

USBC Advocacy Day of Action 2019

Scheduling Appointments

USBC's Breastfeeding Advocacy Day of Action: Wednesday, June 12, 9:30 a.m. – approx. 3 p.m.

1: Who is in your group? You should have received an email from advocacy@usbreastfeeding.org with the subject "USBC Advocacy Day 2019 – Your State." All Advocacy Day attendees from your state are on this thread, and we will add new registrants weekly. If you did not receive this message, please check the spam folder of the email address that you used to register, for a message from advocacy@usbreastfeeding.org. Then, include us in your address book so you receive future messages.

Note: we added attendees to email groups based on the state linked to your conference registration—if you are planning to attend with a different group or a different state, please let us know!

If you are the only attendee from your state, go ahead and start scheduling appointments for yourself with your state's Senators and your own Representative. If there are multiple attendees from your state, coordinate amongst each other so that only one of you is calling each office, especially for Senator appointments. If anyone shares the same Representative, you'll also want to coordinate so that you don't request two appointments with the same Congressional office.

Some state groups are quite large; others have only 1 or 2 individuals. You will want to factor this in when deciding how to schedule appointments. Congressional offices can be small, so we recommend teams of two, four at the most. If you have a very large group, consider making more than one appointment.

2: Who will you meet with? We are happy to report that both the House of Representatives and the Senate will be in session while we are in DC. Even when they are in session, it is rare to actually meet with the Member of Congress, but you should always be able to meet with a staffer, most likely the Health Legislative Assistant.

3. How should I schedule appointments?

- **Look up your Representative and Senators using the [USBC Advocacy Day: Legislator Lookup tool](#).** Select the red "More Details" button for each legislator to find their contact information, which committees they serve on, biographical information, and more.
- **Call the DC office of each legislator, and if you do not get a response, make follow-up calls a day or two later.** Persistence is key for some staff members and offices! Identify yourself and the organization/coalition you represent, and ask to speak to the Health legislative assistant (LA). Some offices may require that you speak with the scheduler instead of the LA.
 - Let the staffer or scheduler know you are participating in the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee's day of action on Wednesday, June 12, and ask for an appointment for you (if attending) and your colleagues (have names available) to discuss **issues and legislation related to breastfeeding**. Given our limited availability to one day, you may wish to let the staffer know that if they are not able to meet with you, you'd appreciate scheduling with another one of their colleagues.
 - When scheduling your appointments, you do not need to know the specific policy priorities your group will focus on. Just say that you want to discuss **issues and legislation related to breastfeeding**.
 - See the sample phone script on the following page.
 - See the "Preparing for Your Appointment" handout for more information about researching legislators and choosing policy priorities.

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Timing considerations:

- We will meet in the Hyatt Regency Bethesda hotel lobby at 9:30 a.m. USBC staff will distribute printed materials for you to provide to Congressional offices and we will leave by no later than 10:00 a.m. so please be punctual. Remember to wear your favorite breastfeeding t-shirt! Purchase t-shirts on the [USBC Cafepress shop](#).
- We'll travel together to the Capitol by Metro (USBC will cover this transportation cost). We should arrive by 11 a.m., where we'll take a group photo to commemorate the day (wear your favorite breastfeeding T-shirt for the day to amplify your message!)
- The DC Metro will drop us off on the Senate side of the Capitol, so we recommend scheduling morning appointments with your Senators whenever possible.
- We recommend you schedule the first appointment for a start time no earlier than 11:30 a.m. We will meet on the east side of Capitol Hill to travel back to the hotel together on the DC Metro at about 3 p.m., but you may schedule appointments later than that if you'd like. We've left the rest of the day and evening unscheduled for site-seeing or enjoying dinner in DC before returning to the hotel on your own.
- Most meetings will last about half an hour.
- It will take at least 30 minutes to walk from the Senate to the House side of the Capitol (or vice versa), so allow plenty of time when scheduling appointments on both sides. Often it helps scheduling morning appointments on one side of the Capitol and afternoon appointments on the other. [View the U.S. Capitol map](#).

If the staffer or scheduler is not available to speak on the phone, ask for their first and last name and correct spelling, and request to leave a message. Leave a message identifying yourself and your organization/coalition and say that you would like to schedule a meeting on Wednesday, June 12. Mention that you will follow up this phone call with an e-mail.

4: How do I follow up? If you had to leave a message or voicemail, next send a follow-up e-mail to the staffer or scheduler (see templates below). Often offices will not give out email addresses but will give you the full name of the appropriate staff member. Sending email messages through the legislator's website may not be responded to as quickly.

Use the following rules to determine the e-mail address based on the name you were given:

House of Representative Staff Members' e-mails: [FirstName.LastName@mail.house.gov](#)

- For example, if Kinkini Banerjee was a staff member for a Representative, her e-mail would be [Kinkini.Banerjee@mail.house.gov](#)

Senator Staff Members' e-mails: [FirstName_LastName@SenatorLastName.Senate.gov](#)

- So if Amelia Psmythe was a staff member in Senator Merkley's office, her e-mail would be [Amelia_Psmythe@Merkley.senate.gov](#)

5: Let us know who you're meeting with! When you've confirmed a scheduled appointment, be sure to reply back to the email thread advocacy@usbreastfeeding.org started. This is how USBC and your state's attendees will know their meeting schedule! Please list:

1. Appointment **time**
2. Senate/House **office building name & room number**
3. **Name and title** of the person you will be meeting with
4. Names of **attendees** from your state attending the meeting.

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PHONE SCRIPT TEMPLATE

Hello, my name is [your name] and I am a constituent of [Representative/Senator XXX]. I'm participating in a day of action with the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee on Wednesday, June 12. I'd like to schedule an appointment to discuss how the Senator/Representative can take action this Congressional Session to support breastfeeding families.

FOLLOW UP EMAIL TEMPLATE

Dear [scheduler or Legislative Aide you are contacting]:

I am participating in the U.S. Breastfeeding Committee day of action on Wednesday, June 12. My colleagues and I will be traveling from [home state] on behalf of [name(s) of organization/coalition] to participate in this event and would greatly appreciate meeting with your office to discuss how the [Senator/Representative] can take action this Congressional session to support breastfeeding families. We are available for appointment times between [earliest possible time and latest possible time].

I may be reached at [your e-mail address] or [your phone number]. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[your signature]