National Alliance to
END HOMELESSNESS

Meeting Agenda Template and Worksheet

Below is a sample meeting agenda to help you think through the framework of your meetings with your Members of Congress. If more than one person attends, think about who will chair the meeting and who will cover each agenda item. Use the sample meeting agenda to help you fill in information on the meeting agenda worksheet. Please personalize all sections *(underlined)* below.

MEETING AGENDA

1. **Introductions (BRIEF).**

    ▪ All attendees BRIEFLY introduce themselves and their agency and say one or two sentences about their involvement with the issue of homelessness. If there are more than three people in the meeting, a previously designated chair might want to do the introductions.
    ▪ Mention any relationships you have with acquaintances of your senator or representative.

2. **Thank the senator/representative for something.**

    ▪ *We would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for your dedication to improving polices that will allow us to better address homelessness in (COMMUNITY).*
    ▪ What is the senator's/representative's history of support on this issue?
        o Thank him/her for something specific. For example, co-sponsorship of work to support legislation, voting to increase federal funding for key programs, signing on to a Dear Colleague letter in support of increased funding for key programs, or visiting your program recently.

3. **Purpose of the meeting / Ask(s).**

    ▪ *We are here today to talk to you about the local progress being made in (CITY/STATE) to implement solutions to homelessness, as well as how we can work together to advance our progress. Specifically, we ask that you work in support of (RELEVANT POLICY ISSUE) by (ASK).*
        o Information about current policies is available in your Capitol Hill Day packet and at the Capitol Hill Day Table. The Alliance can help you decide how your Member can have the most impact.

4. **Tell local stories of personal and community-wide success.**

    ▪ Members are more likely to support your request when you can demonstrate how much you have accomplished with the resources you have. This shows that you can put the resources to good use.
    ▪ Share any community or program-related outcome data. Describe what you do and explain why your program works. Relate the policy issues to your community's success.
    ▪ Tell the story of how you (or an individual/family you know) benefited from a local homeless assistance program.
    ▪ Discuss the involvement of interested partners in the community who have come together in your local movement to end homelessness (i.e., business owners, faith-based leaders, local elected and non-elected officials).

5. **Describe how this policy issue will impact homeless people and programs in your community.**
   - Discuss the number and types of individuals, families, youth, or veterans who would benefit from the policy, as well as how they would benefit.
   - The Alliance can help you decide what to say if you are not sure.

6. **Reiterate your ask(s). Be specific!**
   - *We ask that (SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE X)…* (i.e., send a letter, sign a congressional sign-on letter, co-sponsor legislation, vote a certain way, etc.).

7. **Response from Member/staff.**
   - Think about what questions you expect the Member to ask, based on past contact with him/her.
   - If the meeting is with a staff person (not the Member), the staff person will have to ask his/her boss before giving you an answer. Ask when you can follow up with him/her.
   - If the Member of Congress is there, you should ask, "Who on your staff can I follow up with?"
   - If, in response to your specific ask, you get a …
     - **Yes:** Say: "Wonderful!"
     - **Maybe:** Ask: "Is there any additional information I can provide to help you decide?"
     - **No:** Ask: "Is there a reason why you will not do this? Is there any information I can provide that might address some of your concerns?" (This is an excellent opportunity to keep the lines of communication open.)

8. **Closing.**
   - Summarize any commitments made by the Member/staff.
   - Repeat any questions you need to answer in follow up that you couldn't answer in the meeting.
   - Thank them, and ask when and with whom you should follow up.
   - Invite them to see a local program next time they are at home.
   - Leave the office a Pop-Up House to serve as a tangible reminder of your meeting and key ask.

General Talking Points (Please see Capitol Hill Day: Congressional Talking Points sheet in Hill Day Packets for talking points specific to our Policy Priorities!)

- *STATEMENT OF CONCERN*:
  - Use local data to describe the scope of homelessness in your community.
- *STATEMENT OF THE VALUE:* Why does the policy issue matter?
  - *We use this critical funding to do (X).* Describe the success of local initiatives/programs. *Explain how you are using CoC and ESG funds to implement best practices to quickly and effectively respond to people's housing crises.*
  - *With increased resources, our community would be able to do (X). (AND/OR) With fewer resources, we will not be able to do (X).*
- *STATEMENT OF THE SOLUTION*:
  - Restate the policy request and use the talking points available in your Capitol Hill Day packet to describe how it impacts your community.

MEETING AGENDA WORKSHEET

Meeting with _____

1. **Introductions (BRIEF)**

2. **Thank you**

_____

_____

3. **Purpose of the meeting / Make the Ask(s)**

_____

_____

_____

Specifically, we would like the Senator / Representative to:

_____

_____

This is important nationally because:

_____

_____

_____

4. **Tell stories of local success**

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Describe how this policy issue will impact homeless people and programs in YOUR community

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Reiterate the ask(s)

We ask that Senator / Representative _____:

_____

_____

7. Response and Questions

Think about what questions you expect the Member to have, based on past support of specific issues or past contact with him or her.

_____

_____

_____

Think about how you will respond to questions the Member or staff might have.

_____

_____

8. Closing

Thank you for

_____

Summarize any commitments made by the Member/congressional staff.

Repeat any questions you need to answer in follow up (that you could not answer in the meeting) and any additional information you need to provide.