

John Burton Advocates for Youth Young Adult Advocates Program: Role & Expectations

About John Burton Advocates for Youth

John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) is a statewide organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for California's youth and young adults who have experienced foster care or homelessness through better laws and stronger, local practices in the areas of education, housing and economic mobility. Founded in 2004 by the late California State Senator John Burton, JBAY has helped secure more than 65 landmark policy reforms and billions of dollars in public investments benefiting young people across California. For more information about our work, visit www.jbay.org.

Overview of the JBAY Young Adult Advocate Program

JBAY's Young Adult Advocate (YAA) Program prepares young adults who have experienced foster care or homelessness to become leaders, advocates, and changemakers while bringing their voices into the policies and programs that affect them and their peers. JBAY YAA cohorts typically consist of 7-10 YAAs, and last one year with the option to extend to two years. The YAA Program uses a **"Learn, Influence, Lead"** model (shared below), combining leadership development, hands-on policy experience, and applied research to expose young people to careers in advocacy while advancing JBAY's mission.

Learn, Influence, Lead Model

JBAY's Young Adult Advocates (YAAs) take part in leadership development and applied research, with opportunities to gain hands-on policy experience:

LEARN YAAs develop the skills and relationships needed for long-term leadership through: • Mentorship from JBAY policy experts • Job shadowing and exposure to nonprofit advocacy • Leadership and professional development workshops • Training in public speaking, communications, policy analysis, and advocacy	INFLUENCE YAAs help shape systems change by: • Completing a collaborative policy capstone project • Conducting research informed by lived experience • Developing recommendations for policymakers and practitioners • Presenting findings and using strategic storytelling to communicate with local, state, and national stakeholders
LEAD YAAs who are ready, have the opportunity to engage directly in the policymaking and implementation process by providing an on-the-ground perspective on how policy impacts young people: • Testifying before the California State Legislature at committee hearings • Engaging with the media by authoring op-eds and speaking at press conferences, rallies, and public events • Participating in policy workgroups, advisory bodies, and coalitions • Supporting the development of youth-centered resources, trainings, and outreach materials	

JBAY Young Adult Advocate Qualifications

- Be between the ages of 18-27 years old.
- Have lived experience in foster care or with homelessness at age 13 or after.
- Be available for a 14-month period, November 1, 2026 to December 31, 2027.
- Advocates must be able to travel to meetings within their region (e.g., Sacramento-area meetings for Sacramento-based advocates and Los Angeles County meetings for the LA-based advocate). The LA-based advocate may also be required to travel to Sacramento occasionally for specific meetings, events, or activities. If you intend to drive for any required travel, you must have a current driver's license and proof of automobile insurance.
- Commitment to improving opportunities for young people who have experienced foster care or homelessness.
- Strong or budding communication skills including writing and public speaking.
- Ability to attend meetings/events both remotely and in person, with camera on for remote engagements.
- High level of dependability, including ability to respond to phone and email in a timely manner, and attend meetings and events punctually and attentively.

Responsibilities of JBAY's Young Adult Advocates

Aligned with the Learn, Influence, Lead Model, Young Adult Advocates (YAAs) will engage in a range of activities to help improve access to education, housing, and economic mobility resources for youth and young adults who have been in foster care or experienced homelessness. JBAY is seeking applicants located in or near Sacramento as well as one applicant based in Los Angeles County. These activities may include some or all of the following activities:

Mandatory Activities	Optional Activities
• Two in-person orientations in Sacramento. • Monthly group meetings to learn about policy updates and build professional development skills. • Monthly one-on-one check-ins with JBAY staff to support learning needs, address challenges, and reflect on progress. • Periodic collaborative capstone project meetings. • Learn about the legislative proposals JBAY is sponsoring.	<i>Depends on Interest, Readiness and Availability</i> • For YAAs who engage in legislative advocacy: ○ Be prepared to discuss lived experience using strategic storytelling as a means to educate stakeholders. ○ Attend events at the State Capitol in Sacramento, in district offices, or via Zoom. This includes meeting with elected officials and providing testimony at hearings. • Engage with the public through participation in workgroups, presenting at conferences or webinars, and information tabling. • Advocates based in Los Angeles may have specific opportunities to participate in LA County workgroups aimed at developing local systems-change strategies, and to engage with local government, such as the LA County Board of Supervisors meetings.

Compensation & Contract

JBAY Young Adult Advocates are:

- Paid a rate of \$26 per hour.
- Provided a stipend for each activity conducted. Travel and meal costs will be reimbursed.
- Temporary independent contractors in a role lasting one to two years. JBAY YAAs are not JBAY employees and therefore are not eligible for benefits (e.g. health insurance) through JBAY.
- Offered opportunities that vary from month to month, based on YAAs' availability and interest. Due to the legislative cycle, some months will have multiple opportunities, while other months may have fewer activities.

Join Us: If you feel inspired to help us improve outcomes for youth in foster care and who have experienced homelessness, please fill out this form [HERE](#). For further questions or information, contact Cody Van Felden at cody@jbay.org or 916-281-6518.