

# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO DISTRICT MEETINGS



Throughout the year, there are set periods of time when members of Congress are home in their respective states or congressional districts to find out what's on the minds of their constituents. This year, Congress will be home from **mid-July through Labor Day**. An in-person visit to their local office during this time is one of the most powerful tools we have for ensuring that lawmakers understand the importance of pancreatic cancer research funding.

Follow the steps below to set up and attend a district meeting in your area. If you have any questions or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact us at [advocacy@pancan.org](mailto:advocacy@pancan.org) or 202.742.6699.

## STEP 1: CALL THE DISTRICT OFFICE OF YOUR SENATOR OR REPRESENTATIVE

- Go to the website of your legislator to find the phone number for their nearest district office.
- Identify yourself as a constituent (if calling your own legislator) and ask to speak with the scheduler.
- Let them know that you would like to meet with the senator/representative while they are home for the August congressional recess. If the member cannot meet with you, ask to meet with a staff member. *(Remember, it is often difficult to get a meeting with members themselves, but it is just as effective to meet with a staff member.)*
- State that you are an Advocacy Chair or Community Advocate with the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and that you would like a meeting to discuss pancreatic cancer issues.
- Discuss potential dates and agree upon a mutually convenient date and time.
- **Once you have a meeting scheduled, email us at [advocacy@pancan.org](mailto:advocacy@pancan.org) so that we can add it to the [district meetings web page](#) and can let other supporters who live in your area know about the meeting.**

## STEP 2: RECRUIT A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS TO JOIN YOU AT THE MEETING

- Participants should ideally be constituents, which means that they are from the same state if you are meeting with a senator or from the same congressional district if you are meeting with a representative.
- Participants may include:
  - A volunteer who is on your advocacy committee
  - A survivor, family member or caregiver with a particularly poignant story
  - A pancreatic cancer researcher or healthcare professional
  - Another volunteer from your affiliate
- Schedule a conference call or in-person meeting before your district meeting to coordinate with the other participants so that everyone feels prepared and knows in advance what each person will say.
- The day before the meeting, call back or email the member's scheduler to confirm the names of everyone who will be participating in the meeting.

## STEP 3: PRINT OUT THE LEAVE-BEHIND MATERIAL (it is ok to print these in black and white)

- Before the event, print out the fact sheet that you can hand to your elected official or their staff after the event.  
[Pancreatic Cancer Action Network 2016 Fact Sheet](#)

## STEP 4: MEET WITH YOUR SENATOR OR REPRESENTATIVE (or their staff)

- Each participant introduces themselves by mentioning the name of their hometown and briefly sharing their personal story or connection to pancreatic cancer.
- One participant provides a few facts and statistics about pancreatic cancer (see fact sheet above).
- One participant makes the "asks":
  1. Put the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on a path of sustained growth by appropriating \$34.5 billion for the NIH, including \$5.9 billion for the National Cancer Institute (NCI).
  2. Senate offices: Pass an Innovations for Healthier American bill that includes mandatory funding that supplements, not supplants, NIH annual appropriations.
  3. Continue to include pancreatic cancer in the DoD's Peer-Reviewed Cancer Research Program (PRCRP) and provide \$60 million, as recommended by the Senate Appropriations Committee.
  4. Fully fund the Cancer Moonshot Initiative and allocate a portion of those funds to research on our nation's deadliest cancers – the recalcitrant cancers that have a five-year survival rate below 50 percent.
  5. Join the [Congressional Caucus on the Deadliest Cancers](#).
- Before leaving the meeting, hand the member or staff the leave-behind material you printed out.
- Thank the member or staff for their time and exchange business cards with the staff person in the room.

## STEP 5: LET US KNOW HOW THE MEETING WENT

- After your meeting, be sure to fill out our district meeting [feedback form](#) so that we can follow up as needed.

## STEP 6: FOLLOW-UP WITH A THANK-YOU LETTER



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