



2020 FLA Library Legislative Day Basics

LEGISLATIVE APPOINTMENT SETTING

Appointments may either be made in writing by emailing the legislator's scheduling person, or by phone. Every office differs in their preferred scheduling process, so please check with them to determine which process to use. Sample language follows for emails, faxes and phone call scripts.

CONTACTING LEGISLATORS

How do I contact legislators' offices?

Phone calls are best for urgent matters (a vote or decision is imminent); but they are also welcome at any time. Schedulers will likely want to receive an email from you about the request and email you a confirmation in return. Talking with a staff member is fine; they do a lot of legwork for legislative offices. It is important to work around the legislative calendar.

- When you call, ask for the staff person who is working on your particular issue (e.g., appropriations, education, etc.). You will be transferred over to the appropriate staffer.
- Introduce yourself: your name; you are a library supporter and/or are affiliated with [library or institution name]; and state that you are a constituent.
- Briefly, tell the staffer your issue. If you have a bill number or specific citation, use it. The staff tracks many issues! In a few sentences, explain why your issue is important.

Sample Email

Dear [Name of Scheduler],

Members of the Florida Library Association (FLA) will be in Tallahassee on January 22, 2020. We would very much appreciate a meeting with Senator [Name] and/or a staff person to discuss the importance of Library Funding through State Aid, Public Library Construction, and related legislative issues.

Among attendees will be [Insert names of participants from the district]. There may be others at the meeting as well, but I am unable to confirm the names at this time. A meeting between the hours of 9:00 am and 4:30 pm would be ideal. Thank you so much for your consideration of our request.

Cordially,

Phone Script

“Hello, my name is [name] from [name of organization]. May I please speak to the scheduler?”
(Write down the scheduler’s name. Be sure to get the correct spelling.)

“Several of our members will be in Tallahassee on January 22 and we would like to schedule a meeting with Senator/Representative [Name] and staff to discuss Library Funding, Public Library Construction, and related legislative issues. May we do this on the phone, or would you prefer an email?”

[At this point, you may either continue, or take down the email address. Although you should make every effort to get a meeting with the legislator, many times you will be referred to the appropriate staff person, that’s ok! If you are able to continue on the phone, let the scheduler know who is coming:]

“At this time, the following people will be attending: [list names and affiliations]. We would like to schedule a meeting between the hours of [times].”

Note: You may have to contact the office several times before someone returns your call or confirms an appointment. Be persistent and proactive.

Appointment Reporting Form

Record your confirmed appointments on the FLA Google Forms, which can be updated in real time. Two Google Forms will be available: 1 for House of Representatives and 1 for Senate. Each line is a district. Information to complete in the report form:

- Name of Legislator
- Name of Scheduler
- Phone number of Legislator office
- Time confirmed
- Meeting location
- Attendees from district who will be at meeting

LIBRARY DAY MATERIALS – Pick up on Library Day!

FLA will be providing participants with everything they need for Library Day. The Advocacy Committee and staff have put together a comprehensive packet for both FLA members and for you to leave with Legislators or their staff:

FLA Member Folders

- Agenda of the day's activities
- Appointments list (make sure you're updating the master list!)
- Map of office locations
- Palm Cards/Talking Points
- Strategies for Success Sheet

Legislator Folders

- 2020 Platform
- Priorities Sheets
- Reception Invitation
- Business Cards
- FLA members will also provide each Legislator with leave-behind (TBD)

WAR ROOM: House Office Building, Room 28

FLA will have a Conference Room assigned to us for the entire day of January 22. FLA staff will have extra materials, refreshments and thank you notes available in this room for you. Between appointments, it's a good idea to stop by here to immediately write thank you's to the legislators you just met with. You can also stop in and pick up more folders rather than carrying everything at once for the whole day.