

Cancer Action Day 2025

Getting ready for your Legislative Meetings

Prior to your Meetings with lawmakers:

We have set aside time in the morning session for you to meet with your team before your lawmaker meetings (there may be some exceptions for teams with meetings that are scheduled before noon and your staff partner will let you know if this impacts you). This team meeting prep time is a valuable opportunity to:

- Meet your fellow team members
- Review talking points
- Review how you'll use Hook, Line, Sinker
- Go over the flow of the meeting and review what each person will contribute to each of the meetings your team has scheduled.

What is Hook, Line, Sinker:

Hook: Introductions

The constituent for the member will serve as meeting leader (if there are two or more constituents for the member in the meeting, please identify a leader). The meeting leader should start the meeting by introducing the group as American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network volunteers participating in the 2024 California Cancer Action Day introducing themselves and noting that they are a constituent - and opening it up for a quick round of introductions. All other team members should then briefly introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. Those attendees that are constituents should note that in the introduction.

Line: Local Stories and Statistics

Select one person to share a personal story that ties to one or more of the bills. This could include sharing of personal cancer experiences by a survivor or caregiver as real-life examples to put a face on an issue and establish the need for the lawmaker to take action.

Sinker: The Request

During your prep meeting you'll have decided which participant will be the lead for each bill and responsible for sharing information about the bill with the legislator or staff you are meeting with. Using the talking points provided each lead will quickly present information on a bill and turn it over to the next lead.

After all bills have been introduced the meeting lead (constituent) will make a clear request of the legislator or the staff. Ask for a commitment for each bill and then listen carefully to the response. Legislative offices will often need some time to consider supporting or opposing issues, but they will often share important insights into their thought process. Listen carefully to any insight they give and make note of it in your



report back forms. If they have any additional questions, please tell them they may contact Mary Kemp (Director of Grassroots Organizing) or note this in your meeting report back form. At this point the lead should also present the leave behind packet that contains more information on the bills and Mary's contact information.

And finally, remember to thank them before you end the meeting.

Post Meeting Wrap-up

You will receive a link to complete your meeting report back form. Please include as much meeting information as possible such as whether your lawmaker agreed to support any of the bills, was opposed to any of the bills, had any further questions, or shared any personal connection to any of the bills. The more information you are able to capture in your report the better we can work with the lawmaker as the bill makes its way through the legislature. Remember to send a thank you email soon after your visit to the person you met with. Such notes help you form long-term, business-like relationships with these offices.

Important Information About Legislative Meetings

ACS CAN California staff are scheduling your meetings. Please note—you may meet with your legislator's staff, and with legislators other than your own if we need help covering some appointments. Meetings with staff are as just as important and effective as meeting with the legislator (sometimes even more so—staff are relied upon to advise and inform the legislator on specific issues).

Our goal is to deliver the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network's message to every legislator's office.

Meeting Tips:

- Know the issues – Study the information provided in advance of the meeting. Ask questions of your staff or meeting team before your meetings. Also get to know who your lawmaker is in advance by looking at their website and social media.
- Be on time – Legislators have an extremely tight schedule and will often carve out time specifically to meet with constituents. Plan to gather with your team at the lawmakers office at least 10 minutes before the meeting start time
- Relax – Legislators are just people; don't be intimidated. Be sure to exchange contact information with your team members in the event you are separated during the day.
- Remember the meeting basics – See Hook, Line, & Sinker
- Introductions – Each person in the group should introduce themselves as volunteers or staff of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network. Feel free to describe professional/civic affiliations.
- Bill Authors: If you are meeting with one of the bill authors, be sure to thank them for their leadership and support on the issue.



- Focus on the issue– Avoid spending a lot of time on unrelated subjects.
- Be polite but persuasive – Speak with emotion and conviction.
- Be personal – Emphasize how the issues affect you, your community.
- Be brief – Get your message across quickly as these meetings are usually about 15 minutes at most. Don't get sidetracked into small talk. "Visit" only after you have shared your point.
- Be firm but don't argue – Find out exactly where the legislator stands on the issues. Ask what action they intend to take. Don't be afraid to ask for specifics—will they vote in favor or against our request?
- Answer questions – If you do not know the answer, offer to have our ACS CAN staff get back to them. Remember to write down the question.
- Dealing with belligerence – You may politely end the conversation, but make sure it's on friendly terms. Legislators may be swayed later on, and there are many other issues on which we may need to work with this legislator.
- If there is time – Ask if we can be of assistance. Would they like to get involved in the local Area? Do they need additional information? Remind them that the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network is here to serve the community and welcomes the opportunity to collaborate.
- Meeting Report – Remember to complete your meeting report back form after the meeting.
- After the meeting – Send a thank you email; include a summary of our position and any new information that supports our position. You may also consider sharing a social media post to the ACS CAN California pages or the lawmaker's page. If you take a picture during the meeting be sure to ask the lawmaker/staff if it is okay to share on social media and use the hashtag #CaCancerActionDay.