

RECOVERY ADVOCACY DAY



LEGISLATIVE VISIT GUIDE

Scheduling your Legislative Visit

We ask that you spend your time in Harrisburg visiting with members of the General Assembly and/or their staff. When doing so, try and schedule an appointment ahead of time. If you cannot make an appointment, let legislative staff know that you plan on dropping by sometime during the day of the event. If possible, please coordinate your visits with other participants in your group/region. To schedule:

- **Point Person:** If you are part of a group visiting an elected official, choose a point person to coordinate and schedule the visit.
- **Make Contact:** Email or call your elected official's office to schedule an appointment. Contact information can be found [here](#).
- **Schedule:** State your name, where you are from, and the purpose of your visit. If you are a constituent, be sure to mention that. If your elected official is not available, ask to meet with a member of their staff. Staff are in close communications with your elected official and are in a position to pass along your message. A sample script is provided below:
 - *Hello, my name is [NAME] and I am from [CITY, COUNTY, DISTRICT, ETC.]. I would like to schedule an appointment with [SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE NAME] on September 26, 2017 at [HIS/HER] Harrisburg Office to discuss the importance of drug and alcohol recovery.*
- **Confirm Appointment:** Several days prior to your appointment, please call to confirm the date and time.

Keep track of all appointments that you make. If you cannot make an appointment, let your staff contact know so they are not expecting you.

Note: The House of Representatives will be in session on September 26, 2017. Please be flexible in scheduling and brief with visits as your representative will have other meetings and engagements requiring their attention. The Senate is not currently scheduled to be in session on September 26, 2017 but their staff, and even some senators, will be in Harrisburg.

Preparing for your Visit

Practice: Practice what you are going to say in advance. If you are part of a group meet ahead of time so everyone is on the same page. You may appoint someone to speak for the group or you may take turns on talking points. Also, be brief. A typical visit will last between 5 and 10 minutes. For large groups, everyone may not get an opportunity to speak but you can follow-up after your visit.

Navigation: Research the location of your elected official's office ahead of time. Some offices are located in the Main Capitol while others are located in the East Wing. Please see the map below for additional information.

Dress: Please dress appropriately. Business attire is encouraged but not required. Don't let your appearance detract from your message or credibility.

Be on Time: If you have a specific time schedule for a visit, arrive on time. Allow extra time to go through security upon entering the capitol and for locating your elected official's office.

How to Make your Legislative Visit a Success

Offer to be a Resource: Legislators and their staff usually are not experts in all areas and often turn to trusted outside experts. Knowing that there's someone in the district who understands drug and alcohol, specifically recovery, can be very helpful. Let your legislator's office know that you are such a person and are willing to answer any questions they may have. If you have business cards, feel free to leave one or two behind.

Know "Who's Who": Make sure that you know "who's who" in the meeting, and take down the names of any staff people you may need to interact with in the future. Staff often have business cards that you can request. Keep this information for future outreach.

Be Polite: Treat the staff and the office with the same respect you expect. If you are disagreeable, it will make the staff far less likely to want to work with you in the future. You can be forceful about your views and opinions without being rude.

Always Tell the Truth: Again, staff constantly turns to outside individuals for advice and assistance on important policy issues. They must feel that they can trust the individuals with whom they are dealing. If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the person you will find out and get back to them.

Stay on Point: Please see the talking points below. Use these talking points as a guide during your visit(s). Please remember that Recovery Advocacy Day is a day to share stories of hope and to make the point that recovery is possible.

For Groups: If you are in a large group, please practice what you are going to say ahead of time to ensure that members of the group are on the same page. If time is limited, some members of the group may not be able to tell their story but there is always an opportunity to follow-up with your elected official after your meeting.

Follow-Up: After your meeting, send a thank you note and try to schedule a future meeting or call to maintain an open dialogue with your elected official.

Talking Points

You are welcome to use these talking points as a guide during your legislative visit(s). Prepare to spend 5-10 minutes speaking with your elected official or their staff. Please remember that Recovery Advocacy Day is a day to share stories of hope and to make the point that recovery is possible.

- **Introduction:** Introduce yourself and/or your group and state where you are from. Are you a constituent? Also mention that you are participating in Recovery Advocacy Day and provide a brief overview of the event. This overview can include:
 - *Recovery Advocacy Day aims to raise awareness of substance use conditions, celebrates individuals in recovery, and acknowledges the work of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.*
- **Road to Recovery:** Share your story. How long have you been in recovery? How did you get there? Remember to be brief and to focus on recovery instead of addiction.
- **Positive Outcomes:** What has recovery done for you? Are you employed? Do you have a family? Are you a volunteer? Do you vote? What positive impact has recovery had on your life and the life of others?
- **Recovery in Local Community:** This point is optional as we recognize some participants are reluctant to discuss their involvement in some abstinence based programs such as AA, NA, or CA. If you choose to discuss local efforts, consider the following: Are you involved with any local recovery groups? What do they do? Be sure to mention any past, present, or future events and projects. What positive impact have these groups or their events/projects had on the local community? Invite your elected official to visit a local project or event.
- **Conclusion:** Thank the individual you are meeting with for their time and invite them to the 2 p.m. media event in the Main Rotunda. Also, remember to leave behind a copy of the PRO-A Recovery Fact Sheet for your elected official to review. Printed copies of this handout are available at the Recovery Advocacy Day Registration Table in the Main Rotunda.

Questions

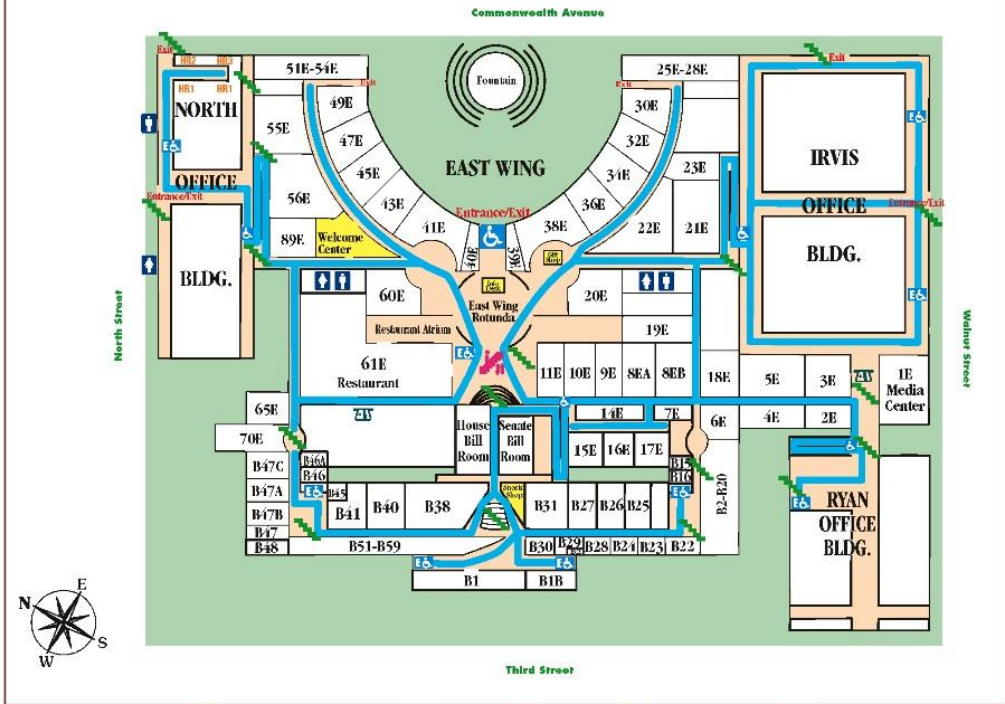
Event staff will be at the Recovery Advocacy Day Registration Table in the East Wing throughout the day. If you have questions, please see them.

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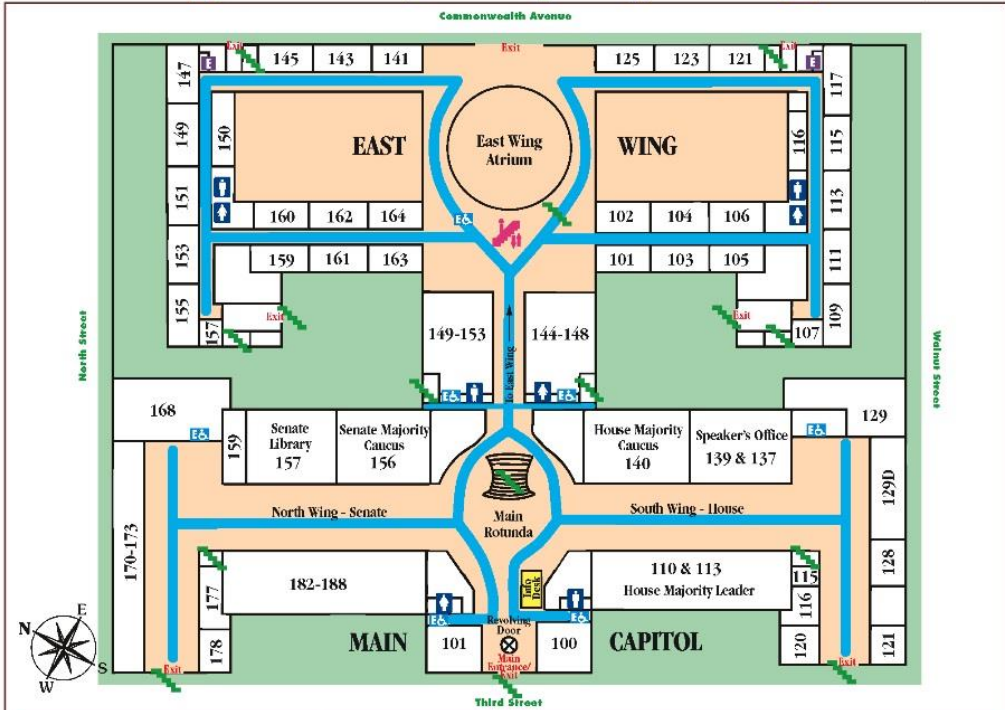
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Main Capitol Basement and Lower (Concourse) Level East Wing



- KEY:**
- Access
 - HR Hearing Room
 - ATM
 - Escalator
 - Ladies Restroom
 - Interior Walkway
 - Accessible Elevator
 - Elevator
 - Stairs
 - Men's Restroom
 - Accessible Walkway



Main Capitol First Floor and Upper Level East Wing