

## **RAC-PA 2023 Campaign to End Gun Violence**

- **Guide for Planning Powerful Legislative Meetings**

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### **Setting Up Your Legislative Meeting:**

- **Appoint a legislative meeting captain from your congregation and get a team of people to work with them.** The captain will oversee the congregation’s or community’s legislative meeting and be the main point of contact with RAC-PA and other congregations’ captains in your legislative district. But the captain does not do it alone, they work with a team of people to plan, invite other members to participate, and conduct the legislative meeting.
- **By Wednesday 9/27, captain will sign-up your congregation meet with your legislators.** In order to sign up, you will need to first request edit access and receive approval to the [RAC-PA GVP Legislative Meetings](#) spreadsheet from RAC-PA’s organizer Rachel Beck. If you do not know how to do that, please email Rachel [rbeck@rac.org](mailto:rbeck@rac.org).
- **Get in touch with the captains from other congregations or communities in your district who signed up.** RAC-PA is holding only one meeting with each legislator, so there will be many meetings with more than one congregation participating. Please discuss with the other captains:
  - your preferred location for the meeting- it can be either a synagogue or in the local office of the legislator- whichever is most convenient for you and the legislator.
  - Who is responsible for the following roles:
    - scheduling the meeting with the legislator’s office
    - communicating the date, time & location of the meeting, pre-meeting, debrief meeting, and any necessary updates with everyone attending
    - coordinating the agenda, talking points & speaking roles for the meeting
    - running the meeting
    - keeping track of the time at the meeting

- making sure everyone has registered through the RAC's registration link PRIOR to the meeting
  - sending a thank you follow-up email to the legislator & their staff who you were in contact with.
- **Schedule the meeting with your legislator.** Enter your address at <https://rac.org/PAlegistor> to find the contact information for your legislator's office. Call the office and ask for the name, email address or extension to reach the scheduler. Email or call the scheduler to set up a meeting with the legislator. See below for a sample email. The location of the meeting
  - **If you are not able to speak with the scheduler directly, follow up consistently with the scheduler.** Call the scheduler every two days until you get an answer. If a Rabbi or anyone else in your congregation has a relationship with the legislator, then you should have them contact the legislator directly following up to your request.

### Preparing for Your Meeting:

- **Get & use the registration link for your meeting.** Reach out to Rachel [rbeck@rac.org](mailto:rbeck@rac.org) to get a unique registration link for your meeting. Make sure that all the people attending the meeting register. That way, RAC-PA will have a total of how many people attended the meetings so we can communicate that to the coalition and to the House and Senate leadership.
- **Decide on the agenda & roles for the meeting.** Use the RAC-PA [Sample Script](#). You may have more people at your meeting than there are roles available. That is OK. You should let people know that showing up at the meeting shows our power and has an impact, even if not everyone speaks at the meeting.
- **Set a time for participants to meet before the meeting with your legislator.** A pre-meeting is necessary to go over the meeting agenda & everyone's roles. Everyone should agree to and be reminded to *stick to the plan*. The pre-meeting can take place days in advance, or it can take place immediately before the meeting with the legislator. If it takes place days beforehand, it is still advisable to meet 10-15 minutes before the legislative meeting to remind people about the agenda & their roles.
- **Set a time for a debrief meeting for participants,** either immediately or very soon after your legislative meeting, while memory of the meeting is still fresh.

### Debriefing Your Meeting

- **Hold a debrief meeting.** Have someone take notes. Ask each participant to reflection on what went well, what could be different next time, and what they learned and/or are taking away from the meeting. Celebrate your successes and give praise to those who played roles in planning and speaking at the meeting. Identify any needed follow up to questions or for resources, and who will be responsible for getting those to the legislator/their staff. Share these notes with Rachel [rbeck@rac.org](mailto:rbeck@rac.org).
- **Confirm that everyone who participated registered at the registration link from RAC.**
- **Confirm that the meeting happened & that you sent your notes to Rachel in the [RAC-PA GVP Legislative Meetings](#) spreadsheet.**
- **Write & send a thank you note to the state legislator and their staff.**

### **Sample Email to Scheduler:**

I am writing on behalf of [congregation or community name(s)] and the Pennsylvania Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-PA) to request a meeting with [Senator/House Member] [Name of Legislator] about the Common Agenda to End Gun Violence sometime during [week or weeks you are available to meet].

[[congregation or community name(s)] has [xx families] members and is part of RAC-PA, the Reform Jewish Movement's statewide social justice effort, representing 40,000 Jews at 40 congregations from 25 counties across PA.

We look forward to talking to the [Senator/House Member] about the four bills in the Common Agenda to end gun violence: Extreme Risk Protection Orders (HB 1018), Lost or Stolen Gun Reporting (HB 338), Universal Background Checks (HB 714), and Safe Storage of Firearms (HB 731). We expect [number of people who will attend – this could be a range] constituents from our [congregation/community] to attend the meeting. We are happy to meet at our synagogue or the [Senator's/House Member's] office, whichever is more convenient for you.

Thank you in advance. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Address, if you are a constituent]

[Phone number]