

FSOMA Legislative Days

Meeting with Your Senators and Representatives

How to Plan, Schedule and Conduct Meetings with your State and Federal Legislators

Based on the time of the year, legislators will be in their home district office (summer recess) or their Tallahassee/Washington office during the legislative session. When calling between May and August, meetings are usually scheduled in the District Office. When calling between Sept and April expect legislators to be in their State or Federal Capitol office. There are no hard and fast rules that apply to all legislators, so it's okay to ask the staff when the Legislator (by name) is next scheduled to be in his/her District Office if you are unable to travel to their Tallahassee/Washington office.

Visit the links below to identify legislators who represent your District. When the page opens you will be prompted to enter your home address.

When the legislator's homepage opens identify the Tallahassee (Capitol Building) and Home Office phone numbers for your legislators. Call the (850)# and request a meeting as scripted below (or feel free to wing it!)

<http://www.flsenate.gov/Senators/Find>

<http://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Representatives/myrepresentative.aspx>

Appointment Scheduling Call-Script:

When you call, have the days and times you are available in front of you. Your call will be answered by a legislative aide; these are staff-persons who keep the calendar for the Legislator; and it is completely acceptable to set-up the meetings through them. During committee weeks and the legislative session, the representatives' schedules may be fluid and unpredictable. So, if the staff says they do not know the schedule well enough to comfortably set up a meeting then ask the person to give you a call schedule an appointment. Please ask for the staffer's email-address send an email to her/him to confirm your meeting time. When your appointment is scheduled, please email Ellen Teeter, AP: FSOMA Executive Director) to inform her about the day and time of your meeting. director@fsoma.org

Hello my name is (However you introduce yourself to patients), and I am a constituent of (Senator or Representative: Legislator's Name), and a member of the Florida State Oriental Medical Association.

Where are you meeting the legislator? – Choose #1 or #2 below:

(1) In your area: “Do you know when (Legislator's Name) is scheduled to be back in the District office? (The answer might be, “In 3 months,” it's okay – just ask, “Will you schedule 10 minutes for us to meet at the office?” and continue with verbiage below, “I would like to meet with...”)

(2) In Tallahassee/Washington, DC: “I plan to visit the Capitol and...(continue with verbiage below)

I would like to meet with her/him just to introduce myself as a constituent and talk generally about acupuncture and healthcare.”

Great, I'm available anytime between _____ am and _____ pm on _____. Thank you.
(Time) (Time) (Date)

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Successful Meetings Take Planning

Okay, now you have an appointment scheduled. What next? *Arrive ON TIME.* A staffer will escort you.

(1) Introduce yourself to your legislator, “Hi my name is _____, I’m a constituent and I live in _____ and work in _____. (FYI: Constituent means: Being a voting member of a community, I can elect you)

(2) Learn about the legislator (I wanted to visit and meet with you to learn a little more about your background and your vision for the district). LET THEM ANSWER; and then ask, “Are you involved with any community organizations or local charities?” LET THEM ANSWER. Take notes to recall these answers later.

(3) Discuss your practice (I’m sorry that I didn’t have time to learn more about you while you were campaigning, but I have a busy medical practice treating patients holistically with Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (fill-in/replace with your self-identified medicine). I graduated from (Alma Mata), a private medical college in (city/town), and I’ve been working in our community for (number) of years. I brought some background information for your staff to review that describes the use of Acupuncture to treat chronic pain and opioid addiction while reducing healthcare expenses.

(4) Finish your visit by stating, “As a licensed healthcare provider, I specialize in treating patients with safe natural medicine. It was nice to meet you. Thank you for your time. Your staff has my contact info, please call me to discuss any questions you might have about the opioid crisis here in Florida or any new legislation or policies related to healthcare issues and acupuncture.”

(5) On the way out, make sure the staff has your contact info (Business Card), and tell them that you are available to volunteer for special events in support of (Legislator’s Name).

Each meeting will probably last only 10-15 minutes, but you will instantly become recognizable to legislator as an ambassador for Acupuncture and a local resource for information on natural medicine and Acupuncture.

Tips:

Repeat these steps and you will have success in meeting with each of your State and Federal Legislators. Make notes to remind yourself of helpful details about your visit. Be certain to promptly follow-up on any questions or requests for additional information. Send a thank you card to the legislator and personalize it with something notable that you learned or gained from your meeting.

How to follow-up on your meeting: yes, there is more.

Please write and send a short thank-you note to each legislator with whom you meet. This is a habit that professional people develop; and it is important for all of us to develop strong professional habits. This letter must be sent 1-3 days following your meeting encounter. The full effect of sending a thank-you note loses value when it is not sent in a “timely” manner and when it lacks specificity for which “thanks” is being offered.

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See Below: The following note is designed for full-effect. Please use over and over again.

On Business Letterhead, if available (no address required with signature)

otherwise

Plain White Paper is fine (use address as seen below with salutation)

(Date)

“Dear Senator or Representative (Legislator’s Name),

Thank you for meeting with me at your office two days ago, on (date). I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about your vision for the District. It sounds like your plans (insert district vision example here) to increase the number of available parking spaces downtown will be convenient for shoppers and provide a boost to businesses in that area. I also want to commend you are supporting (insert volunteer example here) the food pantry and shelter at the First Unitarian Church on Main Street. Many of our neighbors really rely on that support.

Please let your staff know that I am available to volunteer for special projects, fundraising efforts and your next election campaign. Thank you for serving our community.

Sincerely,

(Hand written signature)

(Type your name, with credentials)

(Name of your practice)

(Practice Address)

(Business Telephone)

(Business Email)