

U.S. and Global Poverty Monthly Action

2021 Meetings with Members of Congress

For 40 years, RESULTS volunteers have demonstrated the power of political will generated by citizens who regularly and actively interact with their elected officials. Relationship-building through face-to-face meetings is essential to the ongoing process of educating and emotionally engaging our members of Congress. By relating in person, talking about the issues, and telling our powerful stories, we invite them to become champions for the end of poverty.

A truly powerful meeting with a member of Congress is built on much more than factual information and straightforward requests. It involves speaking, listening, and asking questions in ways that invite us and the member of Congress to be vulnerable, to be moved, and to be sensitive to the very real issues of poverty. It involves building relationships.

Use the following tips and resources to plan and practice for upcoming meetings with your members of Congress. If you need information or support, contact your Regional Coordinator or a member of the RESULTS grassroots or legislative staff.

E-mail the scheduler. E-mail the scheduler for your representative or senator as soon as possible to set up your meeting. If you do not know who your representative or senators are, visit the [RESULTS website](#) and you will be linked to contact information for your members of Congress and their staff. The more you contact them in advance of your meeting, the better. Be sure to coordinate with your group on when you all are best available for a meeting. Use our [2021 sample meeting request](#) (found under “I want to request a lobby meeting”) to draft your e-mail. Be sure to edit it as needed, including which issues you will cover.

Follow up with a phone call. If you do not get a prompt response from the scheduler, call the scheduler directly to follow up. Call the Capitol Switchboard in Washington, DC, at (202) 224-3121 and ask to be connected to your member of Congress’s office, or dial the number directly. Keep making follow-up calls until you speak to the scheduler directly. Once connected, ask if your request was received and proceed to scheduling your meeting.

Confirm the platform for the meeting. When talking or e-mailing with the scheduler, remember to set up how you will do the meeting virtually (e.g., Zoom, conference call). Make sure to save this information and share it with those who plan to attend.

Cultivate relationships with Staff. As you are working with the scheduler to secure a meeting with your Representative or Senator, meet and cultivate relationships with key DC aides who handle our issues (housing, tax, foreign policy aides) and local staff. As they see RESULTS as a good partner and resource, they can help secure a meeting with your member of Congress.

Plan for your meeting. Once your meeting is scheduled, contact your fellow RESULTS volunteers ASAP to let them know when the meeting is and how to join. Schedule a time with your group before the lobby meeting to plan your agenda, assign roles, and practice what you plan to say. Planning and practicing is essential in keeping your meeting organized, focused, and powerful.

Call again to confirm. Within a week before the meeting, be sure to contact the scheduler to confirm your meeting date, time, platform, and who will be in attendance.

Meet regularly with your members of Congress. If you do not get a face-to-face meeting with your legislator right away, be persistent until you do, and then make a habit of meeting regularly – two to three times per year, if possible. Continue to maintain relationships with the DC and local staff as well through regular meetings.

Schedule Your Meetings for the First 100 Days

We're not waiting around to see what policymakers decide to do in 2021 – we'll get in there right away to help set a bold agenda against poverty.

COVID relief is many months overdue, and millions of people in this country and around the world are facing the consequences for Washington's inaction. We will continue to push, as we have for months, for an urgently needed response. But we won't be content with just emergency relief: we need an equitable response to the pandemic, and a long-term vision to bring an end to poverty and the systemic oppression that creates it.

During the first 100 days of 2021, we want to meet with every member of Congress we cover – that means every single member of the U.S. Senate and three quarters of the House of Representatives. Help us get there by requesting meetings with your members of Congress as soon as possible. Stay tuned on [our First 100 Days Campaign page](#) for a map tracking every meeting held with a congressional office.

You can do it! Best of luck with scheduling your meetings, and don't hesitate to contact RESULTS staff for assistance.