



## Getting to Know Your Legislator – District Visits

### Goals

- Build the relationship at the local level
- Establish yourself/your organization as a resource to the elected policymaker and/or their staff
- Identify opportunities for ongoing engagement
- Educate the policymaker/staffperson more about what is needed in their district
- Other goals: \_\_\_\_\_

### Step 1: Identify your Legislator and their District Offices

To find out who your representatives are, enter your address here: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>. Your State Senator and Assemblymember will be listed along with which district number s/he represents. Each legislator has a webpage, which includes district office locations and phone numbers.

### Step 2: Schedule an In-District Meeting with your Legislator

1. Contact the Legislator's District Office and ask who handles the legislator's meeting schedule for in-district meetings and events.
2. Send the scheduler an email as far out in advance as possible. The email should include your name, affiliation, purpose of the meeting, who will be in attendance and the general desired timeline for your visit.

Sample message:

*Good afternoon,  
My name is James Smith and I am contacting you on behalf of the California Campaign to Counter Childhood Adversity (4CA). We would like set up some time with Senator Y in month to introduce ourselves, discuss 2018 legislative priorities and share what we are doing in your district and how you can become involved. Attendees would include me and \_\_\_\_\_ of XYZ organization. I can be reached by email at \_\_\_\_\_, or by phone at \_\_\_\_\_.* Thank you in advance for your time.

*James Smith*

### Step 3: Follow Up on the Request

1. It is appropriate to follow up with the scheduler if you do not receive a response within two weeks. If the legislator is unavailable, it is equally effective to meet with staff. Remember, the goal is to begin building a long-term relationship!
2. Once you have confirmed a date/time with the scheduler, plan your meeting thoughtfully. This includes reading the legislator's biography beforehand, identifying the questions you may want to ask, etc.
3. Confirm the appointment with the scheduler in the days leading up to the meeting.
4. During the meeting: have fun, make an impression, ask lots of questions, tell them what you do and tell them what you need, give lots of thanks and don't forget this is just one easy step to an otherwise long and lasting relationship with your state representative.
5. Leave your business card and follow up with a handwritten thank you card to the legislator and/or staff person.