

A Guide to Meeting with Your Legislators

How to Find Your Legislators

- Go to the Oregon State Legislature Webpage at www.leg.state.or.us
- Click on the link that says “Find Your Legislator” on the right hand side. Type in your address and a list will come up. The first names on the list are the Oregon State Federal Senators and Representative. At the bottom of the list you will find your Senator and Representative for the district you live in.

Setting up an Appointment with your Legislators

- Make an appointment by letter or phone. It is not likely to get a meeting just by stopping by their offices. Unless you already know your legislator, it is recommended to write, rather than phone, if you would like to arrange a meeting.
- Summarize the issues that you would like to discuss in your letter or phone call. Reference previous contacts or any communications that you have had. Prioritize issues you would like to discuss and keep it under three.
- Keep in mind you can also meet with staff aides that work directly with your legislator. They may even be working closely with them on an issue that is of concern to you.

Meeting with Your Legislator

- When meeting with your legislator it is important to be concise, well organized, and thoroughly knowledgeable about the issues you plan to discuss. Plan on your meeting taking 15 minutes.
- State your views strongly but keep in mind the legislator’s position on the issues as well. This will encourage a productive exchange of ideas rather than a lecture. Don’t try or expect to solve all your issues in one visit.
- Offer specific solutions to the issues you are discussing, and make references to how these issues affect his or her constituents they represent.
- It may be beneficial to prepare a brief document that states the points you wish to make and leave it with you legislator. This allows you to present points you might not have time to get to in the meeting. It can also serve as a reminder to your legislator of your visit with them.
- Offer to provide additional information about the issues you have discussed with them and leave your contact information.

After Meeting with your Legislator

- Follow up with a thank you letter that reemphasizes the key points of your discussion.
- Also send a thank you letter to any staff that assisted you in arranging your meeting or to ones who may have participated in the meeting.
- Let the Occupational Therapy Association of Oregon or the American Occupational Therapy Association, Federal Affairs department staff know of significant issues that were discussed during the meeting.