



State/District Staff

Who are the “Local Staff”?

Federal-level policymakers have staff people who work in the local district office. Many state-level policymakers do as well. These are great people to get to know, because they can become “advocates” for you within the congressional office. Although they often don’t directly handle policy issues, they do have the ears of those policy staff who do. Your ability to connect the strange things that happen in Congress or at the state capitol to specific outcomes in the district can be greatly enhanced through a positive relationship with local staff.

House Members generally have from six to eight people located in the district. Depending on the geography of their district, they may have just one office (for urban areas) or several throughout the state. Senators usually have anywhere from 10 to 30 local staff, depending on population. Their offices will be distributed all over the state.

Titles & Functions

Although every office differs in terms of the titles of various staff people, here are some of the people you might expect to see in a local office:

Caseworkers -- If you are looking for help on a problem concerning federal agencies (such as getting your social security check) ask for the **caseworker** who handles that issue (the social security caseworker, for example). District or state caseworkers are masters at maneuvering through the maze of the federal bureaucracy. Their expertise ranges from immigration to social security to veteran’s benefits, and they spend most of their time solving the problems constituents encounter with the federal government. For example, a district/state caseworker can help you secure your veteran’s benefits, or resolve immigration issues.

District/State Scheduler -- If you want to meet with the representative or senator in the district or state, or if you want to invite him/her to an event, ask for the **district or state scheduler**. This is the person who schedules the Member’s time when he or she is in the district or state. (Note that some offices handle all scheduling out of one office, usually the D.C. office, so you may be referred to the D.C. scheduler). Senate offices may have more than one person per office dealing with scheduling duties.

Field Representative -- If you want to meet with a district staff person to discuss a particular local issue, or if you want to invite someone from the district staff to a local event or meeting, ask for the **field representative** who handles your issue. Field representatives can also talk with you about federal issues that directly affect the district (disaster relief for your flooded neighborhood, for example) or actions of a federal agency on something that affects a local group of people or a community (as opposed to individual problems).

District/State Office Director -- This staffer oversees the operations of the district or state staff and is often the point person in the district office for highly sensitive local political issues. Constituents should ask for this person if they feel that their concerns are not being met by others in the office.

Potential Activities

District staff people are generally much easier to chat with because, well, you don’t have to go all the way to Washington, DC or the State Capital to see them! You can ask them to:

- ☐ Visit your golf facility
- ☐ Attend chapter functions, local meetings or events

- ☐ Invite you to attend a meeting in your policymaker's local office
- ☐ Invite you to attend a town hall meeting
- ☐ Follow you on social media
- ☐ Prepare comments for a legislator on local issues
- ☐ Connect you with other staff in the office or other policymakers in the delegation.

Basically, you can ask them to do anything you'd ask a legislator or DC / State Capitol staff person to do!