

# Action Toolkit: The Civil Service Archive

This toolkit offers practical ways the public, including current and former civil servants, can leverage the [Civil Service Archive](#) website to help promote transparency, advocate for fairness, and protect the key services the civil service provides.<sup>1</sup>

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## What is the Civil Service Archive?

The Archive is a searchable catalog that tracks changes that affect how the federal workforce does its work. In the Archive you'll find:

- Plain-language summaries of each policy change
- A one-stop shop: The Archive aims to include changes from all agencies
- Tags that let you search by policy topic, employee type, theme, and more
- Links to related policies — to help you spot themes and connection

Sign-up [here](#) to receive updates about the Archive.

## How can you leverage the Archive for your project?

- ✓ [Write a letter to the editor](#)
- ✓ [Contact your elected officials](#)
- ✓ [Pitch a local news story](#)
- ✓ [Support your union](#)
- ✓ [Build a social media strategy](#)
- ✓ [Comment on proposed regulations](#)

Are you interested in these advocacy approaches but aren't sure how to get started? Read on for a guide on how to raise awareness, advocate for change, and even participate in federal rulemaking about the civil service.

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<sup>1</sup> This document is not meant to, and does not, offer legal advice, including on any specific facts or circumstances. It is intended for general information and educational purposes only. This document also contains hypertext links to information created and maintained by other entities. Protect Democracy does not control or guarantee the accuracy or completeness of this outside information, nor is the inclusion of a link to be intended as an endorsement of those outside sites.

## Raise Awareness

### Write a letter to the editor

Letters to the editor are a great way to engage your community directly. Focus on making a personal connection to whatever issue you're discussing. The Archive provides the **What** (the policy change). Think about how your own personal or professional experience provides the **So What**. Maybe you're a federal worker who can explain why politicized [hiring](#) practices at your agency will impact the services your community relies on — write that! Dig deeper with resources from [Indivisible](#), [Friends Committee](#), and [ACLU of Pennsylvania](#).

### Pitch a news story to your local station or paper

Identify a policy change in the Archive with impacts in your community and consider telling your local news. Focus on storytelling. Why is this an important issue for your community? The Archive makes covering your story easy because it is a one-stop shop for understanding a policy, providing accessible summaries and source documents for journalists. The Archive's "theme" tags make connections between a variety of different policy changes. The [Program & Service Cuts](#) tag could show how the erosion of government services has affected certain communities. More suggestions on pitching news stories [here](#).

### Build a social media strategy

Engage on social media. For some, that may mean amplifying new policy changes added to the Archive for relevant stakeholders (policymakers, legislators, legal scholars, etc.). For others, it might look like creating content yourself! Consider using the Archive's thematic tags to highlight specific trends and patterns. Tips on how to develop a winning social media strategy [here](#) and DIY guide to visual storytelling [here](#) to get you started.

## Advocate for change

### Contact your elected officials

Reaching out to your elected officials about an issue that's important to you can make a big difference. The Archive helps identify different policy issues and serves as a reference in your interactions with elected officials; use the Archive's individual record pages to quickly educate them and their staff on technical policy changes. We've outlined some steps for outreach below:

- **Step 1: Choose an issue that's important to you *and* decide what you want your elected official to do about it.** One-time advocacy to elected officials is most effective when there is a live issue related to that topic (e.g. should I vote for this bill or oppose this bill?) Officials and their staff members keep a tally of messages for and against a particular issue. When you reach out, tell them you're a constituent who votes.
- **Step 2: Find out who represents you.** Use [this tool](#) to find out who represents you.
- **Step 3: Get in touch.** Get in touch with your elected officials [in person](#), over the phone, or via email. Check out these outreach tips from [local activists](#), the [American Battlefield Trust](#), and [UC Berkeley](#). [Democracy.io](#) combines all these tools into one easy place to send

messages to your representatives. Here are some communication tips for folks who think their elected officials are [already doing a great job](#) or whose elected officials [never agree with them](#).

### Work with your union reps

The Archive helps union representatives pinpoint key policies, including on matters important to workplace safety and union contracts. The summaries of policy changes also provide specific details needed to justify [requests for information](#) effectively.

## Lend your expertise to federal rulemaking

Consider submitting a comment on proposed regulations.

The Civil Service Archive includes [information](#) on proposed and final rule changes. Federal law requires that agencies accept and consider comments from the public on proposed rules. Agencies are required to address and respond to comments before finalizing a rule. Even if the agency ignores the comment, it can become evidence in future litigation or can help the media understand the importance and impact of policy changes. When writing your own comment, use the Archive to:

- ✓ Digest plain language summaries of the proposed rules.
- ✓ Understand how these regulations work in tandem with other policy changes.

Check out Protect Democracy's resources on federal regulatory comments:

- [What Makes an Effective Public Comment](#)
- [Template for Individual Commentators](#)
- [Template for Organizational Commentators](#)

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For more information, contact:

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#### ABOUT US

Protect Democracy is a nonpartisan, nonprofit group working to prevent American democracy from declining into a more authoritarian form of government.