

CAB
AMBASSADOR PROGRAM
GUIDE

CAB Ambassador Program Guide

Table of Contents

1. Ambassador Program Overview and Structure
2. Tips for Conducting Successful Ambassador Meetings
 - Sample Talking Points
 - Effective Communication Strategies
 - Ambassador Dos & Don'ts
3. Sample Email Template to Request & Confirm Zoom Meeting
4. Sample Ambassador Meeting Outline
5. Sample Thank You Email
6. Summary of Meeting Notes - Example
7. Sample External Meeting Report-Key Results

CAB AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The CAB Ambassadors Program (CAP) was established in 2016 to strengthen communication between the Community Advisory Board and key decision-makers. As an AB109 Community Advisory Board member, you serve as an ambassador for our work in the community, representing the board when meeting with county supervisors, community organizations, and other stakeholders.

The program serves two essential purposes:

1. **Creating Communication Channels:** CAP establishes direct communication between CAB and those who vote on CAB's proposals. Ambassadors gather valuable insights about departmental and elected officials' priorities through regular engagement while sharing CAB's annual focus areas. This ongoing dialogue ensures mutual understanding and builds collaborative relationships.
2. **Mobilizing Support:** CAP builds support for significant CAB recommendations, particularly those addressing complex or potentially challenging issues. Ambassadors meet with each stakeholder annually to discuss priorities and build understanding before critical end-of-year voting processes.

Program Structure

CAB members collectively develop recommended talking points to guide discussions with Community Corrections Partnership members and County Supervisors. The program operates through carefully assigned Ambassador pairs consisting of a Lead and a Second who function as a coordinated team. The Office of Reentry & Justice (ORJ) reviews all assignments to ensure compliance with Brown Act requirements.

This guide provides the tools and information you need to effectively communicate our board's priorities, gather valuable feedback, and build strong partnerships across the community to support successful reintegration efforts.

Your Role as an Ambassador

As a CAB ambassador, you:

- Represent the collective voice of the advisory board, not just personal opinions
- Build relationships with key stakeholders and community partners
- Educate others about AB109 and its local implementation
- Gather community feedback and concerns to bring back to the board
- Help identify potential partnerships and resources

Tips for Conducting Successful Meetings

Before the Meeting

1. **Prepare thoroughly**
 - Briefly research the organization or official you're meeting with
 - Review relevant data and recent CAB discussions
 - Prepare concise handouts/notes with key information
 - Confirm meeting logistics (time, location, attendees)
 - Be prepared to share any approved board materials

2. Set clear objectives

- Define 2-3 specific goals for the meeting
- Prepare an agenda and share it in advance if appropriate
- Anticipate questions and prepare thoughtful responses
- Know which decisions require full board approval

During the Meeting

1. Make a strong first impression

- Log into Zoom 5-10 minutes early
- Begin with a brief introduction of yourself and the board's role
- Thank them for their time and interest
- Start with common ground before addressing challenging topics

2. Communicate effectively

- Use plain language, avoiding jargon and acronyms
- Balance facts and data with personal stories and examples
- Listen actively and take notes on feedback
- Be honest about what you know and don't know
- Offer to follow up on questions you can't immediately answer

3. Handle difficult conversations

- Acknowledge concerns respectfully
- Focus on shared goals for community safety and successful reentry
- Use "we" language to emphasize a collaborative approach
- Redirect politically charged discussions to evidence-based outcomes
- Stay calm and professional if tensions arise

4. Close effectively

- Summarize key discussion points and any agreements reached
- Clarify next steps and who is responsible for each
- Invite ongoing communication and feedback
- Thank them for their time and perspectives

After the Meeting

1. Follow through

- Send a thank-you email summarizing key points and next steps
- Provide any additional information promised
- Share relevant feedback with the full board and/or chair
- Update your CAB Ambassador Meeting Report Out document
- Schedule follow-up communications as appropriate

Sample Talking Points: County Supervisors

About AB109 Implementation

- "Our county's AB109 implementation plan focuses on evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism while enhancing public safety."
- "The Community Advisory Board provides community perspective and oversight to ensure programs align with local needs."
- "Since implementation began in 2011, we've seen [insert local data point on positive outcomes]."
- "Our current priorities include [list 2-3 board priorities]."

Funding and Resources

- "AB109 funding has allowed our county to develop innovative programs such as [specific local examples]."
- "We continuously evaluate program effectiveness to ensure responsible use of taxpayer dollars."
- "The advisory board reviews data to identify successes and areas needing improvement."

Community Impact

- "Effective reentry services benefit everyone by reducing crime, strengthening families, and creating taxpaying citizens."
- "Our community-based approach addresses the root causes of recidivism, including housing instability, unemployment, and untreated mental health issues."
- "The board includes diverse community voices, including [examples of board composition]."
- "We're seeing promising results in [specific outcome area], with [specific data point]."

Requests and Recommendations

- "Based on our current priorities, we recommend [specific policy or program recommendation]."
- "We invite you to attend our upcoming community forum on [topic] to hear directly from program participants and providers."
- "We'd appreciate your support for [specific initiative or funding request] in the upcoming budget cycle."
- "We see an opportunity to leverage county resources by partnering with [specific organization or department]."

Sample Talking Points: Community Organizations

Partnership Opportunities

- "The Community Advisory Board seeks community partners who can help address gaps in our reentry continuum."
- "Your organization's expertise in [specific area] could significantly benefit individuals transitioning back to the community."
- "We can connect you with the AB109 program manager to discuss potential collaboration or funding opportunities."
- "Together, we can create stronger pathways to successful community reintegration."

Information Sharing

- "We'd value your perspective on how realignment has affected your clients or community."
- "The advisory board is currently focusing on [specific issue], and we'd appreciate your insights."
- "We can present to your staff or clients about available reentry resources."

Community Education

- "Many community members misunderstand who AB109 serves – these are non-violent, non-serious, non-sexual offenders returning to our community."
- "Research consistently shows that stable housing, employment, and treatment significantly reduce recidivism."
- "Successful reintegration benefits everyone through increased public safety, family stability, and community wellbeing."
- "Community support is essential for successful reentry – isolation and stigma increase the risk of reoffending."

Addressing Concerns

- "Public safety remains our top priority, which is why we emphasize supervision and support services."
- "We welcome community feedback and incorporate it into our recommendations to the Community Corrections Partnership."

Effective Communication Strategies

Telling the AB109 Story

- Use a balanced approach that acknowledges both challenges and successes
- Share specific examples and success stories (with appropriate permissions)
- Connect realignment to broader community benefits
- Use visual aids when possible (simple charts, infographics)
- Personalize without compromising confidentiality

Representing Diverse Perspectives

- Acknowledge the range of views represented on CAB
- Focus on areas of consensus when speaking officially
- Clarify when you're sharing personal views vs. CAB positions
- Recognize the different impacts of criminal justice policies across communities
- Invite diverse stakeholders to board meetings to share their perspectives directly

Discuss CAB priorities and the goals of subcommittees

- **Current Priorities:** [Discuss current CAB priorities]
- **Success Metrics:** [Discuss 2-3 positive outcome measurements]
- **Challenges:** [Discuss 2-3 ongoing challenges]
- **Local Impact:** [Discuss 2-3 key local statistics about AB109 population and outcomes]
- **Services:** [Discuss key services funded through AB109]

Ambassador Dos and Don'ts

Do:

- Represent the board's official positions accurately
- Listen more than you speak when gathering community input
- Bring community concerns back to the full board
- Focus on data and evidence-based practices
- Acknowledge both successes and challenges honestly
- Coordinate with the board chair before major presentations

Don't:

- Make promises or commitments without board approval
- Share confidential information about specific cases or individuals
- Criticize other agencies or officials publicly
- Present personal opinions as board positions
- Engage in partisan political discussions when representing the board
- Speak to the media without proper authorization

Resources for Ambassadors

- Office of Reentry and Justice website
- Annual report executive summary
- CAB PowerPoint presentation (customizable)
- Success stories (with appropriate releases)
- Schedule of upcoming community events and meetings

Feedback Loop

After representing the board at meetings or events:

1. Complete the External Meeting Report Form
 2. Share key takeaways at the next board meeting
 3. Submit any new community contacts to OCEC
 4. Identify any needed updates to talking points or materials
 5. Mentor new board members in ambassador activities
-

DRAFT

Sample Email template for CAB Ambassadors to request a Zoom meeting:

Subject: AB109 Community Advisory Board - Request for Meeting on Funding Priorities

Dear [Recipient Name],

I hope this email finds you well. As a member of the AB109 Community Advisory Board (CAB) Ambassador program, my colleague, [Colleague Name], and I would like to schedule a 45-minute Zoom meeting with you to discuss our work related to the AB109 Community Advisory Board for [priorities for the current year].

Purpose of Meeting:

- Provide a brief overview of the CAB Ambassador program
- Share updates on our current initiatives
- Request your valuable feedback on four key priority areas: [list the priorities for the current year]
 1. Housing
 2. Behavioral health
 3. Employment
 4. Pre/post-release services

Your insights would greatly contribute to our efforts in ensuring effective resource allocation and program development for returning community members.

Potential Meeting Dates: Please share your availability in the next few weeks for any of the following time frames.

- [Date Option 1]: Between [time range]
- [Date Option 2]: Between [time range]
- [Date Option 3]: Between [time range]

If these dates don't work for your schedule, please suggest alternatives that would be more convenient for you. Additionally, if you prefer that another individual from your office attend in your place, please let us know, and we'll be happy to coordinate with them directly.

We appreciate your consideration. We look forward to connecting and discussing these important community matters.

Best regards,

[Your Name]
AB109 Community Advisory Board Ambassador
Phone: [Your Phone Number]
Email: [Your Email Address]

Sample Email template for CAB Ambassadors to confirm a Zoom meeting:

Subject: Confirming Our Meeting - CAB Ambassador Program Discussion

Dear [Name/Title],

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us regarding the Community Advisory Board (CAB) Ambassador Program. We look forward to our conversation about how we can collaborate to support AB109 reentry services in Contra Costa County.

Meeting Details:

- Date: [Insert Date]
- Time: [Insert Time]
- Location: [Insert Location/Zoom Link]

During our time together, [CAB Member Name] and I will share an overview of CAB's recent work and would love to hear your thoughts on our four key priority areas [list the priorities for the current year]:

1. Housing services for justice-involved individuals
2. Behavioral health support
3. Employment opportunities for the reentry population
4. Pre/post-release engagement services

We're particularly interested in learning about your current priorities and exploring how CAB might support your initiatives moving forward.

If you need to reschedule or have any questions before we meet, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [phone number] or [email address].

We appreciate your time and look forward to this important conversation.

Best regards,

[Your Name]
AB109 Community Advisory Board Ambassador
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

CAB Ambassador Meeting Outline

Pre-Meeting Preparation

- [] Lead and Co-Lead meet beforehand to coordinate approach
- [] Review interviewee's background/webpage
- [] Prepare questions specific to their role/department
- [] Bring materials: notepads, CAB overview materials
- [] Log In 5-10 minutes early

OPENING (5 minutes)

LEAD: Introductions & Welcome

- "Good [morning/afternoon], thank you for taking the time to meet with us today."
- "I'm [Name], and this is my colleague [Co-Lead Name]. We're both members of the Community Advisory Board."
- **Allow opportunity for them to introduce themselves and any staff present**

LEAD: Establish Meeting Purpose

- "We're here to establish a direct line of communication between CAB and your office."
- "Our main goals today are to:
 - Share an overview of CAB's current work and priorities
 - Learn about your priorities and initiatives
 - Explore how CAB might support your work
 - Get your feedback on our key focus areas"
- "Please feel free to jump in with questions or comments at any time."
- "Before we dive in, are there any specific priorities or issues you'd like to discuss or bring to our attention?"

CAB OVERVIEW (8-10 minutes)

CO-LEAD: CAB Mission & Accomplishments

- "Over the past several years, CAB has worked to realize the goals of AB 109 Public Realignment by advocating for increased community-based reentry services and supporting expansion of our reentry system."
- **Key Accomplishments:**
 - Successful funding increases for community-based housing, legal aid, and employment services
 - New expense reporting templates
 - Strengthened pre-release transition planning
 - Permanent creation and expansion of the Office of Reentry and Justice

CO-LEAD: CAB's Four Pillars

"Our approach to policy rests on four core principles:

1. **We want to invest in what works**
2. **We believe true justice requires social justice**
3. **We believe incarceration should serve as a last resort**
4. **We believe safety for all depends on justice for all"**

LEAD: Recent Major Project

- "This year, CAB's Policy & Budget Subcommittee was tasked by the Community Corrections Partnership and supported by the Board of Supervisors to develop recommendations for a one-time \$15M allocation from AB 109 excess funds."
- "We worked extensively with departments and organizations across the county through workgroups and presentations."
- "This collaborative approach included partners like H3, Behavioral Health, Rubicon, WIOA, Sheriff's Office, DA, Public Defender's Office, and many others."

PRIORITY AREAS DISCUSSION (10-15 minutes)

CO-LEAD: "We'd like to share our four key priority areas and get your feedback:"

Priority Area #1: HOUSING

- Additional countywide CORE teams for homeless reentry population
- Expanded housing supports following H3's 1-2-4 framework (interim, permanent, homelessness prevention)
- **"What are your thoughts on housing challenges for the reentry population in your area/department?"**

LEAD: Priority Area #2: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

- Countywide on-demand mobile outreach for behavioral health resources
- Additional Community Support Workers (peer support specialists) for field-based services
- **"How do you see behavioral health needs impacting the populations you serve?"**

CO-LEAD: Priority Area #3: EMPLOYMENT SERVICES**

- Countywide employment pathway for reentry participants in county positions
- Job training workshops and on-the-job training
- Pre-release employment services and job placement support
- Clean slate program for record clearing
- **"What employment barriers do you see, and how might we address them together?"**

LEAD: Priority Area #4: PRE/POST-RELEASE SERVICES**

- Guaranteed Income pilot program for justice-involved individuals
- Gap-filler services including:
 - 24/7 transportation and mentoring services
 - Extended service hours (weekends/after hours)
 - Language services expansion
 - Enhanced services for women
- Interim Bridge Housing coordinated by CORE teams
- **"What gaps do you see in current pre and post-release services?"**

STAKEHOLDER INPUT & DISCUSSION (8-10 minutes)

LEAD: Open Discussion

- "What priorities or initiatives are you currently focused on that align with these areas?"
- "How can CAB support your work or collaborate on shared goals?"
- "What challenges are you seeing that we should be aware of?"
- "Are there other community partners we should be connecting with?"

CO-LEAD: Alignment & Next Steps

- "Our recommendations will be going before the Board of Supervisors for consideration."
- "How can we ensure our work complements and strengthens what you're already doing?"

CLOSING (3-5 minutes)

CO-LEAD: Appreciation & Follow-up

- "We really appreciate you taking the time to meet with us. This has been incredibly valuable."
- "Your insights about [mention specific feedback they provided] will definitely inform our ongoing work."

LEAD: Ongoing Partnership

- "Please don't hesitate to reach out if there's ever a need for clarification or if CAB can provide support for your initiatives."
- "The fact that you made time for this meeting demonstrates your commitment to this important work."
- "We're excited about the possibility of continued collaboration as we work to make Contra Costa County a better place for everyone."

Both: Contact Information Exchange

- Provide CAB contact information
 - Confirm best way to reach them for follow-up
 - "Thank you again for your partnership."
-

POST-MEETING ACTION ITEMS

- ☐ Complete meeting notes within 24 hours
 - ☐ Share key insights with CAB at the next board meeting
 - ☐ Follow up on any commitments made
 - ☐ Send thank you email within 2 business days
 - ☐ Schedule any requested follow-up meetings
-

During the meeting, be sure to take notes on the following:

- Key priorities they mentioned
- Specific feedback on CAB's priorities
- Collaboration opportunities identified
- Follow-up actions needed
- Contact information for key staff
- Important dates or deadlines mentioned

Sample Email template: Thank you (post-meeting)

Subject: Thank You - CAB Ambassador Program Meeting

Dear [Name/Title],

Thank you for taking the time to meet with [CAB Member Name] and me [yesterday/on Date]. Your insights about [specific topic discussed or priority mentioned] were particularly valuable, and we appreciated learning more about [specific initiative or concern they mentioned].

The conversation reinforced the importance of CAB maintaining open communication with partners like you, who are working to improve outcomes for justice-involved individuals in our community. Your perspective on [mention specific feedback they provided related to housing/behavioral health/employment/pre-post release services] will inform our ongoing work.

As we discussed, CAB remains committed to supporting initiatives that align with our shared goals of reducing recidivism and strengthening reentry services. We'll be sure to keep you updated on [any specific follow-up items discussed], and please don't hesitate to reach out if there are ways CAB can support your work.

We look forward to continuing this partnership and working together to make a positive impact for the reentry population in Contra Costa County.

Thank you again for your time and collaboration.

Warm regards,

[Your Name]
[Your Title/Role]
CAB Member
[Phone Number]
[Email Address]

Notes:

- Customize bracketed placeholders with specific information
- Add specific meeting outcomes or commitments to the thank you email
- Include any relevant attachments or follow-up materials as needed
- Adjust meeting duration in confirmation email based on your planned agenda

EXAMPLE SUMMARY OF MEETING NOTES

- Applauded CAB work in strengthening ties across county departments and CBOs
- Recommend bringing law enforcement into some conversations so we can address issues that lead to incarceration that may be preventable.
- One area I would like to see us learn more about is its pathways for AB109 individuals to get connected back to the education pipeline.
- Supervisor Carlson explored the idea of supporting the families of AB109 individuals.
- One recommendation was to develop training or interactive videos for county staff to walk a day in the shoes of those they serve.

External Meeting Report - Key Results

Report to CAB After Member Participation in an External Meeting SAMPLE REPORT OUT – CAB

AMBASSADOR MEETING:

Group Name	Supervisor Burgis	Date	November 3, 2021
Location	Zoom Call	Time	3:15 PM
Purpose	Update the Supervisor of CAB's Proposals & Activities		

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- In attendance were Jon'Ta Davenport (Lead) & Crawford Carpenter (Second)
- Her assignments as a County Supervisor have not been in the Criminal Justice arena. They are learning about this area.
- Develop a relationship with Alicia Nuchols (925 655 2335) in her office who watches various areas such as this. She can assist us with priorities for the Supervisor's District
- We should look into Measure X money. It allows receiving agencies to be creative with the use of that money. It would be most helpful if we could assist the county in finding funding for various initiatives.
- Public Safety is a key issue for her District. We should frame our messaging to those we are seeking assistance from stressing that our programs save considerable money by not investing it in the prison system
- She feels we can give people HOPE by stressing accountability
- As far as transparency, it would be helpful to provide a model from a county that's engaging in transparency in an effective manner. We should keep in mind that there are limits as to what can be reasonably accomplished. Our emphasis should not be on coming in after the fact, but on being proactive with measures that can be adequately planned for
- Three areas that are priorities for her District are:
 - Housing
 - Mental Health
 - Homelessness

ACTION REQUESTED OF FULL CAB

- Note comments above regarding providing a model of successes

IMPORTANT DATES

- N/A

ATTACHMENTS

- N/A

Last Updated: June 2025