

# How to Host a Legislative Brewery Tour

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## Guide to Hosting a Local Legislator at your Brewery

Allowing members of the Legislature and their staff to see firsthand the vitality and importance of the craft brewing industry will generate a supportive voice for the CCBA in our ongoing effort to protect and defend our industry. Building a relationship with your representatives also gives you the opportunity to ask for their help and assistance in times of policy, zoning, regulatory or other need.

### A Brief Introduction to the California Legislature:

The California Legislature is composed of the Senate (upper House) and the Assembly (lower house) consisting of 40 and 80 Members, respectively. Members of the Assembly are elected for two-year terms, while Senators are elected for four-year terms, with one-half of the membership elected every two years.

Assembly and Senate districts are apportioned on the basis of population. Out of 38+ million Californians, each Member of the Assembly represents approximately 475,000 people, and each Senator represents approximately 950,000 people.

Each individual in the State is represented by both a Senator and an Assemblymember based on where they live.

The California Legislature is a full time legislature meaning they convene year- round and review and vote on legislation with periodic breaks throughout the year.

Typically the legislature holds committee hearings and floor session votes Monday- Thursday during the weeks they are in session. **Fridays through Sunday legislators normally return home to their district.** This is usually the best time to host a tour or your brewery.

### Important Dates in the Legislative calendar:

<u>January:</u>	Legislature reconvenes
<u>June 15th:</u>	Budget bill must be passed and sent to the Governor
<u>July 2nd/3rd:</u>	Summer recess begins
<u>August:</u>	Legislature is back in Session
<u>August 31st or Mid-September:</u>	Depending on the year, the legislative session ends.

A complete list of legislative dates can be viewed here:  
<http://assembly.ca.gov/legislativedeadlines>

# How to Contact your Legislator and Schedule a visit.:

## Step 1: Identify Your Legislative Representatives

To search for your representative you can enter your brewery's street address at this website:

<http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>

You will be directed to all the names and contact information for the state legislators in your district.

## Step 2: Identify the Legislator's Scheduler and send them an Invitation

Once you find your Assemblymember and Senator you will want to contact their local district offices (hours typically are 9am-5pm, M-F) and ask who handles the legislators' scheduling requests.

This individual may be located out of the district office or the member's capitol office depending on the legislator's staff structure. Once you have their name, email and correct phone number send them a formal invitation via email first.

## **Correspondence with the Legislative Office:**

- Correspondence needs to include who will be part of the visit – names and affiliations – and a short description of why you want to meet with the legislator
- Email should include multiple dates you are available to host the legislator, offer 3-4hr time blocks and let them choose what works best for his/her schedule. **BE flexible & patient**- it can often take weeks to finalize a date and time with your legislator because of conflicting schedules.
- Typically an appointment with a legislator lasts 30 mins to one hour so if your brewery tour lasts longer be specific in the estimated length of time you would like to host the legislator but know that depending on their schedule that day it may be shortened.

If they haven't responded to your email after a week feel free to give them a call and follow up on your request. Most importantly **BE POLITE**, legislative schedulers receive countless meeting and event requests daily and need time to prioritize and schedule these meetings.

Being flexible and understanding is important to cultivating a good relationship with your local representative. The good news is legislative offices enjoy touring small businesses in their district and it's an opportunity for them to hear directly from you- a business leader in their community!

*Please also keep CCBA informed of the scheduling arrangements, don't hesitate to call the CCBA office during the process for assistance.*

## **Legislators' Availability Throughout the Year:**

- Legislators usually schedule appointments with constituents in their local district on **Fridays** when they have returned from Sacramento. Have a list of Friday times that you, and anyone attending the meeting with you (i.e. any additional brewery staff you would like to be there during the legislator's visit.) can make.
- During the month of **July** the legislature is in recess and legislators will be back in their district, this is also a great time to schedule a brewery tour with the member and their staff.
- It varies each year but the legislative session typically ends the **last week of August** or the **middle of September**. After this they have more time available to meet with constituents and tour local businesses.

\* Note if your legislator is up for reelection in November the Fall months can be a very busy time so be sure to give the scheduler advanced notice if requesting a visit.

## Hosting a Legislator at your Brewery: Do's And Don'ts

1. Check out their website and get on their email list. This will keep you informed of what is important to them, what they see is important to their constituents and when they are having town-hall meetings, meet-and-greets, etc.
2. **Parking and Directions:** while working out the details with the Legislators' staff be sure to direct them on where the best parking is around the brewery and include any specific directions they may need in order to find the brewery.
3. **Confirm the day before** not just the appointment, but with whom you will be meeting. Legislators' schedules are constantly changing, and things may need to shift last-minute.
4. Make sure **you have enough handouts** and business cards available to give the legislator and one or two of their staff.
5. **Remember: You're the expert!** Legislators and staff usually know little or nothing about our issues. Be sure to explain all acronyms, programs, and the brewing process in full detail.
6. **Be Camera Ready....** During the visit take pictures with the legislator and post to social media (Facebook, twitter, etc.) or even include a recap of the visit in a brewery newsletter. Feel free to share the pictures with the legislator's office, as they may post the pictures to their own website and social media pages.
7. **Follow up!** After the meeting, be sure to send an e-mail or a hand-written note to those who attended the meeting, thanking them for their time. If there were any questions that needed follow-up, or additional materials you wanted to provide to them, this is a good time to do that as well.
8. Inform CCBA staff of any pertinent issues discussed.
9. Invite the legislator and his staff to any large community events your brewery is hosting-anniversary parties, events that benefit local charities, etc.

## Gift Reporting: What you Need to Know

During the brewery tour you may want to have the legislator sample some of the beers on tap, and you may also feel compelled to send the legislator back with a few bottles of beer. Don't be offended if the legislator doesn't accept the gift, there are many rules governing the gifts elected officials receive.

By law legislators and their staff are required to report any gifts worth a certain monetary value to the California Fair Political Practices Commission. Each elected official must complete a *Disclosure on Statement of Economic Interests* each year reporting gifts he/or she received. The provision states that receipt of gifts totaling \$50 or more from a single source during the reporting period must be disclosed. Typically if the gift's fair market value is less than \$10 dollars it's not necessary to disclose it. Most organizations "over report" and will send a letter to the legislator letting them know the value of the gift even if it's as small as \$5 dollars.

1. You don't have to send them home with beer, and don't be offended if they don't accept the beer.
2. If you do- ask the legislative staff how best to follow up with the reporting, most legislative schedulers track their legislator's gifts throughout the year and they may be the best people to talk with. Contact the CCBA for additional assistance and sample reporting letters. Call us at (916) 228-4260.