

Ways to Effectively Communicate with Legislators

In-Person Meeting

Meeting with a legislator in their office personalizes your policy position, making it one of the most effective ways to communicate. These meetings should last no longer than 30 minutes and should be conversational, as opposed to you talking most of the half hour. Bring a business card and a one-page leave behind that recaps your policy position and follow-up with a hand-written thank you note.

Conduct a Virtual Meeting

Virtual meetings with legislators are good alternatives when in-person meetings are not possible. Much like an in-person meeting, a virtual meeting should last no longer than 30 minutes and time should be allotted for questions. Utilize a commonly used virtual meeting platform so the legislator is familiar with the software. Virtual meetings provide an opportunity to incorporate visuals like short videos and pictures. Test the program before the meeting to ensure everything is working properly. For additional information on hosting virtual meetings, please reach out to NATA Government Affairs.

Host a District Site Visit

Inviting legislators and their staff to visit your work setting can be very impactful. Seeing first-hand what you do brings about more understanding of the profession. Site visits should last around an hour and include a tour of the facility, live demonstrations, and an opportunity to visit about the athletic training profession. The best time to host a site visit is when the legislators are not in session. If an in-person site visit is not possible, consider hosting a tour virtually.

Send a Letter or Email

One of the easiest ways to communicate with a legislator is by sending written communication. Matters specific to the district like invitations to local events or constituent services) are typically handled in the legislator's district office, while legislation and public policy is primarily handled in the capitol office. Direct your communication to the appropriate office, keep your correspondence to a page, state your "ask" in the first paragraph, and include your contact information so your communication can be officially recorded and the legislator is able to follow-up with questions.

Tips When Communicating...

- Be polite, brief, and direct.
- Have a specific ask.
- Never be argumentative.
- Always take pictures and post them on social media.

Call the Office

Speaking directly with a legislator or to member of the staff can be a little intimidating, but it is one of the fastest ways to contact your legislator. When calling a legislative office, you should be able to quickly communicate who you are and your position within the first 20 seconds of the call. Be prepared to briefly answer any questions, and be ready to refer them to a more appropriate person if you are unable to answer their question.

Tweet or Send a Facebook Message

Twitter is a great way to communicate publicly with legislators, while sending direct messages through Facebook Messenger or Twitter is a private approach. This means of communication should primarily be used to encourage a legislator to support a bill or thank them for their support. Never be negative, hateful, or rude to or about a legislator on social media. Additionally, use your state legislature's hashtag and #ATvocate in your messages.

*For more information, contact the
NATA Government Affairs Department at (972) 532-8803.*

