



# How To Host A Legislative Brewery Tour

## A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE:

The California Legislature is composed of the Senate (upper house) and the Assembly (lower house) consisting of 80 and 40 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.

Check out your legislator's 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.

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 of your brewery. While you can request a visit during their normal "district days" (Fridays, Saturdays). The time of year they are actively looking to schedule tours and visits are during the spring, summer and fall recess periods.

## HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR AND SCHEDULE A VISIT:

### Step 1: Identify Your Legislative Representatives



1. To search for your representative, you can enter your brewery's street address at this website: <http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>
2. You will be directed to all the names and contact information for the state legislators in your district.
3. If your operation consists of several location, there is a chance you are represented by more than one ASM/SEN. If you are targeting a specific legislator, be sure to submit the address that falls within the legislator's district (for example, Bear Republic has two tap rooms in Sonoma County – one in Assembly District 2 and the other in District 4). District boundaries can be a sensitive issue for neighboring legislators.

## 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 is an easy call and most offices will give you the contact information over the phone.

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.

1. Correspondence needs to include who will be part of the visit – names and titles – and a short description of why you want to meet with the legislator. This can be as simple as “I would be honored to host Sen. \_\_\_\_\_ for a visit at my brewery” or “I want to speak with Assemblymember \_\_\_\_\_ about some issues we’ve been experiencing and would love to give her a tour of my business while we’re at it!” The CCBA can help draft this message with you if you need help!
2. Submit your request a month in advance of your desired meeting. This give both you and the staff members ample time to schedule.
3. 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.
4. Typically, an appointment with a legislator lasts 30 min 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 keep CCBA staff informed of the scheduling arrangements, don't hesitate to call the CCBA office during the process for assistance.*

#### **HOSTING A LEGISLATOR AT YOUR BREWERY:**

Here are a few tips to keep in mind for hosting a legislator at your brewery:

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. Make sure you have enough handouts and business cards available to give the legislator and one or two of their staff.
4. 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.
5. **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.
6. **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.
7. **Inform CCBA** staff immediately of any pertinent issues discussed. This is



- a huge asset to our Government Affairs program.
8. Invite the legislator and his staff to any large community events your brewery is hosting anniversary parties, events that benefit local charities, etc.

It's generally a good idea to check out your legislator's 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.

### CAN I GIVE AWAY BEER TO A LEGISLATOR?

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.

In summary:

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 if needed.

### LET CCBA KNOW WHEN YOU CONNECT WITH YOUR REPRESENTATIVE:

Please let us know when you've made contact with any political representative (Senate or assembly members or congressional members) [by filling out the form](#)

January 9, 2020



[located on the CCBA's members only section of our website](#). Knowing that you've made a connection with a member of the legislator support our efforts at the state Capitol to fight for your interests. Make sure you provide any pictures you take with California state legislators so we can share this on our social media pages as well and help build our collective voice at the state Capitol.

Thank you in advance for support the important legislative advocacy work your association provides.

## WE ARE HERE TO HELP!

Please never hesitate to ask CCBA for some help or guidance should you hit any snags in the process or would like a step-by-step walk through of what to expect.

Call us: 916-228-4260

Email us: [info@californiacraftbeer.com](mailto:info@californiacraftbeer.com)