



How to Schedule a Meeting with a Member of Congress

Members of Congress have very busy schedules. While they are in Washington, their lives are consumed by meetings with their colleagues and constituents, committee hearings and a tight voting schedule. Often times meeting with your representative or senators when they are back home in your district or state is the best way to get quality time and their full attention.

As a constituent, you hold the power to make a difference on Capitol Hill.

It is important to meet with your members of Congress and educate them about PKD. You have a deep personal connection to PKD. Use your knowledge to help build a relationship with your members of Congress to increase their level of awareness about PKD. Raising awareness about the disease will help increase funding for PKD research or advance legislation that will benefit people with PKD and their families.

How do I find out who represents me in Congress? To find out who is your representative and Senators are visit www.congress.org and enter your zip code into the upper right corner. You can also visit www.house.gov or www.senate.gov to visit your member's personal web page.

How do I find their local addresses and phone numbers?

Finding the district and local information for your representative and senators can be easily accessed by visiting their personal webpage via www.house.gov or www.senate.gov. Depending on the size of your district, your representative may have more than one district office. Begin the scheduling process by contacting the office that is most convenient to you.

Senators have multiple offices across their states. To schedule an appointment, contact the office that is most convenient to you.

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

It depends. When Congress is in session, many representatives return home each weekend. They are generally in their district Friday through Monday afternoons. While many senators also return home, their schedules are not as consistent.

All members of Congress return to their districts or states when Congress is in recess for District/State Work Periods. These work periods tend to occur around major holidays. Congress always recesses for the month of August. District/State Work Periods and August recess are the perfect times to schedule meetings with your members of Congress.



To see when District/State Work Periods occur, access the House of Representatives calendar by [clicking here](#) and access the Senate calendar by [clicking here](#).

Before Calling to Schedule a Meeting...

Before making your initial phone call to request a meeting, make sure you have all the necessary information gathered. Information should include:

- at least two dates and times in mind for a meeting;
- who will be attending the meeting, and where they live; why you want to meet, and what you want to discuss.

Making the Scheduling Request

Each office has a different system for scheduling meetings. Some members require meeting requests to be in writing and submitted via fax or e-mail. Others require a web form be filled out, while some are fine with phone requests.

You have to start somewhere, and when scheduling a meeting in the district or state, begin by calling that district or state office.

- Tell the receptionist that you are a constituent, you live in [city, state], and you would like to meet with Representative X or Senator Y to discuss issues related to polycystic kidney disease.
- The receptionist will either give you instructions on how to submit your formal meeting request or will put you in touch with the member's scheduler.

The key is Follow-up.

After filing your formal meeting request, the key to successfully scheduling a meeting is follow-up. Be persistent. Ask the scheduler or staffer when you can follow up. Most schedules are not made up more than one week in advance, so it is important for you to remain flexible. You will be successful if you are persistent and friendly.

Now what?

Congratulations! You have successfully scheduled a meeting with your representative or senator. Use this opportunity to begin building a relationship with your member of Congress and his or her staff. This is your chance to raise awareness about PKD and help advance key issues that will benefit people with PKD and their families.

To learn more about the PKD Foundation's legislative issues and for tips on how to have a successful meeting, visit www.pkdcure.org/advocacy.

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