



MNA 2023/24 Public Policy Agenda and Government Relations Plan

Overall Objective

Charitable nonprofit organizations throughout Michigan improve lives, strengthen communities and the economy, and lighten the burdens of government, taxpayers, and society as a whole.

MNA advocates for nonprofits at many levels of government - federal, state, local, legislative, executive, and regulatory - to educate policymakers and others about the work and impact of nonprofits.

MNA believes that consistent policies that advance diversity, equity, and inclusion enable the work of charitable nonprofits throughout the state and are critical for nonprofits to effectively serve their missions, provide for the public good, and address community needs.

Our work is structured in four broad categories:

I. Tax Policy

Sound tax policies that support nonprofits are one of the most important ways to help secure the resources necessary to effectively serve the public good and address community needs. MNA is committed to preserving the tax-exempt status of organizations contributing to the well-being of their communities and strengthening and expanding incentives for individuals to give their time and money to the organizations whose missions they support. In practice, this commitment means:

- Supporting tax and other incentives that encourage individuals to volunteer their time and contribute resources to the missions of charitable nonprofits.
- Promoting nonprofit relief and recovery efforts of nonprofits through targeted tax incentives for contributions to charitable nonprofits affected by natural disasters or states of emergencies, refundable payroll tax credits and other mechanisms that will help charitable nonprofits retain and pay their employees.
- Opposing the imposition of unreasonable taxes, fees or involuntary fees or payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTS) on tax-exempt organizations.
- Maintaining and – where appropriate – expanding nonprofit sector exemptions from paying state and local property, sales, and use taxes and from collecting sales and use taxes.

II. Public-Private Collaborations

Charitable nonprofits are private organizations that share a commitment with government to improving lives and communities throughout the state. MNA is dedicated to improving government-nonprofit contracting systems, and to strengthening the public-private partnership at all levels through collaboration and direct engagement.

III. Budget & Spending

Budget and spending decisions by governments affect all residents and these decisions can have immediate and significant consequences for the people nonprofits serve and the communities in which they operate, especially those that have been historically underserved and underrepresented.

MNA supports budget and spending decisions at all levels of government that encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion to build stronger, fairer communities and close resource gaps for marginalized people.

MNA opposes the offloading of government services onto nonprofits without paying nonprofits the cost of providing these services.

IV. Promoting Civic and Community Participation

The nonprofit sector plays a key role in the success of democracy in Michigan. MNA works to promote greater engagement of the citizenry, civic dialogue, open elections, and open government.

MNA supports the longstanding federal policy allowing 501(c)(3) nonprofits to engage in nonpartisan voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the-vote activities so long as organizations are not coordinating their activities with political campaigns, political parties, or political action committees.

MNA aims to correct misperceptions and clarify lobbying laws and regulations to empower 501(c)(3) nonprofits to advocate fully and freely within the law.

Federal background

Through MNA's strong relationships with Michigan's congressional delegation, membership with the National Council of Nonprofits, and other partners such as Nonprofit VOTE, Independent Sector and the Leadership Conference of Civil and Human Rights, Michigan's nonprofit sector's interests are shared and advanced at the federal level.

Federal Goals

- **Reform government-nonprofit grants processes** to streamline policies and procedures to avoid duplication and waste, develop standardized definitions for contracting and grant language, ensure that payments to nonprofit organizations for direct and indirect costs from the federal government through state and local governments are applied consistently, fairly, and in a timely manner, and eliminate from federal statutes and regulations arbitrary caps on reimbursement of nonprofit indirect, administrative, or overhead costs.
- **Pass Nonprofit Stakeholders Engaging and Advancing Together (Nonprofit SEAT) Act of 2023**, a bill that creates mechanisms that leverage the mission, knowledge, and impact of nonprofits to help government and the sector work together more effectively in pursuit of shared goals. It also calls for releasing quarterly economic data on the nonprofit sector in the same way as other industries, reducing paperwork for nonprofits to register and fundraise in multiple states, increasing access to national service, and streamlining federal grant processes.
- **Pass [Charitable Act: S. 566](#)**, a bill that allows individual taxpayers who do not otherwise itemize their tax deductions a deduction in taxable years beginning in 2023 or 2024 for charitable contributions. The deduction is limited to one-third of the standard deduction allowed to such taxpayers.
- **Pass [Volunteer Driver Tax Appreciation Act](#)**, a bill to increase the federal tax deduction mileage rate for volunteer drivers. The increase would be from the current rate of 14 cents per mile to the IRS' business rate, currently set at 65.5 cents per mile.
- Address challenges and issues that arise throughout the year such as workforce shortages, health care, childcare, broadband access, etc.

State background

Through MNA's strong state relationships and staffing of the Michigan Nonprofit Caucus and the Nonprofit Council for the Charitable Trusts in the Office of Attorney General, MNA's members have access to policymakers and regulators that ensure that the sector's interests are understood and advanced. In partnership with CMF, MAUW, JCP, MLPP, MCSC, MI Works, Dykema, and our board of directors and committees, MNA has a solid public policy and government relations infrastructure at the state level.

State Goals

- **Research and gain understanding of the state government-nonprofit grants process** in order to streamline policies and procedures to avoid duplication and waste, develop standardized definitions for contracting and grant language, ensure that payments to nonprofit organizations for direct and indirect costs are applied consistently, fairly, and in a timely manner, and eliminate from statutes and regulations arbitrary caps on reimbursement of nonprofit indirect, administrative, or overhead costs.
- Understand and support nonprofit involvement in the **distribution of the remaining ARPA dollars**.
- **Recruit new members and convene the Nonprofit Caucus**. The aim of the Caucus is to serve as a resource for information on the nonprofit sector through which lawmakers can work together on legislative and regulatory issues impacting charitable nonprofits.
- **Pass Charitable Tax Credits** – [SB 127](#), [SB 128](#), bills that restore charitable tax credits lost in 2011 for food banks and pantries and endowed funds at community foundations.
- **Civic and Community Participation** – Continue census and voting issue advocacy, education, training, and communication for nonprofits in MNA's network.
 - Roadmap to Census 2030 – pending funding
 - Nonprofit VOTE Program – pending funding
- **Foster new strategic partnerships** and build on existing, i.e., MI Charitable Gaming Association, Michigan Center for Civic Education, Michigan Chamber of Commerce, SBAM, MAC, MML, MTA
- Address challenges or issues that arise throughout the year such as changes to laws governing nonprofits (Nonprofit Corporations Act, Charitable Organizations Solicitation Act – COSA, Supervision of Trustees for Charitable Purposes Act - STCPA, Dissolution of Charitable Purposes Corp Act), disaggregated data, budgetary proposals, unemployment insurance reimbursement, etc.

Timeline

Q1/2023 (Jul, Aug, Sep)

Hire and onboard public policy fellow – start date 6/20/23

Hire and onboard public policy & government relations manager

Improve Policy section of the website with updated copy and new promotional video

Advocacy training session (1 of 4)

July 19 – Advisory Council meeting

August 14 – Public Policy Committee meeting

September 20 - Advisory Council meeting

Q2/2023 (Oct, Nov, Dec)

Legislative Debrief: MI Nonprofit Relief Fund – LEO subcommittee?

October TBD - CCP Summit

Advocacy training session (2 of 4)
October 3 – AG Council meeting
November 13 - Public Policy Committee meeting
November 15 – Advisory Council meeting

Q3/2024 (Jan, Feb, Mar)

March XX – Foundations on the Hill (Washington DC)
March XX – Nonprofit Day at the Capitol Event (Lansing)
Advocacy training session (3 of 4)
January 17 - Advisory Council meeting
February 12 – Public Policy Committee meeting
March 20 – Advisory Council meeting
TBD - AG Council

Q4/2024 (Apr, May, Jun)

Advocacy training session (4 of 4)
May XX - Mackinac Policy Conference (Mackinac Island)
May 6 - Public Policy Committee meeting
May 15 – Advisory Council meeting
TBD - AG Council
June 10 – Board meeting
June XX – NCN Confab (Washington DC)

Q1/2024 (Jul, Aug, Sep)

Nonprofit VOTE cohort for presidential primary and general elections
July 17 – Advisory Council meeting
September 18 – Advisory Council meeting

Q2/2024 (Oct, Nov, Dec)

Nonprofit VOTE cohort for presidential primary and general elections
TBD - AG Council
TBD - Public Policy Committee
November 20 – Advisory Council

Measures of success:

Recommendations for state grant process reforms
Nonprofit Caucus active
New partners
Bills passed
Participation of the field - increased membership in Advisory Council list and meetings