

# Legislative Toolbox



## Finding Information at the Capitol

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**T**he most valuable sources of information at the State Capitol are the personal contacts (legislators, staff and fellow lobbyists) you develop as you go about your work. You will be surprised at what you can learn.

But what if you don't or can't spend much time in residence at the Capitol? Here are a few suggestions:

### Contact Your Personal Legislators

Introduce yourself in person, by phone or by letter. Let them know your key issues and concerns — and ask them to keep you informed.

### Contact Your Legislators' Staff

Some of the most important people in the legislative process are legislative assistants and committee administrators (if the member is a committee chair). Each legislator has a legislative assistant, although an individual's services may be shared by one or two other legislators. Legislative assistants are committed to their legislators' efforts - and constituent services are always at the top of the priority list. They can solve many problems and answer countless questions for you. They know legislators' schedules and can arrange meetings and will keep you informed on items of specific interest. They will also send you bill and amendment copies, plus other information regarding the Legislature.

### Use the Legislative Web site ([www.leg.mn.us](http://www.leg.mn.us)).

You will find an extremely well-prepared, organized and maintained Web site with links to all branches of state government, legislative committees, hearing schedules, etc. You can also read and download copies of bills that have been introduced and track the status of legislation.

### Contact the House and Senate Information Offices

Call the House Information Office at (651) 296-2146 or 1-800-657-3550 and ask to be put on the mailing list so that you can receive their weekly news magazine (Session Weekly), or the daily news updates (Session Daily), which contain a wealth of information.

Call the Senate Information Office at (651) 296-0504 or 1-888-234-1112 and ask to be put on their mailing list for their weekly news magazine (Session Briefly), which also contains a wealth of information.

### Call the House Chief Clerk's or the Senate Index Office

These people take great pride in seeing to it that you receive every bit of information you need to make your work with the legislature as easy as possible. These folks will be happy to give you bill numbers, bill authors, bill status and much more information on happenings in the Legislature. You can reach the Chief Clerk's office at (651) 296-2314 or the Senate Index office at (651) 296-6646.

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## **Watch Committee Hearings and Floor Sessions**

House Television Services and Senate Media Services provide broadcasts of legislative committee and floor proceedings on Twin Cities Public Television Channel 17 and various cable systems in greater Minnesota. House and Senate coverage is also available online. For more information go to [www.house.leg.state.mn.us/htv/schedule.asp](http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/htv/schedule.asp) for House coverage and [www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/media/index.php?ls=85](http://www.senate.leg.state.mn.us/media/index.php?ls=85) for Senate coverage.

## **Visit the Capitol**

Our Capitol is one of the most beautiful in the country and it's an exciting place to visit. Free public tours are provided by the MN Historical Society. Guided tours are available and occur every hour. Reservations are needed for groups of 10 or more. For more information, contact (651) 296-2881.

