



Legislative Advocacy Basics – Capitol Lobby Guide

Welcome to the Capitol!

Whether it's your first time or your tenth, you're stepping into one of the most beautiful buildings in the nation — and using your voice where it matters most. We're here to help you feel comfortable, confident, and connected as we stand together for informed consent in Pennsylvania.

This educational document is intended to supplement the information on our Pennsylvania Coalition for Informed Consent (PCIC) Legislative Advocacy webpage.

A summary of items to help you prepare is:

- ✓ RSVP by emailing PCICCapitalArea@gmail.com
 - ✓ Review parking + arrival tips
 - ✓ Wear red (or a red accent)
 - ✓ Pack a notepad, pen, and lunch (or plan to eat at the Capitol Restaurant)
 - ✓ Prepare a 2-minute elevator speech
 - ✓ Bring a friendly, open attitude!
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HOW TO JOIN: Please reach out if you plan to attend! Sign up for future notifications about Capitol events, or to RSVP for Lobby Days, by emailing PCICCapitalArea@gmail.com.

If you need to connect on the day of a lobbying event, please text the contact listed in the RSVP confirmation email.

Directions to the state capitol complex can be found at: pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit.

WHEN: From 10 AM to approximately 2 PM. Capitol area traffic and parking are unpredictable. If it's your first time visiting the Capitol, we suggest adding 30 minutes to your arrival time to account for unexpected delays. Please allow ample time for parking and getting through security. More parking information can be found here: parkharrisburg.com.

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WHERE: Meet inside the Capitol at the reserved table in the main rotunda or the east wing atrium outside the cafeteria.

WHAT: In the past, we have met with legislators and staffers, participated in rallies, attended press conferences, delivered postcards, and offered on-site advocacy training.

CAPITOL VISITORS: You will pass a security check in the Capitol. Restrooms are located inside the Capitol building.

FURTHER OUR MISSION: Building Relationships Is Our #1 Goal!

Conversations > Confrontations.

Learning > Lecturing.

Smiles > Speeches.

- Share why you care personally.
- Find common ground — even small points matter.
- Leave every office with a positive feeling, even if you disagree.

Watch this Advocacy Lifeline video to learn how to be an effective legislative advocate: live.childrenshealthdefense.org/chd-tv/shows/advocacy-lifeline-with-dawn-richardson/how-to-be-an-effective-legislative-advocate-show-page/.

Prepare a two-minute “elevator speech” for those you meet as you move around the building. If bringing children, be prepared to be noticed and appreciated for your presence there! Carrying PCIC business cards and giving them at appropriate times is a great way to share our information.

When meeting with staffers or legislators, it’s important to build rapport. For example, questions beginning with “Did you know...?” can lead to sharing facts and furthering conversation in a non-threatening way. Repeating the last few words of their statements or important points can build rapport rapidly. Listen and engage in positive ways. Instead of interrupting the speaker, jot down questions or comments in order to share when most appropriate.

Ask “what” and “how”, not “why”; “why” questions tend to make people defensive. For example, try:

- a. “What do you think would happen if...”
- b. “What made you think that ...”
- c. “How do you think we could...”
- d. “How do you think that parents could find a doctor...”

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Feeling Nervous? That's Normal! Most staffers are friendly and used to visitors. You're not expected to know everything. Just smile, share your story, and if you get stuck, you can say:

"That's a great question. I'll find out and get back to you!"

Staying calm, courteous, and focused is essential, even when conversations are challenging. Our goal is to engage in meaningful, rapport-building conversations that reflect both our mission and our professionalism.

We may not always agree with the individuals we meet, but we should never come across as rude or confrontational. Treat each interaction as an opportunity to plant a seed, clarify a misconception, or build a bridge for future dialogue.

Not everyone is comfortable shaking hands, and some simply prefer not to, ever. Watch for social cues and respect others' boundaries. A friendly smile and warm tone can go a long way in creating a positive connection.

Our primary goal is to build respectful relationships and educate key decision-makers here in Pennsylvania.

Dress well. "When in Rome" – people build rapport more quickly with people who appear to be like them. Try to wear clothes that help you feel confident but fit a business or business casual dress code. Since our first coordinated meetings in 2015, we've worn the color red as a way to boost camaraderie and as a visible signal that we're PCIC. We recognize red is a bold color and it can be worn well as an accent color with white and/or black clothing. However, please do not let our tip interfere with whether you join us, or not.

If the dress code suggestion, parking, and/or other expenses of participating in a Lobby Day present a barrier for you, email PCICCapitalArea@gmail.com to inquire about our Lobby Day Scholarship Fund.

Bring a notepad or notebook. This signals your interest and sincerity. Having notes is helpful for follow-up actions, which may include sending thank-you notes or additional follow-up information.

Lunch time is dependent upon team availability. Many bring a packed lunch or purchase food at the Capitol Restaurant which is cafeteria style. Meetings are scheduled with legislative members/ staffers, and we eat together when there is a break in meetings. For "The Capitol Restaurant & Coffee Kiosk" menu, go to CandJcatering.com.

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This is a great time to get to know like-minded members and ask questions of seasoned advocates. Kids are welcome to join! If this is your first time, don't stress, have FUN! Please refer back to our additional Legislative Advocacy information on our website: informedconsentpa.org/advocacy/ or reach out to PCICCapitalArea@gmail.com if you have remaining questions.

ABOUT THE CAPITOL

The Pennsylvania State Capitol building is a functional seat of government, where legislators pass laws and set policy for the more than 12 million residents of Pennsylvania. As you walk the halls you will see many legislators. For that reason please identify your legislators and be prepared to introduce yourself. You can find your legislator here:

<https://www.palegis.us/find-my-legislator>

For additional education including how a bill is made visit:

<https://www.pacapitol.com/Resources/PDF/Making-Law-In-PA.pdf>

Visitors are welcome to explore the Capitol Building at their leisure on regular weekdays. Leave plenty of time to visit their Interactive Welcome

Center Pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit/welcome-center.cfm and Capitol Gift Shop.

Pennsylvania's State Capitol, proclaimed as one of the most beautiful in the nation, is an architectural and artistic treasure and an icon of democracy and freedom. Find more information about the PA State Capitol on their website: Pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit

Capitol Tour Etiquette > Pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit/capitol-etiquette.cfm

Accessibility > Pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit/accessibility-services.cfm

Events Calendar > PA.gov/agencies/dgs/visit-the-capitol-complex/calendar.html

FAMILIES AT THE CAPITOL: EXPECTATIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENT

We love when parents and children visit the Pennsylvania State Capitol — it's a beautiful space to engage in civic life as a family. Your presence makes a powerful impression and helps show legislators that informed consent matters to real families across our state.

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Your safety and experience are important to us, and we ask that you follow these guidelines while inside the Capitol: [PAcapitol.com/plan-a-visit/capitol-etiquette.cfm](https://pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit/capitol-etiquette.cfm)

The Capitol is a working building; important government business is taking place. Please be respectful of the environment and mindful of children's noise levels and behavior.

Children who like to run or climb are encouraged to enjoy the Capitol steps outside – not the escalators or balconies indoors.

Tours are best suited for attentive children ages 8+, but all ages are welcome to explore!

Be sure to visit the Interactive Welcome Center – it's a fun and educational stop for children and adults alike.

Take time to introduce your child to the three branches of government and help them identify their local legislators.

Additional resources:

 Kids' Corner – Governor's Office www.pa.gov/governor/kids-corner.html

 Keystone Classroom – PA Capitol www.pacapitol.com/keystone-classroom

Learn more about additional ways to volunteer and follow us on Social Media!

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PAInformedConsent

Instagram: www.instagram.com/p_c_i_c/

Telegram: t.me/InformedConsentPA

X: x.com/p_c_i_c

If you've found this advocacy information helpful and want to be more involved with PCIC, please consider joining us in our pursuit to promote medical freedom in Pennsylvania!

Join Us! or Donate!

informedconsentpa.org/join | informedconsentpa.org/donate