

# Balanced **Community Action** Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. How much does it cost?

Nothing! We provide the resources and coaching services for free to dedicated advocates wishing to improve their community food environments.

### 2. What about materials? Do you provide those as well?

We provide a customized website and the .pdf versions of customized powerpoints, leaflets and education materials. We ask that advocates cover the cost of printing any materials they wish to distribute, but financial aid is available for leaders who express a need.

### 3. Start to finish, what does the process look like?

After you've signed up, you'll receive an email with the advocacy guide attached. In the guide you'll find step-by-step instructions for running your own campaign.

You'll also be invited to join a series of digital planning meetings during which you'll meet with Balanced's advocacy coaches and get even more in-depth advice for launching an effective campaign.

During the pre-launch phase, you and your Balanced coach will customize website and education materials, you'll begin reaching out to the key decision makers, and set a timeline for launching a campaign if necessary.

During the campaign, you'll have 1-1 support from your Balanced coach every step of the way. We'll help you troubleshoot obstacles, share more resources, and connect you with others doing similar work across the country.

Once you win, you and the Balanced team will celebrate! Your hard work has paid off and your community will be healthier as a result. You may want to help others across the country by being a supportive member of the advocacy social media groups. You may want to take a break and relax! Either way, after the campaign, we encourage you to stay in touch with your Balanced coach and keep us abreast of the changes you see where you live.

#### 4. How long does it take?

Answering this is kind of tricky. A campaign can last anywhere from 1 week to a few months. Ideal scenario is the food service director or other key decision maker in your community recognizes the need for change, understands the changes you're proposing, and agrees right away.

For most, however, it's likely you'll have to work a little harder to convince key decision makers to commit to change. The goal is always to keep the campaigns positive and encouraging, so we hope very few campaigns end up needing higher pressure tactics.

#### 5. Speaking of high-pressure tactics, I know Balanced has run some pretty intense campaigns in the past. Am I expected to do the same?

The short answer is "No!"

The longer answer is, Balanced's campaigns never start out as high-pressure as they appear. We work extremely hard behind the scenes to maintain a positive relationship with our target companies. Unfortunately, after a certain point, we have to apply a bit more pressure to achieve our goals.

It's unlikely you'll be involved in any high-pressure, negative campaigning, as we *much prefer* positive pressure tactics, but if you hit a roadblock in your campaign and you want to dial up the pressure, we can certainly support those efforts.