



LEGISLATIVE TOOLBOX

Finding Information at the Capitol

The most valuable sources of information at the State Capitol are the personal contacts with legislators, staff and fellow lobbyists you develop as you go about your work. You will be surprised at what you can learn. But what if you don't or can't spend much time at the Capitol? Here are a few suggestions:

Contact Your Personal Legislators

Introduce yourself in person, by phone or by letter. Let them know your key issues and concerns — and ask them to keep you informed. Use the “[Find Your Legislator](#)” tool to see who represents you at the capitol.

Contact Your Legislator's Staff

Some of the most important people in the legislative process are legislative assistants and committee administrators (if the member is a committee chair). Each legislator has a legislative assistant, although an assistant's services may be shared by one or two other legislators. Legislative assistants are committed to their legislators' efforts — and constituent services are always at the top of the priority list. They can solve many problems and answer countless questions for you. They know legislators' schedules and can arrange meetings and will keep you informed on items of specific interest. They will also send you bill and amendment copies, plus other information regarding the Legislature.

Use the Legislative Website (www.leg.mn.us)

You will find an extremely well-prepared, organized and maintained website with links to all branches of state government, legislative committees, hearing schedules, etc. You can also read and download copies of bills that have been introduced and track the status of legislation.

The House and Senate Public Information Offices release daily and weekly updates that provide a wealth of information on the day-to-day events of the legislature. Subscribe to the [House Public Information Office email updates](#) to receive reports on the current events at the legislature.

Twitter

Twitter has developed into a major tool for the capitol press corps, legislative staff, and legislators themselves to get their message and daily activities out to the public. The Twitter hashtag [#mnleg](#) is used by all of those groups, and following that information and users who regularly tweet using that hashtag can provide a lot of valuable information.

Call the House Chief Clerk's or the Senate Index Office

The Chief Clerk and Senate Index Offices take great pride in seeing to it that every bit of information you need to make your work with the legislature is as easily accessible as possible. These folks will be happy to give you bill numbers, bill authors, bill status and much more information on happenings in the Legislature. You can reach the Chief Clerk's office at (651) 296-0719 or the Senate Index office at (651) 296-7198.

Watch Committee Hearings and Floor Sessions

House Television Services and Senate Media Services provide broadcasts of legislative committee and floor proceedings on Twin Cities Public Television Channel 17 and various cable systems in greater Minnesota. House and Senate coverage is also available online through the respective websites or at TheUpTake.org.

For more information go to www.house.leg.state.mn.us/htv/schedule.asp for House coverage and www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/media/index.php?ls=85 for Senate coverage.

Visit the Capitol

Our Capitol is one of the most beautiful in the country and it's an exciting place to visit. Free public tours are provided by the Minnesota Historical Society. Guided tours are available every day of the week, although fewer time slots are available on weekends and during the interim. Reservations are needed for groups of 10 or more. For more information, contact 651-296-2881 or visit <http://www.mnhs.org/capitol/activities/tours>