

MN Second Chance Coalition

2022 SCDOTH

Legislative Visit Guide



Thank you for volunteering to meet with your legislators as part of our Second Chance Day on the Hill! This document is to help you prepare for that visit, **whether you are a constituent or visit leader**. Please read through to learn what to expect in these visits.

Before the visit

Prepare. Read through this document to understand what to expect, read through our bill summary packet to get grounded in our legislative priorities, and read through the legislator bios to get familiar with your legislators.

Prioritize. Your time with your legislators will be quick, and you may be sharing that meeting with other constituents in your district. But, it is your time to talk about what's most important to you. What is the one story you want to tell, or the one issue you want your legislator to respond to? Think about what's most important to you, and be prepared to speak for a minute or two on that.

Practice and plan. If it helps you feel comfortable, jot down notes about what you're going to say. Practice telling your story, and making the ask that your legislators support the bill(s) that you care most about. Think about what you want to have next to you during your visit. Get a glass of water, a cup of coffee, something to take notes on. Make sure you have the Zoom link handy and your device charged.

Post on social media. Boost the impact of SCDOTH by posting about your upcoming visits. Tag your legislators and us (@MN2ndChance), and the hashtag #mnleg and #MN2ndChance to get more eyes on these issues. There's also a key hearing in the House Public Safety Committee on Tue, 3/1, at 1pm, on some really great legislation, including giving young people the right to an attorney during a police interrogation.

Pop in early and prioritize some more. Visit leaders -- please arrive in the Zoom meeting space around 15 minutes ahead of the meeting time. And constituents, please make use of that extra time. Ask visit leads any questions you have, and meet other constituents who are in your visit. This is also a time to prioritize who should speak when. Constituents with a personal connection to a bill (for example, someone who has been denied a job due to an expungeable offense on their record) should speak before someone who is passionate about the issues, but who is not personally impacted.

During the visit

Be polite, and confident. When the meeting starts, thank your legislators for their time. But remember, it's your time, too! Legislators' work for your district is better when they know what's important to the people in their district. They know this, and will likely do what they can to make you feel comfortable sharing.

Introduce yourself and the Second Chance Coalition. Let your legislators know your name and that you're a constituent. Make sure someone mentions that you (or, for a group visit, you all) are there as part of the Minnesota Second Chance Coalition, a membership organization working for a system of justice that supports all involved in living to their fullest potential.

Tell your story. You've prepared. Now deliver. And, in a group visit, try to make sure that everyone with a personal connection to a bill or bills has a chance to share.

Make the asks. Ask your legislators if they will support the bill(s) that matter most to you. If they will, great, but don't stop there! Ask if they have any questions or suggestions for what you can do as an organized constituent to help that support make a difference. If they don't support the bill(s), take the no with grace, but follow up! Ask "why not?" and "what would help you get to 'yes'?"

Take notes. Especially where your legislators have ideas about what we can organize around to help a bill be successful, or have ideas about how to turn 'no' to 'yes,' make sure you're taking notes.

Visit leads are there to help. With so much good work to support, it's likely that constituents won't touch on every bill that MNSCC is trying to help along. So, visit leads, please make sure to pass the bill summary packet along to the legislators. Please also ensure that the asks are made, take good notes on how the visits go, summarize any commitments that were made during the meeting, and thank the legislators again for their time.

After the visit

Boost the impact. Follow up on any posts you made (remember to tag your legislators and @MN2ndChance, use the hashtag #mnleg, #MN2ndChance) and let folks know how it went!

Follow up with us. We'd love to hear how it went, and what information you learned! Please email notes from your visits, questions or ideas from legislators, or ideas for how MNSCC can make changes to make this experience better, to Lindsay Turner (she/her), Legislative Affairs Committee Co-Chair, lindsayturner@mnsecondchance.org.

Follow up with your legislators. Feel free to continue the conversation and connection, especially if there were things that you can do to help these bills have success.

Join us again! Sign up for our legislative update and action email list [here](#).

Last-minute questions or visit cancellations?

Zoom or other technology issue? Text or call Emily Terrell (she/her): 612-805-1874

Have to cancel your visit? Contact Deanna Guillford (she/her): dgulliford@gesmn.org, or 612-799-2902

Thank you for your time, and your support of MNSCC!
