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Common Titles and Job Functions in a Congressional Office:

Members of Congress rely on their staff to assist him/her during a term in office, so knowing and understanding the titles and roles of these staff members is critical to communicating effectively with Congress. These are some of the common staff members in a Congressional office:

Chief of Staff (CoS). The AA or CoS is usually a person in charge of overseeing office operations and supervising key staff, but most importantly, this person reports directly to the Member of Congress. The AA/CoS typically has responsibility for evaluating the political outcomes of various legislative proposals in the member's district or state and constituent requests.

Legislative Director (LD). The LD is typically the staff member who monitors the legislative schedule according to the interests and committee assignments of the member, supervises legislative assistants, and makes recommendations to the CoS or the member based on the likely or expected outcomes of particular issues.

Legislative Assistant (LA). An LA is usually a staff person with specific interest and expertise on a particular issue or a number of issues. There are typically several LAs in a given member's office and they will usually vary based on the interests of the member and his/her constituency.

Press Secretary (Press Secy.) or Communications Director (Comm. Dir.). The responsibility of the Communications Director is to establish clear and open lines of communication between the member, their constituency, the media, and the public at large. This staff member must be able to effectively promote the views and positions of their member on specific issues to these parties as clearly and briefly as possible.

Scheduler. This secretary or scheduler is responsible for appropriating the member's time to accommodate the many demands on his/her time including congressional and constituent requests and staff requirements. These responsibilities may involve making travel arrangements, scheduling speaking engagements or visits to the district, or making appointments with the member.

Caseworker or Legislative Correspondent. This staff member typically deals with constituents' requests, addressed to the member or to a federal agency, and prepares replies to those requests for the member's signature. These staff people will also address or resolve constituents' concerns over the phone. There are usually several of these correspondents in any given Congressional office.