



HOW WISCONSIN GOVERNMENT WORKS





DISCLAIMER:

**THIS PRESENTATION IS INTENDED AS
GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY, NOT AS
SPECIFIC LEGAL ADVICE.**

**CONSULT QUALIFIED LEGAL COUNSEL FOR
SPECIFIC QUESTIONS.**

WHAT IS POLICY?

Made (a construct) in response to an issue or problem that requires a solution

What the government chooses to do (actual) or not do (implied) about the issue or problem

Policy

May take the form of law, regulation or set of laws and regulations that govern an issue or problem

Ongoing process that does not always have a clear beginning or end- continually reassessed, revisited and revised

Who Makes Policy ?

Legislature and other local elected bodies (i.e. School Board, County Supervisors, City Council)

The Executive (Mayor & Governor)- signs or vetoes bills, proposes the budget, makes appointments (except DOJ & DPI- elected positions)

Who Makes Policy ?

Departments & Agencies (i.e. DHS)- create and administer programs, develop and implement regulations and rules, monitor, evaluate and study

The Judiciary (Courts)- interpret legislative intent, hears and decides lawsuits

What does the Legislature do?

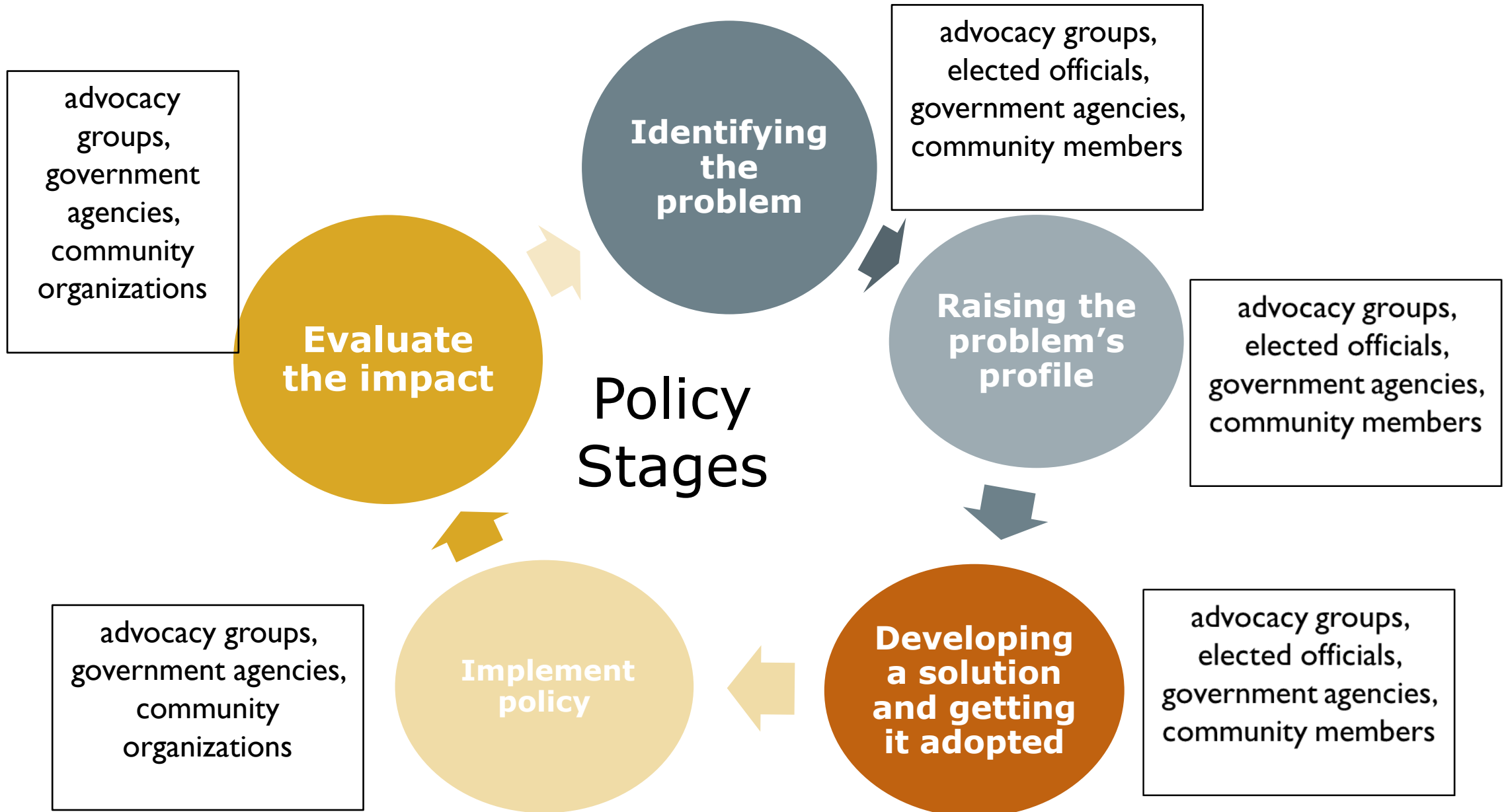
Passes legislation and resolutions
Sets and approves a budget

Holds hearings and other fact-finding activities
Provides help to constituents

WISCONSIN STATE AGENCIES

- Department of Administration (DOA)
- Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)
- Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF)
- Department of Financial Institutions (DFI)
- Department of Health Services (DHS)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)
- Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Department of Public Instruction (DPI)
- Department of Revenue (DOR)
- Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS)
- Department of Tourism
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA)
- Department of Workforce Development (DWD)
- Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority (WHEDA)
- Office of Commissioner of Insurance (OCI)
- Public Service Commission (PSC)
- Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)

<https://www.wisconsin.gov/Pages/AllAgencies.aspx>



QUESTIONS



QUICK REFERENCE

- ❑ legis.wi.gov
- ❑ 33 State Senators in WI (4-year terms)
- ❑ 99 Assembly State Representatives (2-year terms)
- ❑ Speaker of the Assembly and Leader of the Senate:
 - Names committees
 - Chooses committees
 - Decides committee chairs and members of their party on the committee

- ❑ Joint Committee on Finance (JFC): unique to WI with the combination of budget and finance
 - Other states have a separate budget and appropriations committee
 - Assembly and Senate sit together on this Committee
 - 16 members-9 affirmative (YES) votes to pass
- ❑ Bill: language before signage
- ❑ Act: language after signage- law in effect
- ❑ Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) = translators, typically lawyers, non-partisan
 - Take the legislators "solution" to a "problem" and put it in "bill" language

WHAT'S IN A WORD? : FREQUENTLY USED WORDS & THEIR MEANINGS

- **Amendment**: a suggested change to a bill or other proposal that has been introduced into the legislative process. An amendment may propose the addition, deletion, or substitution of language in a proposal.
- **Appropriation**: A legislative authorization for the expenditure (spending) of funds.
- **Biennial Budget**: the State's budget covers a two-year period (fiscal biennium) | Start: July 1, Odd Year | End: June 30, Next Odd Year | July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2023
- **Bill** : a proposed change in state law originating in the Legislature.
- **Bipartisan**: representing, characterized by, or including members from two parties or factions.
- **Nonpartisan**: not based on, biased towards, influenced by, affiliated with, or supporting the interests or policies of a political party.
- **Resolution**: formal statement of opinion or intention passed by a legislative body.
- **Veto**: the action by which all or a part of a bill is rejected by the Governor.
- **Veto override**: a vote of both houses of the Legislature to overturn a gubernatorial (Governor) veto. To be successful, such a vote must receive a two-thirds vote in both houses.

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW IN WI

"SCHOOL HOUSE ROCK" REMIX & ABRIDGED

- **Step 1:** The bill is drafted
- **Step 2:** The bill is assigned to the Senate or Assembly
- **Step 3:** The bill is referred to a committee
- **Step 4:** A hearing is held on the bill
- **Step 5:** The committee votes on the bill
- **Step 6:** The bill is scheduled for a vote on the floor
- **Step 7:** A floor vote is conducted
- **Step 8:** The bill is sent to the opposite legislative body and the same process repeats

A DEEPER DIVE:

House:
Assembly

State Representative
(LRB &
Co-Sponsors)

Introduction- 1st
Reading

Assembly Standing
Committee

Public Hearing

House: Assembly

Committee
Amendments, Executive
Action, Committee
Recommendation

Joint Committee on
Finance (Assembly &
Senate)

Assembly Rules
Committee

Calendar
2nd Reading
(amendments considered)

Debate and
Amendments

House: Assembly

Calendar

Engrossment (incorporate all adopted amendments and approved technical corrections in the house of origin)

3rd Reading

Passage

Assembly Message
to the Senate

Goes through
Senate Process

House: Senate

Receive Assembly
Message
1st Reading

Senate Standing
Committee

Public Hearing

Committee
Amendments, Executive
Action, Committee
Recommendation



House: Senate

Senate Organization
Committee

Calendar
2nd Reading
(amendments considered)

Debate and
Amendments

Calendar
3rd Reading
(no more amendments |
discussion & final vote)

House: Senate

Concurrence

a bill must pass both houses in identical form to become law

Senate message to assembly

Finally, the process of both houses will converge

Enrolling

Amendments consolidated and prepared to be sent to Governor for signature



Governor

Bill without
signature

Secretary of State
THEN
Publication

Approval with
signature

Secretary of State
THEN
Publication

IF VETO (whole or part) = Calendar
Assembly & Senate
Veto message within 6 days
THEN
Passage notwithstanding Gov's
objections (2/3 vote ea. House)

QUESTIONS



TIMELINE: WI BIENNIAL BUDGET PROCESS

Sept. 15, Even Year: State agencies submit budget to Governor (via State Budget Office [DOA] for review)

November 20, Even Year: DOA Secretary provide Governor, Governor-elect and each member of the next Legislature with total amount of each agency's biennial budget request

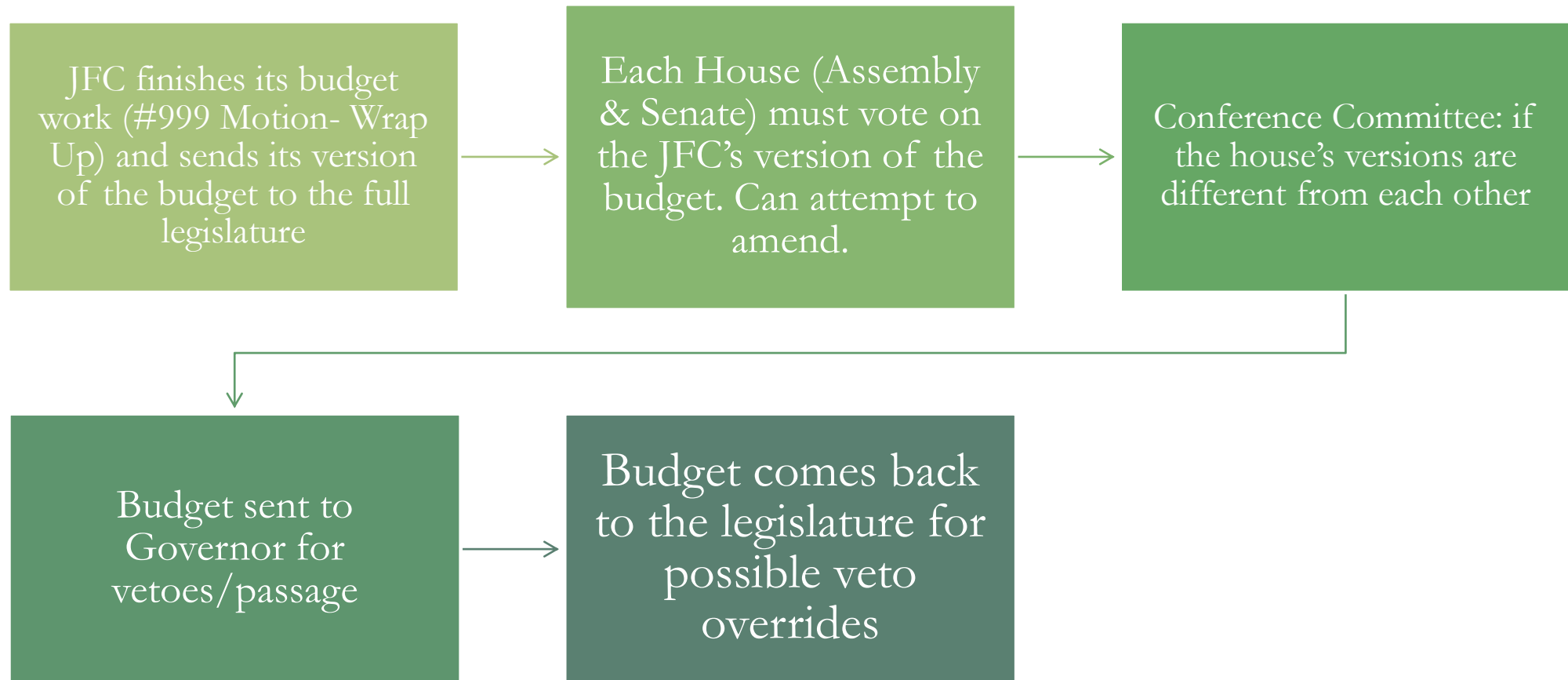
Last Tuesday in January.
Odd Year: Governor delivers biennial budget message and "gives" the Biennial Budget to JFC

Late Feb/Early March,
Odd Year: JFC holds agency briefings (open to public but not for commentary)

Mid-late March/
April, Odd Year: JFC holds public hearings throughout the state

April- June. Odd Year: JFC begins votes on each agency's piece of the budget (called Executive Action)

TIMELINE: WI BIENNIAL BUDGET PROCESS



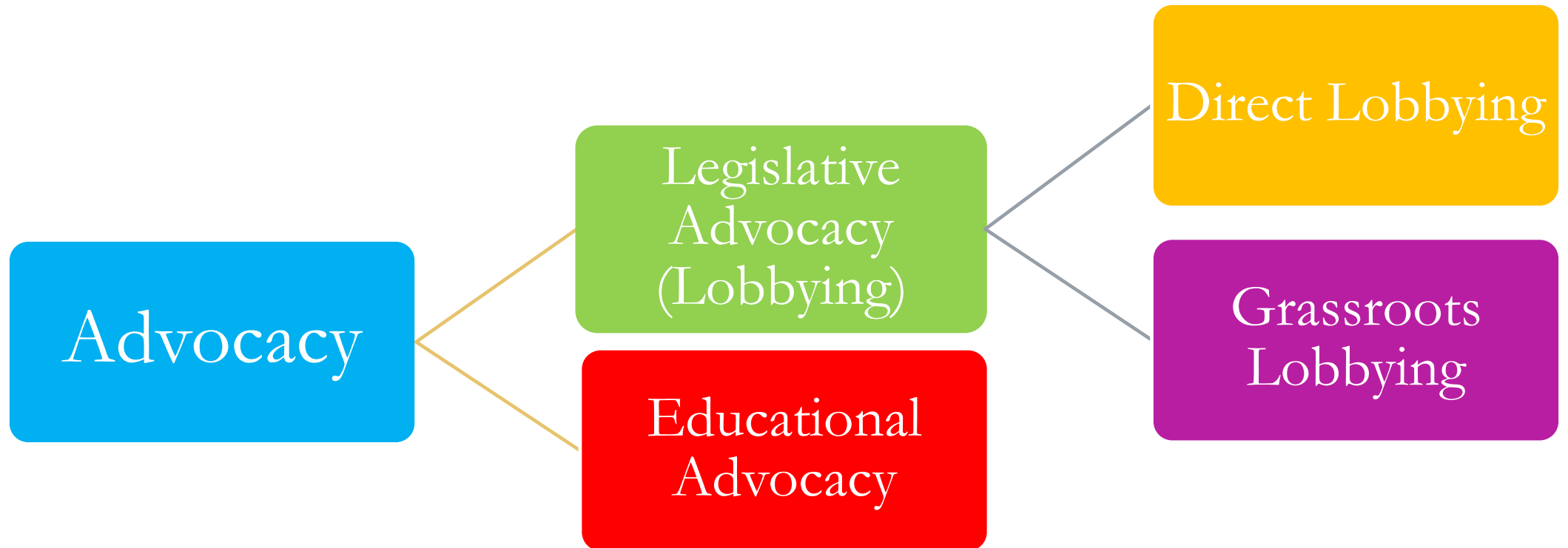
NON - BUDGET FISCAL BILLS

“During the legislative session, there are bills other than the biennial budget bill that request funds for specific limited purposes, such as for a new program or to modify the operation of an existing program. These bills, introduced during the regular legislative session, are termed fiscal bills and have specific requirements related to them as they proceed through the legislative process. Each fiscal bill must be accompanied by a fiscal estimate predicting the cost of the bill to the state and its political subdivisions. [s. 13.093 (2) (a), Stats.] Each fiscal bill must also be referred to JCF before being passed. [s. 13.093 (1), Stats.]” – WI Legislative Council Information Memorandum, IM -2020-17

QUESTIONS



ADVOCACY SPECTRUM



EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY

Meeting with, calling, emailing, general communications to legislators or decision makers to EDUCATE THEM about your work or the impact of legislation on your work

NO LIMIT on the amount of educational advocacy a 501c3 may provide

LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

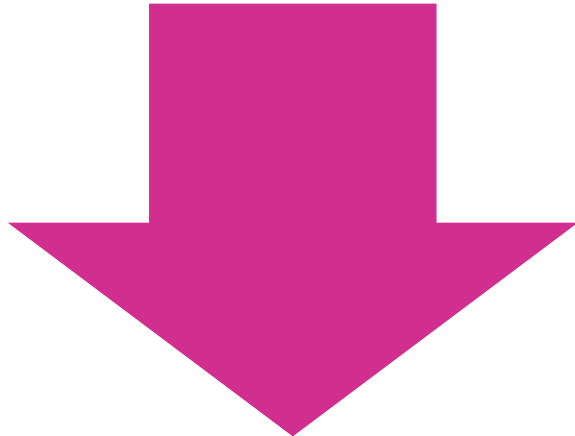
Influence decision making on public policy issue (Vote on Bill #...)

For 501c3 organizations, legislative advocacy is allowed, within limits

DIRECT LOBBYING VS. GRASSROOTS LOBBYING



Direct Lobbying: communicating with legislators (including staff) to influence legislation. Taking a position on public policy issues.



Grassroots Lobbying: communicating with the general public to influence the vote of a legislative body on a specific piece of legislation

CAN A 501C3 ADVOCATE!?

YES

Advocacy:

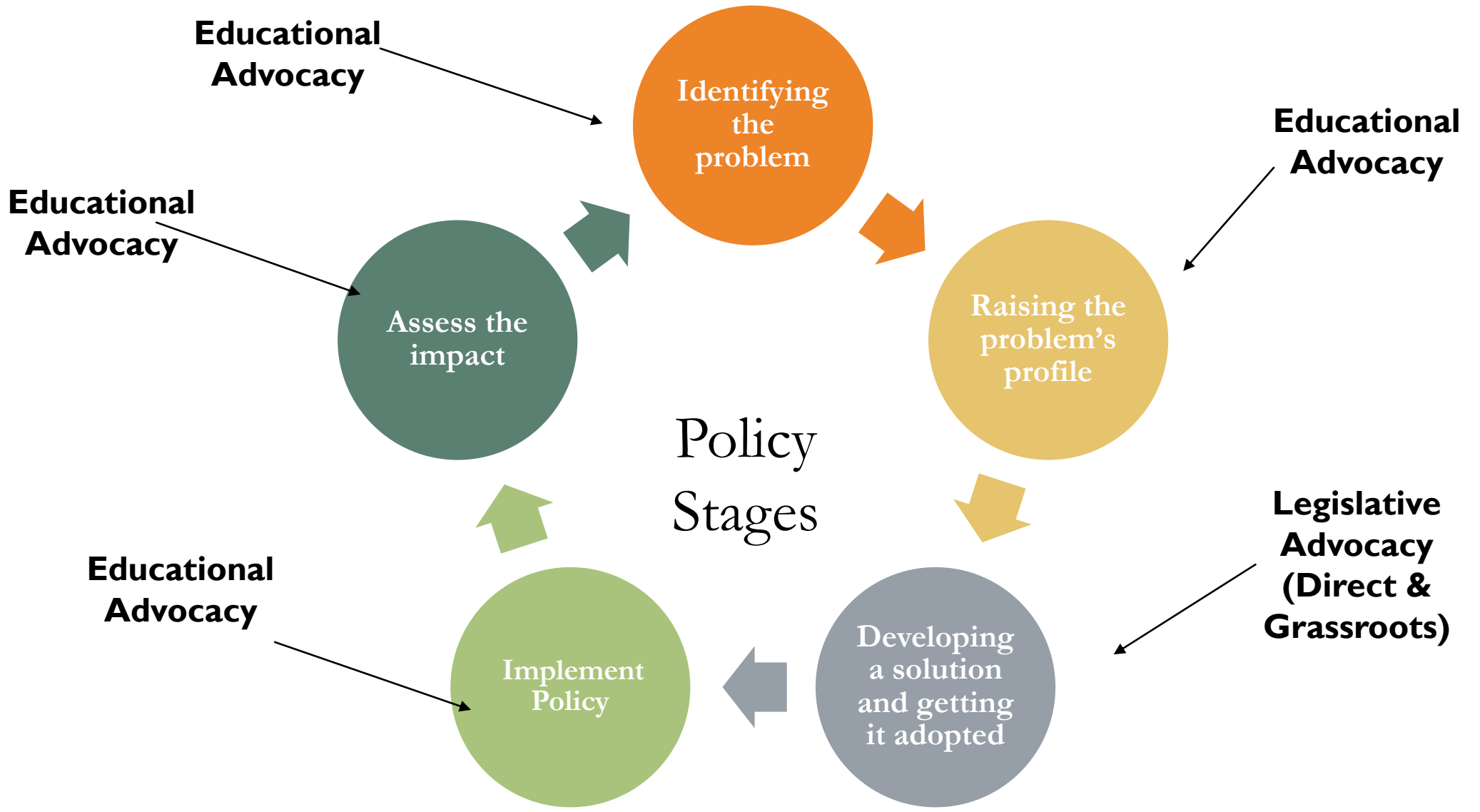
- Organizing (grassroots)
- Educating legislators (provide information on an issue)
- Educating the public about the legislative process
- Educating the public about health care issues
- Research on public policy issues
- Non-partisan voter education

CAN A 501C3 DIRECT LOBBY?

YES, Lobbying: a FORM of advocacy

- Attempting to influence legislative or administrative action
 - By oral or written communication
- With any elected state official, agency official or legislative employee
- Includes:
 - Time spent in preparation for such communications
 - Appearances at public hearings or meetings
 - Service on a committee in which such preparation or communication occurs

Wis. Stat. 13.62 (10)



RUN TOWARDS THE ROAR



QUESTIONS

