



# Meeting With Your Legislator

## Scheduling a Meeting

Reaching out to your legislator can be intimidating, especially if you haven't done it before! Here are a few suggestions you can use when you are contacting your elected officials. We hope this guide will help as you establish relationships with your newly-elected lawmakers.

1. Find your legislators and their [contact information](#).
2. Use the email and phone scripts below to connect with staff or your elected official. If you can, try to add your own personal flair to your communication.
3. Follow up! Do not be discouraged if you do not hear back right away. You may have to contact the office a few times to get a response.

## Tips:

- Always include your name, organization, and address to show that you are a constituent.
- Share the issues you wish to discuss, but keep it brief!
- Include dates that you can meet and offer several dates or a wide time frame so that there is flexibility.
- Include the legislator's aide for accountability.

## Email Script

*Hello,*

*My name is [YOUR NAME], from [ORG NAME] in [CITY/TOWN]. I am requesting a virtual meeting or conference call with Representative/Senator [NAME] regarding the importance of child care in our community. Does Representative/Senator [NAME] have any availability to schedule a virtual meeting or a conference call on [DATES]?*

*Thank you in advance for considering this request. I can be reached at the phone number and email listed below and look forward to hearing from you regarding a time we can meet.*

*Sincerely,*

*[NAME]*

*[ADDRESS, EMAIL, PHONE]*

## Phone Script

*YOU: Hello, my name is [YOUR NAME], from [ORG NAME] in [CITY/TOWN].*

*I wanted to follow up on my request to meet with Representative/Senator [NAME] regarding child care and its importance in our community. Is Representative/Senator [NAME] available for a virtual meeting with me on [DATE]/to schedule a conference call with me on [DATE]?*

*OFFICE: I'm sorry — the Representative/Senator isn't available on those dates.*

*YOU: Could you let me know some dates that he/she or a staff person might be available to meet with me?*

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## Steps for a Successful Meeting

1. Thank the legislator and/or staff members for taking the meeting.
2. Introduce yourself, your group, or the organization you represent.
3. Tell the legislator and/or staff member a little about yourself or your organization. Share a short personal story.
4. Share relevant materials you have brought.
5. Introduce the policy issue you wish to discuss.
6. Make a clear ask.
7. Thank the legislator and/or staff again for the meeting.
8. Give contact information and send a follow up.

## Tips:

- If you have a meeting with multiple advocates, it may make sense to have someone facilitate the introductions. Don't forget to say where you live and work, so that the legislator and/or staff know you're a constituent.
- Have materials, leave-behinds, or one-pagers prepared. Make sure there are enough copies for the legislator and their staff to review. You can also send the materials ahead of time so that they can be shared with participants in advance.
- Stay on topic and present your messages on policies briefly and persuasively.
- Keep your talking points simple and focused.
- Don't assume the legislator or their staff are the experts, that is why you are there! – use this opportunity to educate and inform them about your issue and why it's important.
- Don't be afraid to personalize the conversation. Stories help paint a picture and allows your message to "stick" with your legislator after you leave.
- Have facts and figures in your back pocket. Some legislators want to hear the data that goes along with your personal stories.
- Have a back up plan! Meetings unexpectedly can get cut short, so have a two-minute "elevator-speech" prepared just in case.

## Clear Ask Examples:

**Take Action:** "Can you commit to an investment in child care in the future for the long-term rebuilding of the system?"

**Be a Supporter:** Ask the legislator or their staff to cosponsor legislation, speak out or vote against a bill, sign a letter, or join a Caucus.

**Be Educated:** Ask the legislator to visit a website, read a report, visit a child care provider in your community, or attend an event.

**Let's Be Partners:** Review your organization's advocacy plan for the year, give contact information, and have them reach out when child care issues come up.