



CAC2
COALITION AGAINST
CHILDHOOD CANCER

CAC2 ADVOCACY GUIDE TO SEPTEMBER PROCLAMATIONS

A proclamation is an act that formally declares to the general public that the government has acted in a particular way. It is a written or printed document issued by a superior government executive, such as the president or governor, which sets out such a declaration by the government. Proclamations are typically signed and issued by federal officials, governors, state legislators, or other government officials at the local level. The methods to request and acquire proclamations vary from city, state, region, or entity.

Proclamations are also used ceremonially, as an official announcement that publicly recognizes an initiative, a special event or occasion, such as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month. A proclamation is a great way to build credibility for your issue, raise awareness and promote it.

Presidential Proclamations

One type of proclamation is the Presidential Proclamation.

Presidents “define” situations or conditions on situations that become legal or economic truth. These orders carry the same force of law as executive orders – the difference between the two is that an executive order is aimed at those inside government while proclamations are aimed at those outside government. Presidential proclamations do have important political and historical consequences in the development of the United States, including President Washington’s Proclamation of Neutrality in 1793 and President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Other more recent policy-based proclamations have also made a substantial impact on economic and domestic policy, including President Clinton’s declaration of federal lands for national monuments and President Bush’s proclamations issued related to the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. In recent years, more proclamations have been issued to spotlight important awareness campaigns.

For a number of years, childhood cancer has been included among the proclamations issued thanks to national collaborative advocacy efforts. The Presidential Proclamation recognizes the importance of raising awareness, advocating for research, remembering the children we've lost and advancing the plight for those fighting and surviving.

View last year's [Presidential Proclamation](#).

Local Proclamations

By encouraging local government officials to sign proclamations in support of Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, it demonstrates to the local community a commitment to raising awareness about the vulnerabilities of children in your area diagnosed with childhood cancers, access to quality treatment, and the lifelong challenges for survivors.

The information below includes tips to help draft and promote a local Childhood Cancer Awareness Month proclamation.

First Steps

Before drafting a proclamation to designate September as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month in your area begin a conversation with the local Public Officials. Try to learn about their interests and inclinations. They may be already aware of childhood cancer and ready to help, or you may need to educate them on the importance of such a proclamation. It is best to engage someone who is passionate about this issue, if possible, or try to generate passion for the issue as a result of your outreach.

Remember that many public officials can issue a proclamation, including:

- Governors
- Senators and Representatives • State Legislators
- County/City Council Members • Mayors

Lead Time

With Childhood Cancer Month in September – and since many legislatures and city governments are not in session during the summer months – it is best to contact public officials at least three months in advance, as most will require at least a month prior to your targeted event to publicize the proclamation.

How to Request a Proclamation

Two key methods:

- Look on the website of the office, which often outlines the procedure you will need to follow.
- Write a letter or send an email to initiate correspondence with an official's communications office, and follow up with a phone call.

In either case, it is good to include an explanation for the critical need to observe Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, and when possible provide a detailed schedule of local activities and discuss the importance of the office's annual support for awareness month. Explain that it's a simple way for the government to recognize the impact of the number one disease killer of children in the country.

Once the office confirms that the official might support Childhood Cancer Month and issue a proclamation, it's time to start writing.

Writing the Proclamation

Two main styles are commonplace in today's proclamation: traditional and modern. *Traditional proclamations* begin with a series of statements starting with the words "whereas," and which detail the current state of affairs and suggest the reasoning behind the proclamation. Each clause notes the problems or issues being addressed and is followed by a concluding phrase beginning with "therefore," which specifically requests the support or action needed.

Modern proclamations are written in a letter format. They highlight the same points as a traditional proclamation, but are written as statements. Samples of both formats are included on the CAC2 September Proclamation page.

You can request a copy of a local proclamation from the mayor/government office, as it may help to review how others have incorporated local info.

Checklist of Key Steps to Draft and Submit a Proclamation:

Use the following checklist when drafting and submitting a proclamation:

- Determine the official's preferred writing style (traditional or modern), examine other proclamations by the office and cater to the style.

- Offer a draft of your desired proclamation.
- Insert local information or statistics that will resonate with community members. If any local press has been generated in the past year, include copies of the articles.
- Follow up with relative frequently to check the status of the proclamation.

Publicize the Proclamation

Publicizing the proclamation will bring more attention to an awareness campaign, and generate momentum for the national campaign locally. Inquire to see if your event can be announced at city/county meetings that take place prior to the event. If possible, arrange for a press conference or town-hall meeting and have local officials sign or present the proclamation. At times, the press event can be accompanied by a roundtable discussion on issues related to childhood cancer. Ideas for panelists include medical professionals and service providers, families touched by childhood cancer, children currently in treatment, young adult survivors.

Once the proclamation is approved (hopefully by the first week in September) visit government buildings, local businesses, health clubs (especially if they have a kids' center), libraries, hotel lobbies, schools, hospitals, urgent care facilities, pediatrician offices, daycares to see if they will allow you to display copies of proclamations and other awareness materials.

Arrange for a proclamation to be featured in a local publication or local area news Facebook page to increase awareness. Distribute electronic copies of the document to the local or metro desks of local newspapers, along with a press release to announce the signing of the National Childhood Cancer proclamation and include a sample of a short article that can be used.

Remember to post any event on the CAC2 calendar: <https://cac2.org/events/>. Cumulative recognition across the country in this way speaks a very loud message of the national concern for this important issue.

If you are denied a proclamation, always write a letter of gratitude for consideration. Set goals during the upcoming year to have influential persons in your area prepare letters of support for a proclamation for you to submit with next year's request. These types of letters can communicate the level of awareness and concern in your area, which can pique an official's interest.