



Legislative Advocacy Basics – Capitol Lobby Guide

This educational document is intended to supplement the information posted on the PCIC Legislative Advocacy webpage found at a link on our [InformedConsentPA.org](https://www.informedconsentpa.org) website.

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 from that same address.

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

WHEN: From 10 AM to approximately 2 PM. If it's your first time visiting the Capitol, we suggest adding 15 minutes to your arrival time to accommodate for any delays. Please allow ample time for parking. More parking information can be found here: parkharrisburg.com.

WHERE: Meet inside the Capitol at the reserved tables behind the escalators, right outside of the cafeteria.

WHAT: Each month the Capitol Committee will send an email to those who are signed up explaining the month's lobby focus. In the past we have met with legislators and staffers, participated in rallies, attended press conferences, delivered post cards, and offered an on-site advocacy training.

CAPITOL VISITORS: You will pass through a security check to get into the Capitol. Restrooms are located inside the Capitol building. Capitol security asks that masks or face shields be worn. They do allow for medical exemptions and do not require proof of exemptions. There will be no judgment, so do what you feel is best. Some legislation offices are requiring masks to enter in which case it will be your decision to enter those offices based on their requirements.



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.

If the dress code, 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.

Have a two-minute “elevator speech” prepared 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. Try to truly listen and engage in a positive way. Instead of interrupting the speaker, jot down questions or statements that you plan to say when an appropriate opportunity presents itself.

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...”

As hard as it can be sometimes, it’s important to remain calm and respectful. We want to have rapport-building, informative conversations and meet them where they are. While we may disagree at times, we do not want to come off as rude or unprofessional. Additionally, some may not be comfortable shaking hands at this time, so watch for cues as to their preferences. Our primary objectives in these meetings are to build respectful relationships and to educate key decision-makers here in PA.



Lunch time is dependent upon team availability. Many bring a packed lunch or purchase food at the Capitol Restaurant which is cafeteria style and located next to the reserved table under the escalators. 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 <http://www.candjcatering.com/>.

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: www.InformedConsentPA.org 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.

Visitors are welcome to explore the Capitol Building at their leisure on regular weekdays. Leave plenty of time to visit their Interactive Welcome Center www.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: www.pacapitol.com/plan-a-visit/

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

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

Events Calendar > <https://www.dgs.pa.gov/Pages/Calendar.aspx#.V6NWyAkq71>