



For New Legislator Orientation you will need to schedule your own appointment with each legislator’s office, with the Center’s help and guidance. No need to worry; this is easier than it sounds. Listed below are five easy steps to schedule a district meeting.

To see if you have a new legislator check the Center’s list entitled “New California Legislators November 2008.”

1. Designate a lead person

Select one person on your coalition who lives in your legislative district to make the appointment request so that the legislative office is not confused by multiple requests for meetings on the same topic.

2. Call to get contact information

The next step is to call your new Assembly member or Senator’s Capitol office and determine who handles the member’s schedule in his/her district office. In some cases, it will be the Capitol office staff and in other cases the district office staff; it varies from member to member. The Capitol office phone numbers are available on the Center’s “New California Legislators November 2008” document.

Be extra patient, this is a time of transition for new legislators. The new members were sworn into office on December 1 and received their Capitol offices and phone numbers on that date. However, the schedule for hiring staff and opening up a district office varies by member. To get the phone number and address for the member’s district office, you can visit the member’s website available through www.legislature.ca.gov.

When you call the member’s office, identify yourself as a constituent and say that you want to meet the Assembly Member/Senator in his/her district office. Most likely, they will require that an appointment request letter be faxed either to the Capitol office or the district office. In some cases, they will request the letter via e-mail. In either case, make sure to get a contact name, fax number and e-mail address for the Scheduling Director.

3. Send an appointment request letter

Once you determine who handles the district scheduling, fax or e-mail a letter to that office to the attention of the Scheduling Director. See the Center’s website for a sample appointment request letter you can use (www.center4tobaccopolicy.org/districtdays-newlegislatororientation). You will want to use the letterhead of your local organization or coalition when making this request.

Scheduling Checklist

- Designate a lead person:

- Get contact information
Scheduler’s Name: _____
E-mail/Fax: _____
- Modify and fax/email appointment request letter
- Make an appointment:
Date: _____
Time: _____
- Complete the online participation form
- Coordinate, Coordinate, Coordinate

4. Follow up to schedule the meeting

Some offices will respond within 24 to 48 hours of your request so be sure you are ready to confirm the best date and time for this meeting. In other cases, you will need to follow up with the Scheduling Director by the third business day after your initial request.

Again, please keep in mind that both the Capitol and district offices are extremely busy during this transition time so please be patient with them. You may find yourself contacting the office several times in order to secure an appointment. It is very common for the office to request that the appointment letter be re-faxed to them. Also when you call, tell the Scheduling Director that you are flexible and are willing to meet with staff in lieu of the elected official. Often times developing a relationship with a staff member can be extremely advantageous.

5. Coordinate, Coordinate, Coordinate

Now that you have a meeting scheduled you need to coordinate with your coalition and other tobacco control advocates to determine who will attend the meeting and your key messages. In addition, to better coordinate our efforts, please log on to the Center’s web site to complete an online participation sign up form (under “Get Involved”).