

Guidance for State Co-Leads in Coordinating Capitol Hill Visits during the 2025 National Home Visiting Summit

During the last National Home Visiting Summit, more than 100 attendees participated in Capitol Hill visits to educate their elected officials about the importance of home visiting for parents, children, and families in their home communities. As advocates prepare to join us in Washington D.C. from February 12 – 14, 2025, the Advocacy & Policy Community of Practice is excited to offer a suite of resources for advocates and all Summit attendees. **Our vision is that advocates, home visiting professionals, parents and caregivers, and other home visiting champions will feel prepared, supported, and energized to engage in Congressional outreach during the 2025 Summit!**

The guidance below is intended to support advocates in coordinating their Congressional outreach efforts with other Summit attendees from their home state. In particular, this guidance aims to describe the responsibilities and key activities for State Leads who help coordinate the participation of advocates from their home state in Hill Visits. We are eager to **recruit you to act as a State Lead** for your fellow advocates to help reduce duplication and maximize the impact of our collective advocacy.

Special thanks to Melea Rose-Waters for her contributions to this work and generosity in sharing tips from her expertise on advocacy!

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Hill Visits 101

What: Home visiting advocates will meet with their Congressional leaders either in person while in D.C for the Summit

Why: Raise awareness about home visiting and the federal priorities needed to sustain and scale its impact on families and communities. Many lawmakers are unfamiliar with home visiting, and while we are not in a MIECHV reauthorization year, it is critical that advocates maintain relationships with members of Congress to preserve and grow investments in early childhood and home visiting.

- Inviting a member of Congress to visit your organization so that they may see firsthand how funding or a policy affects day-to-day operations and the difference it makes, also known as “site visits” or an “open house,” is a key way of extending the impact of your Hill visits after you leave D.C.

When: Visits occur **February 12, 2025 between 9am-3pm.**

Responsibilities of the State Lead for Hill Visits

- 1) Updating your state profile in [the Congressional Tracker](#) to include all current legislators in your state delegation
- 2) Maintaining communication with advocates from your home state; you’ll receive a list of other home visiting advocates who have indicated their interest in Hill visits
- 3) Organizing one (virtual) prep meeting with your state team and delegating activities across other advocates
- 4) Identifying program data or other state-specific information to support your state’s messaging materials
- 5) Serving as a point of contact for the CoP co-facilitators regarding your state’s Hill visit plans.

Responsibilities of Hill Visit Participants

- 1) Indicate your interest in participating in Hill Visits in your Summit registration.
- 2) Communicate with your State Team Lead and participate in planning meetings.
- 3) In coordination with your State Team lead, help schedule meetings, prepare your local information

How to become a State Lead

- Indicate your willingness to serve as a state lead in your Summit registration or email Kayla and Michelle.
- Kayla and Michelle will contact State Leads in October to connect them by email to advocates who have indicated they intend to participate in Hill visits.

Support from the CoP & Resources for Advocates

- The CoP will provide fact sheets that can be used as leave-behind materials describing home visiting in each state.
- The CoP will provide talking points and guidance on how to schedule and conduct Hill Visits.

- The CoP will provide training to advocates in January and will offer a debrief session, as well as be on-hand during February to answer questions at the Summit.
- The CoP will update State Leads an email in October, November, and January to connect all of the state Summit attendees participating in Hill visits to their state teams.

Timeline

- *Now*
 - Book your travel to the 2025 Summit. Plan to arrive a day early, as we have designated time on February 12th from 9am – 3pm for advocates to complete Hill Visits.
 - If you have to schedule your visits later in the week, that's OK.
- *October – November*
 - Volunteer to be a State Lead! Email Michelle and Kayla, or designate your interest in being a State Lead.
 - Michelle and Kayla will begin reaching out to State Leads in mid-October.
 - State leads should begin prep for meetings by updating [the Congressional Tracker](#)
 - The CoP facilitators will begin connecting state teams to one another by email.
- *December*
 - Reach out to schedule your Hill visits.
 - State leads should be the point of contact for any visits they are attending/coordinating on behalf of the group.
 - Otherwise, individual advocates should schedule their own meetings.
 - State teams should check-in by email or meet to divvy up meetings; the aim is to coordinate any outreach so that there are not duplicate meetings or requests to Congressional offices. **Visits don't have to happen at the same time – different groups can meet with staff / Congressional offices, but be sure to coordinate with your state teams to ensure aligned messaging. It is best to divide and conquer talking points to be able to cover more ground in your meetings.**
- *January*
 - After the holidays, reach back out in late January to confirm your appointment with the staff member.
 - Attend the Pre-Summit Hill Visit Prep webinar with the Advocacy & Policy Community of Practice.
- *February 1 – February 11*
 - State leads should confirm with their state advocate teams on the timing and details of Hill visits.
- **February 12: Hill visits!**

Scheduling your visits

- If you don't already know who your Senators and Representatives are, go to the Senate and House websites:
 - Senate www.senate.gov -- look up your Senators by state
 - House www.house.gov -- enter your zip code to find your Representative
- Call or email to request a meeting for February 11 between 9am – 3pm EST
- Email Deputy Chief of Staff, Chief of Staff, Scheduler, or Legislative Assistant
- See [email template resource](#) from the CoP
- Confirm meeting, day, time, and participants names, role, and organization they represent after you schedule the meeting and again the week before the meeting

Logistics at the Capitol

- *Senate Office Buildings*
 - Russell Senate Office Building (SR)
 - 2 Constitution Ave NE
 - Washington, DC 20002
 - Dirksen Senate Office Building (SD)
 - 50 Constitution Ave NE
 - Washington, DC 20002
 - Hart Senate Office Building (SH)
 - 120 Constitution Ave NE
 - Washington, DC 20002
- *House Office Buildings*
 - Rayburn House Office Building (RHOB)
 - 45 Independence Ave SW
 - Washington, DC 20515
 - Cannon House Office Building (CHOB)
 - 27 Independence Ave SE
 - Washington, DC 20003
 - Longworth House Office Building (LHOB)
 - 1 Independence Ave SE,
 - Washington, DC 20003
 - Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. House Office Building
 - 200 C St SW
 - Washington, DC 20024
- Buildings are approximately a **35-minute walk** from the hotel, and it is recommended that you either take an Uber/Lyft/Cab or walk.
- You will go through a security screening process
- Prohibited items: <https://www.uscp.gov/visiting-capitol-hill/regulations-prohibitions/prohibited-items>
- Plan to leave at least **an hour before** your scheduled meeting time to allow for time to go through security and finding the meeting location

- Senate directory (office and phone number):
https://www.senate.gov/general/resources/pdf/senators_phone_list.pdf
- House directory (office and phone number):
<https://www.house.gov/representatives>

Hill Visit Framework

In the Meeting

- You'll spend 20 minutes in any available space
- Most likely with a staffer, though meeting with your members of Congress is ideal!
- Staffers will have varying levels of issue knowledge, so be prepared to spend much of your time telling the story of home visiting in your community.

Be Prepared!

- Have a plan - Introduction lead. Note taker. Picture taker. First sentence sayer.
- Have a short, concise, packaged first sentence.
- Take a picture! The CoP would love to collect photos from Hill visits. Photos can be a fantastic way of staying in touch with the Congressional office after the visit; say thank you and give them a shout-out on social media.
- Follow up!

After the Meeting

- **Email:** Thank, repeat the key takeaway, include at least one link to something you talked about, answer any outstanding questions.
- **Social:** Use the picture and tag the member. An example: It was great to meet with the @SenJohnDoe office this week to talk about the importance of home visiting programs and the need to protect and prioritize funding for child care and early learning. Thank you!
- **Letter to the local paper:** "Dear [Tribune], A group of us from [organization] traveled to Washington DC last week to meet with Rep. John Doe's office. Key Takeaway. Why it's important."

Agenda for your Hill Visits

- Welcome & introductions
- We are here today with two messages.
 - First, we wanted to thank Congress for investing in the MIECHV program, which teams families who need support with trained home visitors like nurses, social workers, and educators.
 - And on behalf of families with young children in our district, we also want to urge Senator John Doe to PROTECT AND PRIORITIZE funding for early learning programs this year.

- Find the connection to the district, to your own story, to the families and children you work with. Bonus if you can center the voices of home visiting providers and families who participate in home visiting services!
 - This work is so important to families in our district. [story]
 - The funding for home visiting has made such a difference. [story]
 - Funding for child care and early learning is so important to the littlest learners in our state. [story]
 - Everywhere I go in our community, I hear stories about families who need the type of support offered by home visiting. [story]
- Thank you so much for your time and meeting with us to talk about how important is to support home visiting programs and why we are all counting on Congress to protect and prioritize funding for child care and early learning this year.
 - Could we take a photo?!

Resources Index for State Teams & State Leads

- Congressional Office Tracker
- Scheduling Template
- Fact sheet for leave behinds
- MIECHV state profiles
- Talking points