1	**PREPARATION.** In preparation for **advocacy** work, the organization scans the outside policy environment and its own knowledge, skills, and resources for advocacy.					N/A
2	**AGENDA.** The organization has a clear, written advocacy agenda, which is informed by its **constituents** and approved by its leadership.					N/A
3	**PLANS, STRATEGIES, AND ADAPTABILITY.** To accomplish its advocacy agenda, the organization 1) identifies key **decision-makers** for its advocacy agenda goals, 2) determines what it will take to obtain those decision-makers' support, and 3) plans a flexible strategy.					N/A
II.	**CONDUCTING ADVOCACY**					
	*You should choose **"Rely on Partners"** if the organization has decided not to build capacity in a particular indicator because it primarily gets that capacity from other individuals or groups.*					
4.	**RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS.** The organization gathers and analyzes credible information on its issues and shares its analyses as appropriate.					
5.	**FIELD OPERATION.** The organization communicates with, educates, and engages its **constituents**/**networks,** and the public on its issues.					
6.	**ADVOCACY PARTNERS AND COALITIONS.** The organization identifies and collaborates with other stakeholders in order to advance its goals.					N/A
7.	**MESSAGING.** The organization develops clear, compelling, and concise messages that are adapted for its **target audiences**.					
8.	**MEDIA RELATIONS.** The organization plans media outreach and distributes information to online, broadcast, and print media as needed to communicate its messages.					
9.	**INFLUENCING DECISION-MAKERS.** The organization builds and nurtures ongoing **working relationships** with elected officials and other decision-makers who can influence progress of the organization's advocacy agenda.					

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III. ADVOCACY AVENUES

*You should choose **"Rely on Partners"** if the organization has decided not to build capacity in a particular indicator because it primarily gets that capacity from other individuals or groups.*

10. **ADMINISTRATIVE.** The organization monitors and works to influence **executive** branch, **regulatory** and enforcement activity in order to further the organization's advocacy priorities.

11. **LEGISLATIVE.** The organization monitors and works to influence legislative branch activity in order to further its advocacy priorities.

12. **BALLOT MEASURES,** **REFERENDA, AND INITIATIVES.** The organization monitors the planning and progress of, and takes public positions on **ballot measures,** referenda, and Initiatives related to its advocacy priorities.

13. **ELECTORAL.** The organization understands the election process and participates in **voter** and/or **candidate education** efforts.

14. **LITIGATION.** The organization monitors litigation related to its policy priorities and pursues activities such as initiating litigation or signing on to **amicus curiae** briefs.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL OPERATIONS TO SUSTAIN ADVOCACY

15. **ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT.** The organization's **leadership** understands and supports its advocacy plans and activities. — N/A

16. **FUNDING ADVOCACY.** The organization informs individual donors and foundations about the value of funding advocacy and the latitude **funders/donors** are given to do so under the law. — N/A

17. **DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE AND PROCESS.** The organization's leadership has a clear process for making timely, informed decisions about its advocacy work. — N/A

18. **FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY.** The organization allocates funding for advocacy work and **tracks** its **lobbying** activities and expenses as required by law. — N/A

STRENGTHENING

Please write down two or three of the above 18 **indicators** in which your organization may want to strengthen organizational advocacy capacity and/or obtain or increase capacity from partners. This will allow you to monitor your progress in these areas over time.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Thanks for using ACT! Quick. To tally results, please go to the ACT! Quick Results page.

Now you're ready for the full ACT! www.bolderadvocacy.org/act

ACT! *Quick* Results
ADVOCACY CAPACITY TOOL

You can score and tally your responses in the charts below *(count one response per question):*

First, count the numerical results for each of the 18 indicators, and enter the number in the middle column.

For each time you marked the answer below, score:

4	for Very Strong/Always
3	for Moderately Strong/Usually
2	for Somewhat Strong/Sometimes
1	for Not Strong/Rarely/Never
0	for Rely on Partners

Second, in the last column, enter the number of times "Rely on Partners" was chosen.

Where applicable fill in "1" each time you chose Rely on Partners.

Third, compile results for each section.

- Add up the numerical scores for each of the four sections.
- Add up the number of times "Rely on Partners" was chosen for each section.

Don't overly focus on the numbers!

The objective here is to identify organizational strengths and weaknesses, and where to build advocacy capacity—not to get the highest score.

Remember, in areas where groups choose to mostly "Rely on Partners" the organizational score is expected to be low.

Capacity Indicator Scores	Points Awarded	# Times "Rely on Partners" Selected
I. Advocacy Goals, Plans, and Strategies		
1. Preparation	_____	n/a
2. Agenda	_____	n/a
3. Plans, Strategies, and Adaptability	_____	n/a
II. Conducting Advocacy		
4. Research and Analysis	_____	_____
5. Field Operation	_____	_____
6. Advocacy Partners and Coalitions	_____	n/a
7. Messaging	_____	_____
8. Media Relations	_____	_____
9. Influencing Decision-Makers	_____	_____
III. Advocacy Avenues		
10. Administrative	_____	_____
11. Legislative	_____	_____
12. Ballot Measures, Referenda, and Initiatives	_____	_____
13. Electoral	_____	_____
14. Litigation	_____	_____
IV. Organizational Operations to Sustain Advocacy		
15. Organizational Commitment	_____	n/a
16. Funding Advocacy	_____	n/a
17. Decision-Making Structure and Process	_____	n/a
18. Fiscal Management and Sustainability	_____	n/a
Section Scores	**Points Awarded**	**# Times "Rely on Partners" Selected**
I. Advocacy Goals, Plans, and Strategies	_____ out of 12	n/a
II. Conducting Advocacy	_____ out of 24	_____
III. Advocacy Avenues	_____ out of 20	_____
IV. Organizational Operations to Sustain Advocacy	_____ out of 16	n/a