

Pennsylvania Cancer Action Day

Training Manual



Tuesday, May 13, 2025



Welcome to Cancer Action Day 2025

Dear Cancer Advocate,

Thank you for your willingness to participate in our 2025 Cancer Action Day. We are looking forward to hosting you at the capitol building on Tuesday, May 13, 2025!

As the leading cancer advocacy organization, ACS CAN works every day to encourage elected officials to make cancer a top priority. We support evidence-based solutions designed to eliminate major health problems. We bring together ordinary people with extraordinary power to fight cancer with the training and tools they need to make their voices heard.

This annual event is the best opportunity for new and experienced volunteers to add their voices to the lifesaving mission of ACS CAN. Cancer Action Day is a chance to come together to ask our elected officials to actively support the fight against cancer. You are bound to leave feeling energized, excited, and personally rewarded.

To make the absolute most of your day at the capitol, please read through this guide for important updates and attend the virtual Cancer Action Day training. This is when you will have the opportunity to learn more about our issues and ask questions.

We truly appreciate your commitment to advocacy and look forward to the great accomplishments we will achieve together.

Keep fighting!

Donna Greco
ACS CAN Pennsylvania
Government Relations Director

Lydia Lippold-Gelb
ACS CAN Pennsylvania
Grassroots Manager

Heather Schweitzer
ACS CAN Pennsylvania
State Lead Ambassador



#PACAD2025

2025 PA CANCER ACTION DAY

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Staff Contact Information

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2025 PA CANCER ACTION DAY

Training Details

Virtual Training

Mark your calendar and attend one of our virtual training sessions

Our Cancer Action Day training will review event-day logistics and policy issues in detail. It will be a great opportunity for volunteers to get their questions answered. Your participation is required, and we believe that you will find it informative and helpful. If for any reason you are unable to participate in one of the sessions, please contact Lydia Lippold-Gelb at lydia.lippoldgelb@cancer.org.

Training dates and times – *Note: You only need to attend ONE training. Training links are available on the event site at

<https://www.fightcancer.org/pennsylvania-cancer-action-day-2025>

The training will take place in Microsoft Teams, please join on your computer or mobile app with the link provided

- Training option 1: Tuesday, April 29th from 12:00–1:00pm
- Training option 2: Wednesday, April 30th from 12:00–1:00pm
- Training option 3: Tuesday, May 6th from 7:00–8:00pm

The more prepared you are for your ACS CAN Cancer Action Day event, the more comfortable you'll be in your meetings with lawmakers. Our policy materials are on the next several pages. Please take the time to review them to be prepared for your meetings. We'll have time on the training call to answer your questions.

Nervous?

Whether it is your first time, or you are a seasoned advocate, we will walk you through what to expect on our Cancer Action Day training session.

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AGENDA

8:00 AM

Registration Opens + Meeting Prep
Main Rotunda

9:00 AM – End

Lawmaker/Advocate Meetings
Capitol Building – Locations vary

11:00 AM

Press Conference
***Your lawmaker meetings take priority.
Capitol Steps – Main Rotunda

11:30 AM

Group photo
***Your lawmaker meetings take priority.
Capitol Steps – Main Rotunda

Meals are on your own

Participants will be provided with vouchers for a light breakfast/snack and lunch to be used at the cafeteria around your lawmaker meeting schedule.

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Meeting Logistics

Lawmaker Meetings

ACS CAN will organize all teams and schedule all meetings. To avoid confusion with lawmakers' scheduling staff, please do NOT schedule separate meetings. All attempts will be made to schedule meetings with your specific lawmakers. Your final schedule will be provided on Monday, May 6th, before the event.

An ACS CAN T-Shirt will be provided to you when you arrive in Harrisburg to wear for the day and display our solidarity and who we are! Please feel free to bring a long-sleeved shirt to wear under it if it is chilly. If you already have a blue ACS CAN shirt, please bring it!

Report Back Form

Don't forget to fill out your report back form after your legislative meetings.
See page 15 for QR Code

<https://act.fightcancer.org/a/acs-can-report-back-form>

Sharing your story

Please contact Casey O'Neill at casey.oniell@cancer.org if you would like to share your story, particularly if you have had prostate cancer or breast cancer, or can speak to the benefit that paid leave would have made in your cancer journey (covering appointments, treatment, or recovery time).

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Review of Our Asks

We have 3 primary ASKS* that we will be making during our lawmaker meetings! Here is an overview of the asks. There is more information on the following pages and we will cover each ask during our training.

Ask 1: Establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave Program by supporting HB 200

Ask 2: Increase access to prostate cancer screenings for those at high-risk of developing prostate cancer by supporting HB 281

Ask 3: Expand access to breast cancer diagnostic and supplemental imaging by supporting HB 433

To be asked during the conclusion of the meeting: Protect Funding for Critical Prevention Programs – PA’s Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program and Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Programs

**The specific language is subject to change, given where the bill is in the process.*

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Review of Our Asks

Establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave Program

- **About 62%, or 4 million workers in PA do not have access to paid family leave through their jobs**, which means they may have to make impossible choices between work and caring for themselves or their family.
- **90,240 Pennsylvanians will be diagnosed with cancer in 2025.** Cancer treatment is time consuming, often requiring time off from work for doctor's visits, surgery, chemotherapy/radiation, and recovery.
- **This is a health equity issue** – While all workers need paid leave, there is a greater impact on lower income households, those with lower levels of education, younger workers, and those working in smaller companies without existing flexibility or resources to take unpaid leave.
- **Access to paid family and medical leave contributes to positive outcomes such as being able to complete treatment, manage symptoms, and afford treatment.** It also contributes to employee retention and morale. This makes a huge difference for patients, survivors, caregivers – and employers.

House Ask: Will you **pass House Bill 200 on third consideration** to establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave program and ensure that no one has to risk employment to care for themselves or a loved one?

Senate Ask: Will you **support Senate Bill XX** to establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave program and ensure that no one has to risk employment to care for themselves or a loved one?

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Review of Our Asks

Increase Access to Prostate Cancer Screenings

- **In 2025, an estimated 13,400 Pennsylvanians will be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 1,480 will die from the disease**
 - Early detection is critical for effective treatment – there is a 99% survival rate for early stage diagnosis, compared to 29% for late stage.
 - Yet, screening rates are decreasing, with only 33% of Pennsylvanian men 50+ up to date on their screening.
 - Prostate cancer is often asymptomatic until metastatic. Screening helps detect the disease early when it's most treatable and survivable.
- **Prostate cancer does not impact all men equally**
 - A combination of factors can contribute to an individual being at high-risk of developing prostate cancer, including age, personal health history, family health history, and/or Black or African ancestry.
- **Cost barriers have a direct effect on cancer care: high costs can lead to delayed detection and lower survival rates**
 - Cost-sharing drives men to forgo needed cancer screenings, annual exams, and visits to the urologist.
 - Improving access to prostate cancer screenings can help ensure that high-risk patients receive an earlier diagnosis, leading to improved treatment options and an increased likelihood of survival.

House Ask: Will you **support House Bill 281** to increase access to prostate cancer screenings by requiring coverage without cost sharing for high-risk individuals.

Senate Ask: Will you **sign on as a cosponsor of Senate Bill XX** to increase access to prostate cancer screenings by requiring coverage without cost sharing for high-risk individuals?

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Review of Our Asks

Access to Breast Cancer Diagnostic and Supplemental Imaging

- **In 2025, an estimated 13,650 Pennsylvanians will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 1,800 will die from the disease**
 - Early detection is critical for developing an effective treatment plan and would not be possible without diagnostic follow-up or supplemental imaging following an abnormal screening result.
 - 12% of individuals require additional follow-up imaging after an abnormal mammogram.
- **Individuals requiring additional follow up imaging are often faced with hundreds to thousands of dollars in patient cost sharing**
 - A recent ACS CAN study found that out-of-pocket cost sharing is estimated to result in 1.1 million women nationwide delaying necessary breast cancer diagnostic testing and imaging in 2024 due to affordability issues.
- **Cost barriers have a direct effect on cancer care: high costs can lead to delayed detection.**
 - HB 433 will eliminate out-of-pocket costs for individuals who need follow-up tests after an abnormal screening mammogram or supplemental imaging because of personal risk factors
 - By expanding access to breast cancer diagnostic imaging, we can help ensure that more patients receive an earlier diagnosis, leading to improved treatment options.

House Ask: Will you **support House Bill 433** to increase access to breast cancer diagnostic and supplemental imaging by removing patient cost sharing?

Senate Ask: Will **support Senate Bill XX** to increase access to breast cancer diagnostic and supplemental imaging by removing patient cost sharing?

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Review of Our Asks

Protect Funding for the PA Breast & Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program

- The PA-BCCEDP provides low-income, uninsured, and underinsured women access to breast and cervical cancer screenings and diagnostic services
- **From 2018–2023, nearly 32,300 PA women were served by the program.** Over 416 breast cancers and 719 cervical cancers or precancerous lesions have been detected by the program.
- **It is simple, screening saves lives.** Cancers that are found at an early stage are easier to treat and lead to greater survival.

Protect Funding for the State Tobacco Control Program

- **Over 30% of cancer deaths are caused by smoking.** Across the state, 14.9% of adults smoke cigarettes and about 20% of high school students use tobacco products.
- **Current program funding falls woefully short of the \$140 million recommended by the CDC**
- Statewide evidence-based, tobacco control programs have been shown to:
 - reduce tobacco use rates
 - reduce tobacco-related diseases + deaths
 - prevent young people from smoking

House and Senate Ask: Will you protect funding for these vital cancer prevention programs -- continue funding the Pennsylvania Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program at \$2.563 million and funding the Tobacco Control Program at the current rate of 4.5% or approximately \$18.4 million?

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Hook, Line, and Sinker

All issues have many details and no one should ever feel expected to know everything– but it is important to understand why we are having a meeting and what needs to be addressed. So, what should one say in a meeting with a lawmaker? That is not as difficult as it seems if you follow the Hook, Line, and Sinker method.

Hook: Who You Are

Tell them who you are and where you are from + a very brief sentence stating the purpose of the meeting. Remember, you are a voter, a survivor/caregiver/advocate and their constituent.

Line: Share Your Stories

Be informative, be thorough, and be concise. Provide your lawmaker with personal stories. They will appreciate real-life examples that put a human face on the issue. Discuss how the legislation will directly affect you, your family, and your community. **Personal stories truly make an impact and achieve results.**

Quantify the Problem Using Facts

Share a few facts during either the 'Line', or when doing the 'Sinker'.

Sinker: The Request (include statistics as relevant)

Make a clear request of the legislator or staff and ask their position on the issue. Be polite, direct and specific. Wait for their response.

Answer any questions to the best of your ability. If you do not know the answer, it is OK to say, "That's a good question, I'm not positive on the answer, and I'll need to get back to you." Don't answer any questions you're not 100% sure you know the answer to – make sure to list them on your report back forms.

Leave on a positive note. As you wrap up the conversation, repeat one last time what action you hope the lawmaker will support. Make sure your lawmaker and/or their staff member receives a copy of the leave-behind folder. Thank them for their time and offer to be an ongoing resource.

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Lawmaker Meetings

"Thank you, Representative/Senator _____, for taking the time to meet with your cancer-fighting constituents today.

My name is _____ from hometown and I am an ACS CAN volunteer. With me are constituents and advocates from around your district to talk about their cancer stories.

All advocates introduce themselves- name and hometown.

We are here to discuss and ask for your support on three items: **access to prostate cancer screenings; Paid Family and Medical Leave; coverage of breast cancer diagnostic and supplemental imaging**

This year, Pennsylvania is expected to see 90,240 new cases of cancer. With this in mind, we are working hard to ensure that every resident has the ability to detect, treat, and survive cancer. This starts with supporting key policies and budget items to ensure equitable access to prevention programs and life-saving treatment, as well as helping all Pennsylvanians cover the cost of care through paid family and medical leave and wiping out medical debt.

This is especially important to me because (share your personal story and connect it to the importance of [paid family leave/early detection and imaging]).

With this in mind, we are asking for your support of three life-saving policies:

1. Will you **pass House Bill 200 on third consideration/support Senate Bill XX** to establish a Paid Family and Medical Leave program and ensure that no one has to risk employment to care for themselves or a loved one?
2. Will you **support House Bill 281/sign on as a cosponsor of Senate Bill XX** to increase access to prostate cancer screenings by removing cost sharing for high risk individuals?
3. Will you **support House Bill 433/Senate Bill XX** to increase access to breast cancer diagnostic imaging by removing patient cost sharing?

Meeting conclusion: Before we go, we want to lift up our annual budget asks. Can we count on you protect vital cancer prevention programs that so many Pennsylvanians rely on – specifically, continue funding the **Pennsylvania Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program** at \$2.563 million and funding the **Tobacco Control Program** at the current rate of 4.5% or approximately \$18.4 million.

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Lawmaker Meetings

Remember, we want to hear a yes or no answer.

- If your elected official answers yes to this question that is great! Thank him/her for their support.
- If your member answers no, ask why and if there is further information you can provide after the meeting. Include that information on your report back form.
- If your member doesn't give a direct yes or no answer, ask for clarification.
- You should plan to follow-up with your House Representative 1-2 weeks after your meeting (by phone or email) to ensure their questions are answered and check on their level of support.

Please note: this script is a framework for your conversation. Please feel free to elaborate and share your personal cancer story and use information from the fact sheet and talking points.

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Lawmaker Meetings

Do:

- Look and act professional
- Introduce yourself and tell the legislator where you are from
- Stay on message
- Be prepared to wait
- Know the asks and something about it
- Be efficient and articulate; the meeting should be brief and concise
- Ask for your legislator's support for the issue
- Stop discussing the issue if you get a "Yes"
- Leave a one-pager about the issue
- Turn off your cell phone
- Thank the lawmaker (be sure to also send a thank-you note)

Don't:

- Attempt to answer questions you don't know the answer to or commit to anything you aren't certain of
- Get angry or hostile
- Get distracted by small talk
- Mention your political affiliation
- Leave behind materials that aren't provided in this packet
- Lobby on other issues
- Get defensive if an elected official doesn't support our legislation

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Report Back Form

How was your lawmaker meeting?
Report back and let us know!



Scan the QR code

Tips for completing your report back:

- Please complete a separate report for each lawmaker you interact with.
- For Issue, please select all that apply,
 - Access (for Paid Family and Medical Leave, prostate cancer screenings, breast cancer screenings, and the BCCEDP funding ask)
 - Tobacco for the Tobacco Cessation Program funding ask .
- For "Type of Action" please select all that apply, including "office meeting with lawmaker" for any meetings you had in-person.
- Please include the full name of your lawmaker or their staff and where they stand on each ask.
- Please be as specific as possible when completing the form to allow for follow up by your ACS CAN Staff partners.
- Questions, please connect with Lydia Lippold-Gelb at lydia.lippoldgelb@cancer.org

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Social Media

Please promote your participation in Cancer Action Day on social media! Follow us at @ACSCANPA and share our posts throughout the week -- and post your own!

Pre-event Sample Post

On May 13, I will be spending the day at the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network asking lawmakers to help ensure that care is affordable for all by passing paid family and medical leave, increase access to early detection and screening, and fund life saving prevention programs! Follow along! #FightCancerPA #PACAD2025

Event Day Samples

Do a Facebook live or record a video to post on social media. Below are sample scripts to use.

1. Good morning! Today, I am so excited to be participating in ACS CAN's Pennsylvania Cancer Action Day to meet with **LAWMAKERS NAMES**. Follow along as I join PA advocates from around the commonwealth in calling on our state lawmakers to make fighting cancer a priority in PA. Check in today for updates and opportunities to join me in the fight!

2. Hey everyone! I just met with **LAWMAKERS NAMES** and it was awesome! We are making our voices heard and fighting to expand access to biomarker testing, help ensure care is affordable and accessible via paid family leave and wiping out medical debt, and protecting prevention programs. Want to fight with me? It's easy and rewarding. (Post on your page with your video, sign up to be a volunteer with ACS CAN at <https://www.fightcancer.org/volunteer-for-acscan>)

Posts:

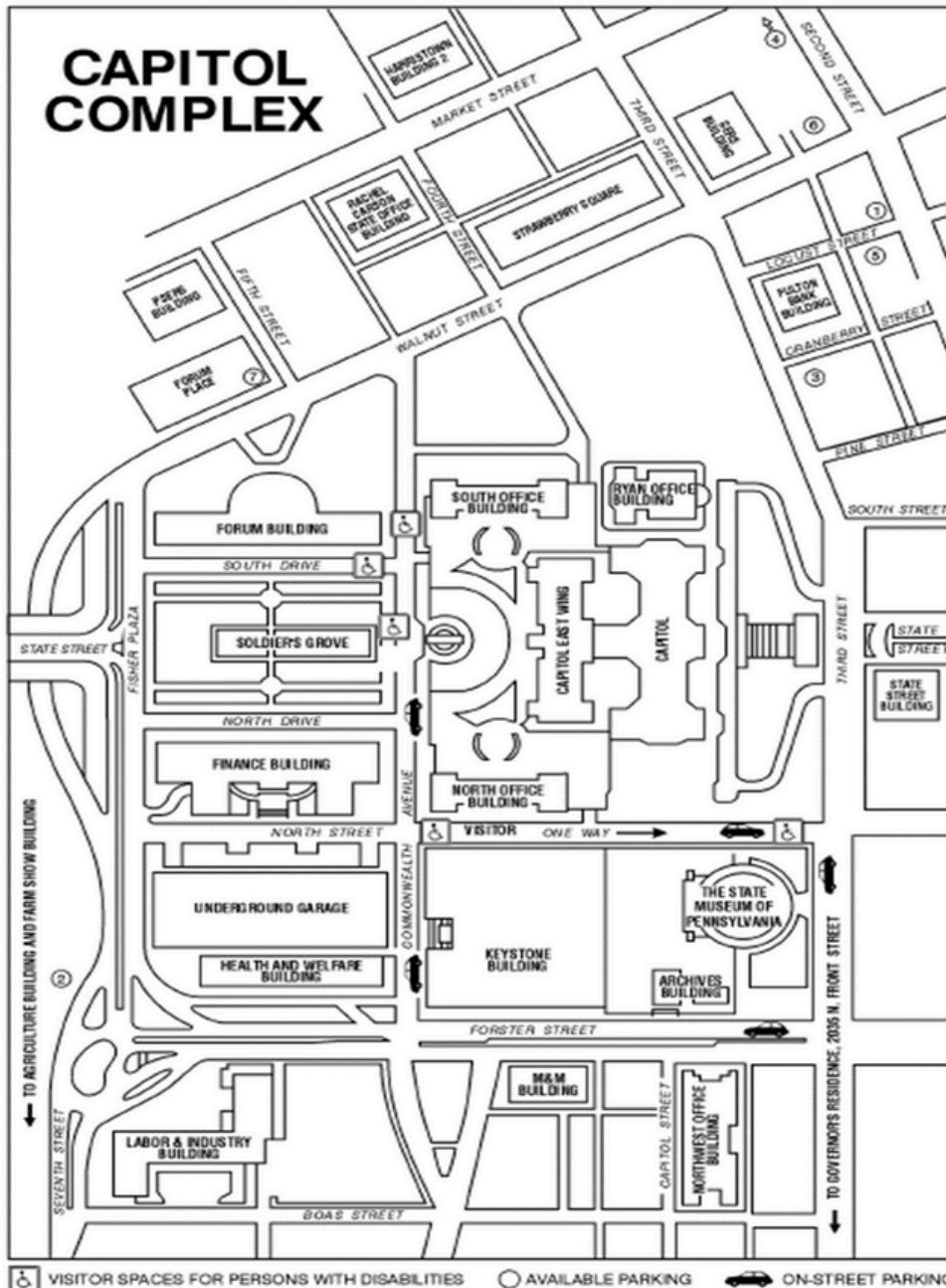
Today, I am so excited to be participating in @ACSCANPA Cancer Action Day to meet with **tag your lawmakers**. Follow along as I join PA advocates from around the PA in calling on our state lawmakers to make fighting cancer a priority #FightCancerPA #PACAD2025

I am happy to participate @ACSCANPA Cancer Action Day at the State Capitol. I'm calling on **@tag your lawmakers** to help ensure care is affordable and accessible and to expand access to critical early detection, screening, and prevention programs #FightCancerPA #PACAD2025

Today I am joining @ACSCAN advocates in Harrisburg to call on **@tag your lawmakers** to ensure that all Pennsylvanians can detect, treat, and survive cancer #FightCancerPA #PACAD2025

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Capitol Complex Map



Parking: There's an abundance of parking around the Capitol. We will reimburse for paid parking. A full list is available at <http://parkharrisburg.com/garages-and-lots/>

Entrances: The public entrances are the East Wing Entrance at the Fountain on Commonwealth Avenue (also the handicapped entrance) and the Main Rotunda Entrance at Third and State Streets.

All visitors to the PA State Capitol will be processed through metal detectors. All bags and packages will be x-rayed, and are subject to hand inspection.

Registration/Check in: Event registration and our event hub open at 8 a.m. in the Main Rotunda of the Capitol Building and will be available throughout the day.

KEY:

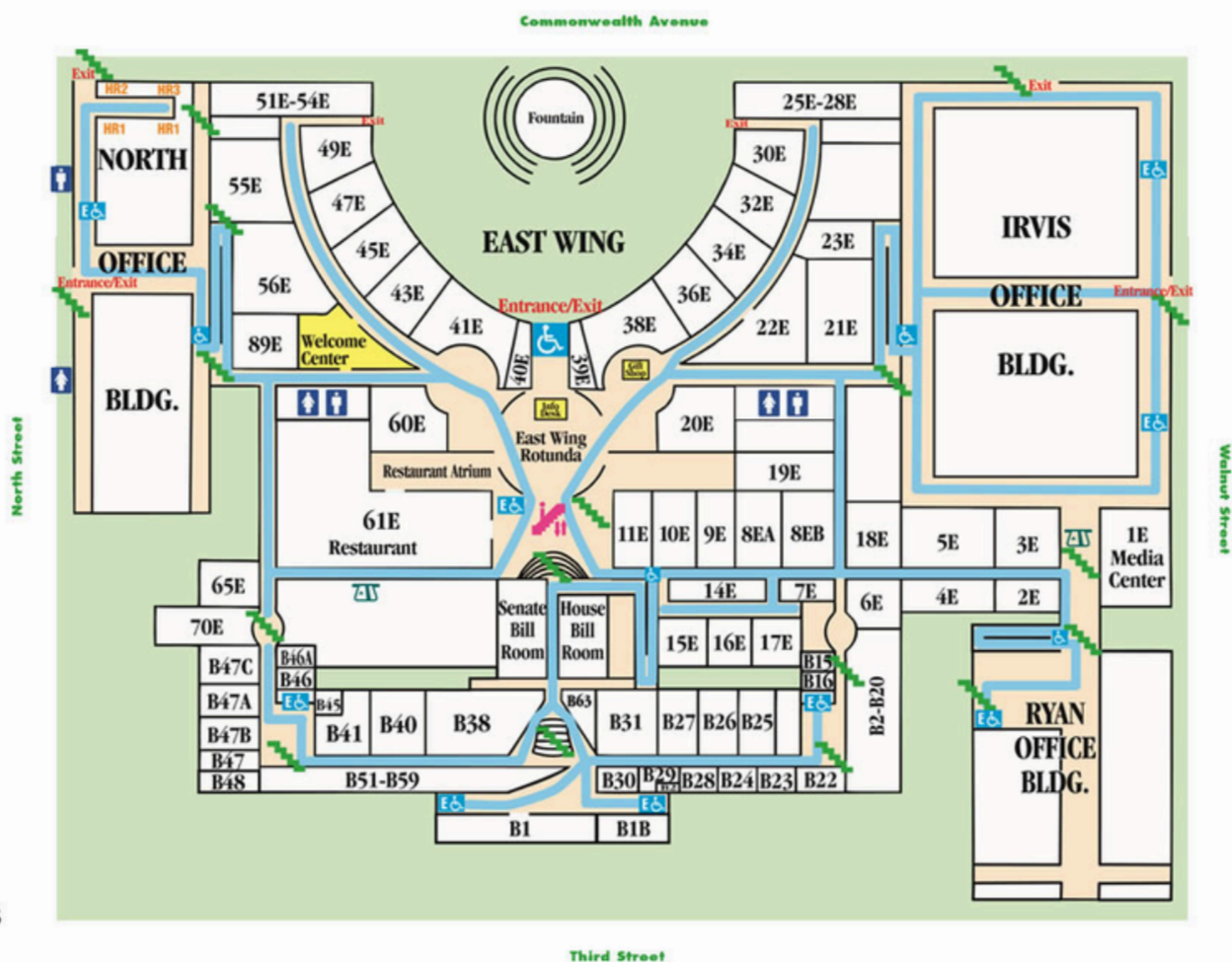


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Capitol Complex Map

Main Capitol Basement and Lower (Concourse) Level East Wing



KEY:



Access

HR Hearing Room



ATM



Escalator



Ladies Restroom

Interior Walkway



Accessible Elevator



Elevator



Stairs



Men's Restroom



Accessible Walkway

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Next Steps

Congratulations!

Cancer Action Day is completed! You should feel proud of the effort and the impact of your meetings.

Follow the steps below to properly wrap up your experience and tie any loose ends.

Social Media Posts:

Thank you @[legislator handle] for meeting with @ACSCANPA volunteers today to hear our stories and policy priorities. Together we can #FightCancer #PACAD2025

Sorry we missed you, @[Legislator handle], during @ACSCANPA Cancer Action Day. We hope you will prioritize cancer patients in your policy positions this session. #PACAD2025

That's a wrap for PA Cancer Action Day! It was amazing to stand alongside fellow advocates in calling on the PA legislature to make fighting cancer a priority! XX meetings in one day! Want to learn how you can join us in future events? Find out more at www.fightcancer.org/volunteer-for-acscan.

Hand-Written Notes:

Use the cards in your packet and write a note for any legislators who you wanted to speak to, but weren't able. Just a quick "sorry we missed you".

Also write brief thank you notes for all legislators who took the time to meet with you.

Turn in these note cards to Lydia, your Grassroots Manager, at the event hub in the Main Rotunda.

Stay Involved:

Join our volunteer team and advocate for life-saving policies year-round! Keep an eye on your email for actions to take and ways to make an impact as an ACS CAN Legislative Ambassador.

Sign up for more info at: <https://act.fightcancer.org/a/pavolunteer>

Contact:

For questions about this information, please contact
Lydia Lippold-Gelb, Grassroots Manager
lydia.lippoldgelb@cancer.org
206-818-1573

