

**Letter writing to support sickle cell disease (SCD) can be applied in so many different ways for effective action and advocacy.**

Advocacy is all about using your voice, including words on paper. Understanding different types of letters and how they are used in various scenarios can help build confidence in your advocacy journey.

## Best Practices For Letter Writing

1

### Identify the best strategies to increase the effectiveness of your letter

- Examples can be addressing the letter to an individual or collecting signatures to build a sign-on letter.

2

### Prepare to be persistent with follow-up emails, and try reaching out to other staff at the same organization.

- If you don't get a response the first time, don't give up! Many ways to send letters can be via ground mail, email or voicemail.

3

### Research the receiving organization or recipient for more than one contact

- You may not know whom you should write to get the best support or results. Be sure to explore the organization's contact us page and website address.

4

### Tailor your "Ask" according to your advocacy goal

- Write about what your organization is doing, and what has been done to help your community. Limit each paragraph to one topic.

5

### Explain why it is important to you & how others can help

- What are some issues or concerns for the SCD community? Why is it important to address these concerns?

6

### Organize your letter to make the read easier

- When writing you want to make it easy to read for the recipient. Explore what the reader may need to know, that will help produce an effective letter.

## Types Of Letters



### Formal Letters

These letters are strictly professional and have a standard structure. This is a good format for writing to a hospital, agency, or other organization.



### Informal Letters

Most people are more familiar with these. They're often a personal letter and don't have a specific structure. This is effectively used in advocacy as a powerful tool.



YOUR STORY  
MATTERS

An advocacy letter can be an important tool for participation in community engagements, to politicians or organizations to express your view about a certain issue. You will also find on other occasions when your letter writing is needed, such as communication with school or even the workplace.



# THE POWER OF THE PEN

TAKE ACTION WITH YOUR **ADVOCACY** WRITING



**When letter writing, it may help to write a draft before you send out the final letter, depending on your audience.**

First, you should identify the decision makers. What is your main message for them? This will help to ensure you are staying on topic keeping your ask clear.

## Tips & Best Practices

- 1 Be persistent & contact other stakeholders.
- 2 Contact media to gain the audience for your letter
- 3 For wider support, make it a sign-on letter



## Why to Write

- To support a Particular Bill → Write to your legislator
- To file a complaint after an ED Visit → Write to the chief of ED
- To appeal an Insurance Denial → Write to the Insurer
- To send gratitude for inpatient care → Write to your hospital or Primary care
- To request support in school or work → Write to your HR manager or School Administration

## Get More Traction With Your Letter!



### Stakeholders

Either an individual, group, or organization that has a stake in the issue you care about. Communication with stakeholders offers greater opportunities to contribute directly to systems development as well as policy and program development. Is there anyone else to include to make your message stronger?

...Your allies often come from unlikely places.



## LETTER-WRITING RESOURCES

Medical leave of absence  
[Link Here](#)

Writing to your legislator  
[Link Here](#)

Form a letter of complaint  
[Link Here](#)

Write a thank you letter  
[Link Here](#)