

# **DISTRICT MEETING**

## **What to Do When your Chapter Wants to Attend a District Meeting**

### **Beginning of the Year**

Create a committee to look at all legislators in your area; assign 1-2 legislators to each committee member

Identify individuals who can attend meetings on Thursday afternoons or Fridays (this is when legislators are in their district offices)

### **One Month to Go...**

Designate a Point Person to coordinate meeting

Send a meeting request to legislator's office (sample letter attached)

Send an email out to interested psychologists about attending the meeting

### **One Week To Go...**

Call legislator's office to confirm meeting

Call CPA for any info on legislator/CPA positions on high priority bills

### **Day of Meeting**

Point Person should make introductions, explain about CPA and the local chapter

### **After the Meeting**

Write Thank You e-mail to psychologists who attended the meeting

Write Thank You letter to legislator and staff

# **6 Easy Steps to Meeting with Your Legislator**

- 1. HOW TO FIND YOUR LEGISLATOR** The first step is to research your legislative contacts. Learn who your legislators are by visiting [www.cpapsych.org](http://www.cpapsych.org) and look under Advocacy. You can also visit [findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov](http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov). Type in your address and contact information for your State Assemblymember and Senator will appear. Another great way to do this is to contact CPA and speak with Advocacy staff to make a priority list of legislators in your chapter's area.
- 2. HOW TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT** The second step is to contact the legislator's district office. Please prepare a written letter and/or email to send to the legislator's office. Schedulers will not schedule appointments without a written request. Be persistent-follow-up with weekly phone calls and emails until you get a date scheduled. Once you have an appointment, recruit 1-2 psychologists or graduate students to attend. Strength in numbers. Always remember a legislator's schedule is subject to change; you might meet with a staff member instead. This person will likely be a useful contact-so do not feel slighted if you do not meet with the legislator. District appointments are usually made on Thursday afternoons or on Fridays when the legislators are in their home district. The meeting will typically last for 20-30 minutes.
- 3. HOW TO DEVELOP CONTENT FOR A MEETING** The next step is developing an introduction to and 2-3 talking points for the meeting. Please consult with your Chapter President to establish the correct number of people in your chapter, areas in which you work (and live), and issues important to the region. Contacting CPA's Advocacy Department and asking for 2-3 issues on which you can speak during a meeting is the easiest way to accomplish the second part of your task. Please contact Amanda Levy at 916-286-7979, ext. 106 / [alevy@cpapsych.org](mailto:alevy@cpapsych.org). It lets us know who you are meeting with and ensures that your message will be consistent with what professional staff is doing in Sacramento. The bills we want to raise and talking points will vary from legislator to legislator and by time of year. Many meetings might almost exclusively focus on the differences between a psychologist vs. a psychiatrist vs. a marriage and family therapist. CPA gives every legislator a CPA Handout at our Leadership and Advocacy conference, but it's a good idea to print 1-2 for your meeting. They can be found at [www.cpapsych.org](http://www.cpapsych.org) under Advocacy. District staff members aren't typically the policy experts, but they do connect with Capitol staff and let them know CPA was there.
- 4. HOW TO PUBLICIZE YOUR WORK** Take pictures of you meeting with the legislator or with staff; post it your association website, place in your local newsletter, send copies to CPA's Director of Government Affairs (Amanda Levy [alevy@cpapsych.org](mailto:alevy@cpapsych.org)) and send copies to the legislator and their staff member. They may put your pictures on the legislator's website or Facebook page. After our Leadership and Advocacy Day, members of the Alameda County Psych Assn. and LACPA were on Facebook
- 5. HOW TO FOLLOW-UP** Be sure to have a reason to follow up with the legislator. This is so that you can call them, or send them something. All of this goes to establishing a relationship, which is the main goal. You want to be able to call the office and have them know who you are.
- 6. HOW TO MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS** Follow up with them. And schedule another event with them. You should set some specific goals of how many times you want to make contact with the legislator. Invite them to your Association gatherings-holiday parties, membership events, etc. They will see how organized you are, and know you are strong

# **Phone Script: Following up on a Scheduling Request with your Legislator's District Office**

**\*Things to know before following up on a scheduling request – or will at least make the process easier:**

- the date the original scheduling request was made
- the requested meeting date
- the name of the scheduler/staff-member responsible for district meetings
- who you spoke with last time
- the date you last contacted the office

Hello, my name is Dr. (FIRST NAME) (LAST NAME) and I am calling with the (CHAPTER/DIVISION NAME) to follow up on our scheduling request with (TITLE) (LEGISLATOR'S LAST NAME) for (REQUESTED DATE). I spoke with (SCHEDULER/STAFF-MEMBER NAME) on (DATE LAST CONTACTED OFFICE) and was told to check in with your office later. Are there any updates regarding our request?

### ***If yes:***

- Great, what time would the member/senator be available to meet with our group?
- And where will we be meeting at?
- Thank you. So, to confirm, our group will be meeting with you on (SCHEDULED DATE) at (SCHEDULED TIME) at (SCHEDULED LOCATION).
- I will send you an e-mail the week before the meeting to make sure it is still on the calendar. Please let me know if you have any questions for our group beforehand. Thank you!

### ***If no:***

- Okay, when can I call back for that date?
- Great, thank you. I will follow up with your office in a week to see if there are any updates.