

This document was created for ACT Leads in New York State to provide guidance and handy links for creating and updating your District Assessment.

1. WHO REPRESENTS YOU? - Understand the lawmakers at all levels of government who serve the communities in your Congressional District.

Before you even start filling out the District Assessment worksheet, do some research to get to know the names of elected officials you should know about. Consider using a paper map, or digital map, to make notes showing the boundaries and names of lawmakers. (see example at the end of this document)

- a. **List all who are relevant to you:** Use the lookup tool on ACS CAN's national volunteer home page [Find Your Elected Officials](#). This resource tells you the federal, state and local lawmakers who serve your specific address. It includes links to their websites.
- b. **Federal:** Look up a map of your Federal Congressional District and focus on your member of the House of Representatives in Congress. (Don't worry too much about your US Senate representatives because your SLA/VSLA will focus on them.)

There are many options for finding a map – check out each of these so you're familiar; then choose the ones that you are most comfortable using, including:

- i. Your Congress member's website (you found their name in step 1 above)
- ii. Wikipedia <https://www.wikipedia.org/>
- iii. DataUSA <https://datausa.io/>
- c. **State:** Look up the STATE lawmakers whose districts fall within your Federal Congressional District boundaries.
 - i. Learn about the NY State Senate and find a map here: <https://www.nysenate.gov/about>
 - ii. A map of State Assembly districts is here: [NYS Assembly Districts](#)
 - iii. A comprehensive (but complex) resource you might consider is this: [Redistricting & You: New York](#).
- d. **Local:** If you live in the 5 boroughs of NYC, look up your City Council member <https://vote.nyc/page/nyc-district-maps>

2. YOUR MEMBER OF CONGRESS (HOUSE) - Focus on your member of Congress (House of Representatives). That's the most important person that ACS CAN needs you to understand.

- a. On page 1 of the District Assessment template, fill in the requested information based on what you learn from your Congress members website.
- b. Look for the CONTACT page on their website and sign up for their newsletter.
- c. Look for the social media symbols on their website and follow them.
- d. Remind yourself to periodically (maybe quarterly) do a Google search for news about your lawmaker and update your District Assessment accordingly.

3. ABOUT THE DISTRICT: Focus on the geographic area and communities that are included in your district to understand the communities and their cancer-related needs and resources.

- a. Starting on page 2 of the District Assessment template, follow the prompts to compile a map and make notes about major communities and needs. The template includes links to help

ACS CAN District Assessment – Useful Links and Tips

you look up community health information. You might also find that DataUSA <https://datausa.io/> is a good resource here to help you understand the demographics of the district.

- b. Make note of the health systems and cancer centers, and of ACS activities (Relay for Life and Making Strides Against Breast Cancer)
- c. Make note of major employers and civic organizations who might be partners in our fight against cancer. These entities might be sponsors or partners in our work.

3. YOUR STATE LAWMAKERS: Focus on your state Assembly Member and Senator.

- a. Starting on page 5 of the District Assessment template, look up (Google) the Assembly Member and State Senator who represent you personally. (You found their names in step 1 at the beginning of this exercise.) Visit the website of each of these two elected officials (you have one Assembly member and one Senator)
 - Follow the prompts to record the information about office addresses, contacts, committees and issues.
 - Look for the CONTACT page on their website and sign up for their newsletter.
 - Look for the social media symbols on their website and follow them.

5. NEW YORK CITY - If you live in the 5 boroughs of New York City, focus on your member of the City Council

- a. Starting on page 6 of the District Assessment template, look up (Google) the NYC City Council member who represents you personally. Visit their website
 - Follow the prompts to record the information about office addresses, contacts, committees and issues.
 - Look for the links on their website and sign up for their newsletter
 - Look for the social media symbols on their website and follow

6. OTHER STATE LAWMAKERS - As time allows, learn more about the state lawmakers who don't represent you personally, but represent nearby communities that fall within your Congressional District. As ACT Lead, you should be aware of all the state lawmakers who fall within your area, not just the senator and assembly member who represent you personally.

- a. Starting on page 7 of the District Assessment template, look up (Google) the Assembly Members and State Senators who represent communities near you, in your Congressional District geography. Visit the websites of each of these elected officials as time allows and search for recent news about them.
 - Follow the prompts to record the information about office addresses, contacts, committees and issues as you come upon useful information.
 - You may not have the capacity to follow all of these people, so use your judgement and selectively consider signing up for their newsletters or following them on social media.

7. VOLUNTEERS AND COALITION PARTNERS – Focus on your team and those who can help you accomplish your mission

ACS CAN District Assessment – Useful Links and Tips

- a. Starting on page 8 of the District Assessment template, make notes about your volunteers, partners with ACS, and coalition partners who will work with you to accomplish your mission.
 - a. Record names, contact information and notes about each of the Legislative Ambassadors on your team.
 - b. Do the same for involved volunteers who are prospects for making the commitment to become a Legislative Ambassador
 - c. If there is an active board of advisors or other ACS or ACS CAN body in your area, record the names and contact information for those volunteers
 - d. If you have coalition partners in your area, record those here. Examples might include cancer-specific groups (NCCS, Blood Cancer United, NBCC), those focused on other disease (Lung Association, Heart Association), or others such as representatives of the Cancer Services Program.
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Example of a district map:

Wide purple line is the Congressional District boundary. Blue stars show Congressman's district offices. Green boxes are state senate members; yellow boxes are state assembly members

