

Chapter 9

How to Communicate With Members of Congress

There are many ways to communicate with policymakers: letters, postcards, e-mail, phone calls, faxes, and face-to-face meetings. Advocates often wonder which method is most effective and whether all are counted equally. Each Congressional office has its own calculus and system for handling and “counting” different communications. Generally, each policymaker gets a regular report from staff regarding how many letters, postcards, e-mails, phone calls, and faxes have been received on various issues and what positions constituents are advocating. No matter what method you use, the most important thing is to ensure your voice is heard.

All offices handle constituent communication differently. Therefore, you might want to call each of your Members' offices and inquire on their preferred method of constituent input.

For the most part, the information below and the tips and guidelines found in the next chapter apply to all forms of written communication, including faxes, e-mails, and regular letters.

Proper Forms of Address for Members of Congress

Members of the United States House of Representatives

The Honorable [First Name Last Name of Member of Congress]
 United States House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative [Last Name of Member]:

United States Senators

The Honorable [First Name Last Name of Member of Congress]
 United States Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator [Last Name of Member]:

Also, you can reach your Members of Congress in the following ways:

- Phone through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202/224-3121.
- E-mail your U.S. Representative through:
<https://writerep.house.gov/writerep/welcome.shtml>
- E-mail your two U.S. Senators through: <http://www.senate.gov>
- Visit www.rehabnurse.org for alerts on priority issues, template letters to send federal policymakers, and links and information about how to contact your Congressional delegation.
- Look in the “Blue” pages of your phone book, which have local, state, and federal government contact information.