



**BTAN
Atlanta**

**Advocacy
Plan**



**BLACK
FUTURISTS
GROUP**

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To empower and ensure that this **Black Treatment Advocates Network** is equipped and skilled to successfully complete their advocacy plan they were assessed on competencies related to public policy and organizing, the following highlights their competency levels:

Legislative Advocacy

Captures this BTAN Chapter's competency to influence the introduction, enactment, or modification of legislation.



Community Organizing

Captures this BTAN Chapter's competency to collaborate and function with the community, create solutions to public issues and hold public officials accountable.



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The **Black Treatment Advocates Network (BTAN)** is a national network of HIV/AIDS stakeholders including service providers, community members and leaders, educators, and people living with HIV/AIDS, who mobilize Black communities across the country to confront HIV.

The following are policy and advocacy recommendations for BTAN

Atlanta:



Addressing the housing challenges for PLWHA by banning source of income (public assistance vouchers) discrimination by landlords. Outside of the City of Atlanta, landlords can deny a person housing due to paying rent with a housing voucher.

Sample Legislation: New York State Ban of Source of Income Discrimination Legislation

https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/GPB23_LAWFUL_SOURCE_OF_INCOME_NONDISCRIMINATION_ACT_BILL.pdf

City of Atlanta Source of Income Discrimination Ordinance

https://atlantacityga.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?

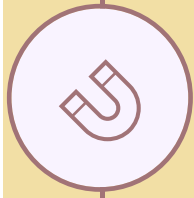
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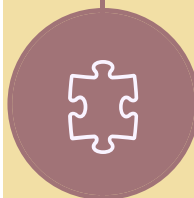
To implement these policies we recommend you create the following:



HOPWA Tenant Association: Create a tenant association that will serve as a watch dog and platform for PLWHA to engage in advocacy related to amplifying housing concerns, challenges, experiences, and forward-thinking innovations.



End Source of Income Discrimination Coalition: To advance policies related to ending source of income discrimination, BFG recommends the creation of a broad coalition of organizations with stake in affordable, accessible, and equitable housing issues.



Create End Source of Income Discrimination Advocacy Days & Briefings: To amplify the stories, policy ideas, and demands of PLWHA and others impacted by source of income housing discrimination, BFG recommends hosting advocacy days and legislative briefings aimed at educating lawmakers and the public about the housing challenges presented to PLWHA due to voucher discrimination.

1. SPECIFIC

Eliminate housing discrimination and minimize poor use of HOPWA funds.

2. MEASURABLE

Identify current areas of housing discrimination and address the current gaps in affordable housing opportunities for PLWH.

3. ATTAINABLE

The BTAN will work alongside community of PLWH to develop a tenant association. Additionally, the BTAN will host legislative briefings to educate lawmakers on housing challenges.

4. RELEVANT

Affordable housing persists as a challenge for PLWH. Additional housing challenges as a result of COVID-19 seek to further this issue leading to increased homelessness for PLWH.

5. TIMELY

To be determined by BTAN members and leads.

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Engaging with elected officials can be nerve-wracking or confusing if advocates have never reached out to their representatives. Your BTAN chapter should provide resources to educate advocates on how to accomplish the following tasks:

- Identify the legislators that represent them
- Send a message to a legislator via email or phone call
- Schedule a meeting with the district office
- Schedule a site-visit at a facility in their neighborhood
- Attend a lobby day and meet with legislators at the state house or in Washington, DC
- Continue to follow up and engage periodically

Best Practice: Set up a series of emails to share resources for each step of the advocacy process, then track who opens and engages with your emails. If an advocate has opened and clicked on an email, you can send them a second email with resources on the next step in the process.

If a period of time has passed and they have not opened or engaged with your email, resend the email with additional information on why it is important.

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Natalie Hall Vice Chair, District 4

Natalie Hall is Fulton County Commissioner of District 4, which encompasses the heart of Atlanta, downtown, Midtown, Old 4th Ward, and neighborhoods west of downtown Atlanta to Fulton Industrial Boulevard. The unique attribute about this district is that it's completely inside of the City of Atlanta.

Commissioner Hall is passionate about making a positive impact in the lives of the citizens of Fulton County. She previously served Fulton County faithfully for 6 years as the Chief of Staff to the late Fulton County District 4 Commissioner Joan P. Garner, and has over 25 years of management experience in the public and private sectors.

KHADIJAH ABDUR-RAHMAN, District 6

Khadijah's priorities include public safety and criminal justice reform including reducing juvenile delinquency; senior services and youth programs; environmental justice; public health; economic development and entrepreneurship; and arts and cultural programming.

A community leader for years, Khadijah serves on the board of directors of Atlanta Legal Aid Society; is fundraising chairperson at Humanitarian Relief Inc., a faith-based program that feeds homeless and needy persons; is past board member of the Fulton County Council on Aging; and has been a longtime volunteer with the C.T. Martin Youth Fest.



ROBB PITTS, Chairman

Robb Pitts is the Chairman of Fulton County Board of Commissioners. He previously served on the Fulton County Board of Commissioners from November 2002 to December 2014. During his tenure, he advocated for diversification in revenue sources to relieve the tax burden on property owners.

Robb previously served as a member of the Atlanta City Council for two decades, chairing the Finance and Community Development Committees for most of those years. He was elected to serve as the Atlanta City Council's President in 1997. During his tenure as President of the Atlanta City Council, he was a strong supporter of initiatives leading to tax relief for the elderly. Robb encouraged efficiency in city operations and procurement procedures, earning a reputation as the "taxpayers' watchdog" by scrutinizing spending and diligently reviewing the annual budgeting process.



08

Grasstops advocates ([see definition here](#)) are key to your organization's advocacy plan as they will be the most active in your campaign. Grasstops advocates can be identified in two main ways. First, you can survey existing advocates to find those with the qualities your organization looks for in a grasstops advocate.

Second, you can provide an opportunity for grassroots advocates to enroll in a training program your organization runs to elevate their level of contribution. In order to organize a survey and training program, outline the qualities that would distinguish a grassroots advocate, an individual who is a candidate for grasstops training, and an existing grasstops advocate. See sample assessment here:

QUALITY	GRASSROOTS ADVOCATE	GRASSTOPS IN TRAINING	GRASSTOPS ADVOCATE
Can Identify their local, state, and federal representatives	X		
Aware of all local election dates	X		
Aware of committee		X	
Has donated or volunteered for an elected official(s)		X	
Has spoken at committee meetings or public committee		X	
Has personal relationship with elected officials			X
Has spoken on-the-record with the media		X	
Has personal relationship with members of the media			X

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Since the goals have been identified, there is a need to identify advocates. While there are likely many people who believe in the same cause, there is a need to find them and convince them that they should engage with your organization to bring change.

The following is a chart of the target audiences and the methods to use to get them to your website:

TARGET AUDIENCE	METHOD
Voters	Canvassing, Social Media, Email Blast, Direct Mail, Virtual and Physical Events
Media	Press Release, Media Briefings, Press Kits, Press Conferences
HOPWA Providers	Coalition Meetings, Email Blast,
Elected Officials	Advocacy Days, Legislative Briefings, Personal Emails from Advocates, One on One Meetings

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Engaging in collaborative work and building coalitions can prove to be beneficial in the implementation and success of advocacy plans the following organizations may be potential allies to successfully complete these advocacy plans:

- The Movement 4 Black Lives, Atlanta Chapter
- Black Youth Project 100 Atlanta
- Housing Justice League
- Southern's on New Ground
- Thrive Support Services
- Solutions NOT Punishment Co.



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Whether your BTAN organization is advocating for change at the state or federal level, bringing your advocates to the state house or the Capitol building can be an effective way to show the size and volume of your organization's voice.

To have a successful lobby day, it's critical to make sure that advocates are prepared with statements to provide to staffers and materials to leave with an office after a meeting. These things should be included in any meeting with a legislative office:

- **A Personal Story:** What have your advocates experienced that make this issue an important one?
- **Details on the Potential Outcomes:** What will change for better if an office supports your cause? What will happen if they don't?
- **Data:** What numbers back up your support or opposition for a piece of legislation? How many advocates do you have in that legislator's district? How much will legislation impact an advocate financially?
- **Leave-Behind:** Provide advocates with a one-page leave-behind that summarizes the advocate stories, the potential outcomes, and the data backing up your advocacy.
- **Follow-Up Email:** To ensure that staffers have the information you discussed in your meeting available to them when a vote comes up on your issue, send a follow-up email with a reminder of the specific ask your team is making. With offices meeting with dozens of advocates on a given day, it's important to have your information available in their inbox in case meeting notes and leave-behinds get buried in piles of papers.

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To further strengthen, and ensure the likelihood of success in completing this advocacy plan, the following are areas the BTAN will be trained on to increase their organizational capacity:



Policy Briefings



**Policy Research &
Analysis**



**Advocacy vs.
Lobbying**