



Once you've gotten procured your meeting with your local political representative, you need to decide on the agenda for the meeting, and you need to make sure that everyone on your team is going to be pulling in the same direction. This document provides guidance on these points.

Prior to the Meeting

Go through the following checklist well prior to the meeting with your MP:

- Know your political representative. Research his/her background. Most politicians have their own Websites – check them out.
- Know the political representative party position. Remember all politicians are committed to the policies of their party. Check website for party positions on different issues.
- Know your issues. Make sure you are up to speed on all the materials / knowledge provided.
- Make sure you know HOW you want to present your material. Does the politician have a good understanding of the issue, or does he/she need background info? Is he/she supportive? Will you be well-received? Do you need to be assertive to get your point across, or will this hinder your objective? If others have met with this politician, try to get tips on how to best approach them.
- Try to consider the counter arguments your political representative might raise and how you could respond. Plan for different scenarios ahead of time. It may be helpful to hold a mock meeting with a friend where they play the role of the political representative. This will give you a chance to consider some of the questions your political representative might raise or arguments they might make, and help you plan what to say in response.
- Know what you want. Identify what the political representative can do for you, e.g. Present the petition; Raise an issue in caucus or with a committee; Speak to the relevant minister or MP; Ask a question in City Council, the provincial legislature or the House in Ottawa; Support or oppose an upcoming decision or policy; Speak at an event etc.
- Prepare information packages and/or handouts ahead of time. Include a one-page summary of your main points in large print. Have enough handouts for participants in your group, the political representative and his/her assistants. CJPME has many different handouts and position papers available at: <https://www.cjpme.org/positions>.

Establish the Agenda for your Meeting

It is essential that everyone on your team be clear about the agenda and purpose of the meeting:

- If you're doing a meeting at the politician's riding office, agree to meet 30 minutes ahead of time at your politician's office. Agree who will bring what to the meeting.
- Choose who will be present during meeting. Work with the CJPME (or your organization's) team to identify appropriate people. Agree on the role of each person, and practice together so that you all feel comfortable.
- Suggestion: Establish the role of each person. Remember that everyone is responsible to ensure that you get to all your agenda items in the time allotted to you. You will want to assign a facilitator, a

primary presenter, and a note-taker. While everyone should take notes, it is good to designate one person as the official note taker. This person should issue the notes from the politician subsequent to the visit.

A Sample Agenda

It is essential that everyone on your team be clear about the agenda and purpose of the meeting:

- Greetings. Greet the politician and his/her assistant(s.)
- Introductions. Have each person on the team introduce him/herself. Convey info about each person's affiliations, and exchange pleasantries briefly.
 - Name of individual
 - Professional title of individual
 - Role in advocacy organization
 - Linkage to the riding, if any
- Confirm your time. If you got the amount of time that you wanted, say something like, "Thank you for setting aside an hour of your time for us. We're sure you'll find this meeting to be time well spent." If you got less than you wanted, say something like, "We thank you for meeting with us. We have tailored our agenda to meet your time constraints."
- Review your organization's Objectives. Introduce your organization.
- Present your Material. Your presenter should walk through your main presentation. Agree on how much time you want at the end of the meeting for free discussion. Your presenter must ensure that he/she presents the material such that he/she covers the material in the targeted time.
- Present the Petition. Agree on who will present the petition. Stress that the signatures on the petition are from the politician's riding, if indeed this is the case.
- **Get a commitment**: Ask your politician to do something concrete to show support for your issues. For instance, you may ask her/him to:
 - make a statement in City Council, the Provincial Legislature or the House;
 - ask a question in Question Period;
 - ask a relevant government committee to look at the issue;
 - raise your concerns in party caucus, help you arrange a meeting with several other politicians in their party or their party caucus chair;
- Next Steps. Discuss next steps with your political representative. Go over the action items, and make sure that you have one or more reasons to follow up with your political representative.
- Take a Picture. Bring a camera and take pictures for your social media accounts.

What to do after the Meeting

Plan on certain activities following your visit to your political representative. The following is a suggested follow-up checklist:

- Have participants evaluate the meeting. Revise and expand notes taken during the meeting.
- Write a letter of thanks to the politician with a reminder of the key points and actions.
- Consider writing a brief press release for the local paper or campus paper. The press release can reinforce the message you delivered to your political representative. Make sure that what you tell the media is exactly the same as what you told your political representative.
- Put your political representative on your org's mailing list and send him/her regular updates.