



# 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 members 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 based on population. Each member of the Assembly represents approximately 495,000 people, and each Senator represents approximately 989,000 people. Each individual in the State is represented by both a Senator and an Assembly member 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.

**During the legislative session, legislators normally return home to their district on Fridays and Saturdays.** 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 and Saturdays), they are also actively looking to schedule tours and visits 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 of the state legislators in your district.
3. If your operation consists of several locations, there is a chance you are represented by more than one Assembly or Senate member. If you are targeting a specific legislator, be sure to submit the business address that falls within the legislator's district.

## Step 2: Send your Legislator an Invitation

Once you find your Assemblymember and Senator you will want to contact their local district offices and request a meeting. Most legislators have an email form you can complete on their website, or you can call the district office or the member's Capitol office listed on their website.

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 Senator \_\_\_\_\_ 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."
2. Email should include multiple dates you are available to host the legislator and offer a few different time blocks so they can choose what works best for their schedule. Because of conflicting schedules, it can take a few weeks to finalize a date and time with your legislator.
3. Typically, an appointment with a legislator lasts from 30-60 minutes. If your brewery tour lasts longer, be specific in the estimated length of time you would like to host the legislator.
4. If they haven't responded to your email after a week feel free to give them a call and follow up on your request. Be flexible and understanding, legislative schedulers receive many meeting and event requests daily and need time to prioritize and schedule these meetings.

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 as a business leader in their community!

*Please keep CCBA staff informed of the scheduling arrangements, and 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. **Provide parking and directions.** Let them know in advance of your meeting where to park around the brewery and include any specific directions to find the brewery.
2. **Confirm your meeting.** Contact the legislative staff the day before your scheduled meeting to confirm who will be attending the meeting. Legislators' schedules are constantly changing, and things may need to shift at the last minute.
3. **Have business cards** or any handouts available to give to the legislator and their staff.
4. **You are the expert!** Legislators and staff may not know very much about our issues, so explain your business model, the manufacturing process, and the challenges you face.
5. **Be camera ready!** During the visit take pictures with the legislator and post them to social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Feel free to share the pictures with the legislator's office, as they may post the pictures to their website and social media pages.
6. **Follow up!** After the meeting, be sure to e-mail those who attended, thanking them for their time. This is also a good time to follow up on any questions or provide additional materials.
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 their staff** to any large community events your brewery is hosting anniversary parties, events that benefit local charities, etc.

## Can I Give 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.

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 Legislator:

Please let us know when you have contacted any political representative by emailing us at [info@californiacraftbeer.com](mailto:info@californiacraftbeer.com). Knowing that you've made a connection with a member of the legislature supports 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 supporting your association's important legislative advocacy work.

## We Are Here to Help!

Please never hesitate to ask CCBA for help or guidance through the process or would like a step-by-step walk-through of what to expect from your meeting.

Call us: 916-228-4260

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