



How to Schedule a Meeting with a Member of Congress

As a constituent, it is important to meet with your members of Congress and educate them about childhood cancer. Use your knowledge to raise awareness and form relationships. Members of Congress have very busy schedules, especially while they are in Washington, D.C. Often times the best way to meet with your representative or senator is when they are back home in their district or state office.

How can I find a member's contact information?

You can find out who represents you at [House.gov](https://www.house.gov) or [Senate.gov](https://www.senate.gov) where you can also find a link to the member's personal web page. The member's personal page will list their district, local, and Washington, D.C. contact information.

When are members of Congress in their district/state offices?

When Congress is in session, many representative return home Friday through Monday afternoon. Many senators also return home, however, their schedule isn't as consistent. All members of Congress return home when Congress is in recess. This tends to occur around major holidays and the month of August.

To find out when your Congressman or Senator will be in their local office:

- Call the local office
- Check the [house](#) and [senate](#) state work period calendars
- Get on their mailing list

How to make a scheduling request

Each office has a different system for scheduling meetings. Some offices prefer a web form be filled out, others prefer requests in writing via email or fax, and some simply prefer a phone call. To begin, call the office and tell the receptionist that you are a constituent who lives in [city, state] and you would like to meet with Representative X or Senator Y to discuss issues related to childhood cancer research. The receptionist will then give your further instructions on how to formally submit your meeting request.

Information for the meeting request should include:

- At least two dates and times you're open for a meeting
- Who will be attending and where they live
- Why you want to meet
- What you want to discuss

Now that you've secured a meeting...

- Meetings tend to last about 15 minutes. **Briefly** tell your personal story and have one specific issue to discuss (sign a particular bill).
- Bring any supporting material such as charts or graphics. Bring extra copies for staff members if possible.
- It's okay to say "I don't know the answer to your question." Write down the question and tell them you will research the answer and get back to them.
- Arrive at 10 least ten minutes early and dress professionally and conservatively.
- Don't be upset if you end up meeting with a legislative staffer rather than the member. The staffers are knowledgeable and will inform the legislator of your views and requests.
- Send a follow up letter thanking the legislator or staff member for the meeting.