

Navigating the Capitol Hill

Finding the offices

For all Capitol Hill offices, you will have to pass through security. Don't carry any items (even a pocket knife) that may be suspect.

House Office Buildings:

For House offices, you can tell the building and floor by the room number.

Any three-digit room number

Cannon (CHOB), First St. and Independence Ave. SE

The first digit indicates the floor.

Example: 327 CHOB is on the third floor of Cannon.

Four digit rooms beginning with "1"

Longworth (LHOB), Independence and New Jersey Aves. SE

The second digit indicates the floor.

Example: 1223 LHOB is on the second floor of Longworth.

Four digit rooms beginning with "2"

Rayburn (RHOB), Independence Ave. and South Capitol St. SW

The second digit indicates the floor.

Example: 2449 RHOB is on the fourth floor of Rayburn.

Basement room numbers in Longworth and Rayburn begin with "B". No House members have offices on those floors but committee staffs do.

Senate Office Buildings:

For Senate office buildings, you will need to know the building as well as the room number. In all buildings, the first digit indicates the floor.

Dirksen (DSOB) First St. and Constitution Ave. NE

Three digit room numbers preceded by "SD".

Example: SD 145 is on the first floor of Dirksen.

Hart (HSOB) Second St. and Constitution Ave. NE

Three digit room numbers preceded by "SH".

Example: SH 320 is on the third floor of Hart.

Russell (RSOB) Delaware and Constitution Ave. NE

Three digit room numbers preceded by "SR".

Example: SR 216 is on the second floor of Russell.

If you don't know the office number of your Senator or Representative, look for an elevator. Usually there is a listing of House or Senate offices posted nearby. Many have directional maps with room numbers.

Once you have located the congressional office you want to visit, tell the person at the front desk where you are from and who you want to visit. If the member is not available, ask for the staff person who handles transportation issues.

Your meeting should be short – 10 to 15 minutes – so plan what you will say ahead of time. Ask for his/her business card and offer yours as well. More tips are listed in the next section.

If the person you need to see is unavailable, leave your business card and any other materials you want them to see with the receptionist at the front desk. If you've successfully met with a member or staff, send a follow up thank you letter. (See Section 4 for sample letter.)

Congressional staff roles

Each member of Congress has staff to assist him/her during a term of office. To be most effective in communicating with Congress, it is helpful to know the titles and principle functions of key staff. The titles may vary from office to office, but the functions are similar.

Administrative Assistant or Chief of Staff

The Administrative Assistant (AA) reports directly to the member of Congress. He/she usually has overall responsibility for evaluating the political ramifications of legislative proposals and constituent requests. The AA is generally also in charge of overall office operations, including the assignment of work and supervision of key staff.

Legislative Director, Senior Legislative Assistant or Legislative Coordinator

The Legislative Director is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations on the pro's and con's of specific issues. In most congressional offices, there are several Legislative Assistants (LA), and responsibilities are assigned to staff with particular expertise. For example, an office may include a separate LA for health issues, one for transportation, environment and energy issues, one for budget and taxation issues, etc.

Press Secretary or Communications Director

The Press Secretary's responsibility is to build and maintain lines of communication between the member, his/her constituents, other members of Congress and the general public. The Press Secretary is expected to know the benefits, demands, and special requirements of print and electronic media and how to effectively promote the member's views or positions on specific issues.

Appointment Secretary, Personal Secretary or Scheduler

The Appointment Secretary is usually responsible for allocating a member's time among the many demands that arise from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements, constituent requests, etc. The Appointment Secretary may also be responsible for making travel arrangements, arranging speaking engagements, setting up visits to the district, etc.

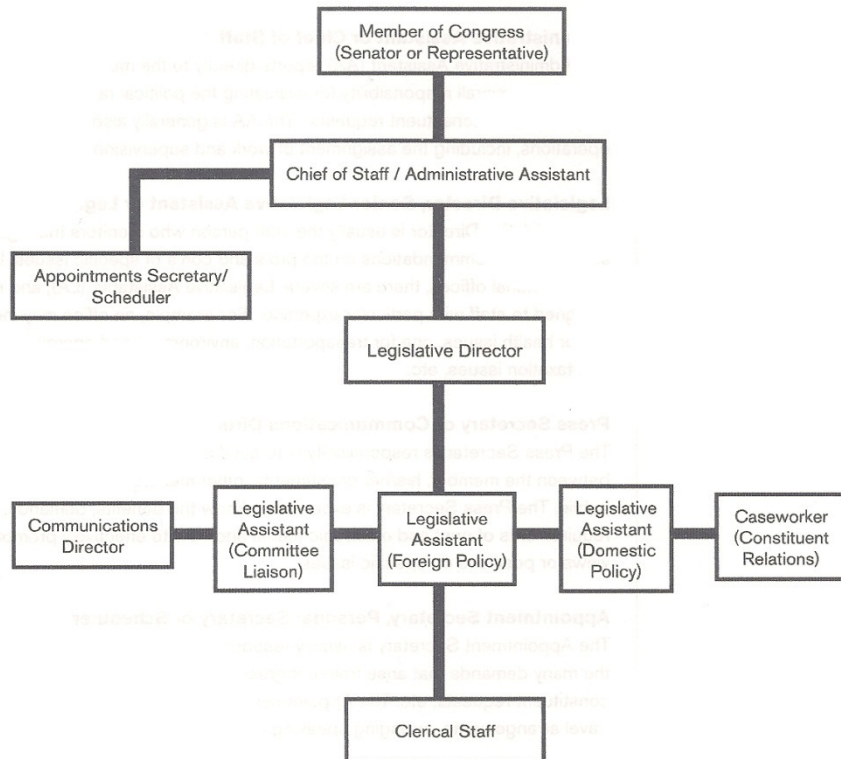
Caseworker

The Caseworker is the staff member usually assigned to help with constituent requests by preparing responses for the member's signature. The Caseworker may also help resolve problems constituents have with federal agencies or programs such as Medicare, Social Security, veterans benefits, etc.

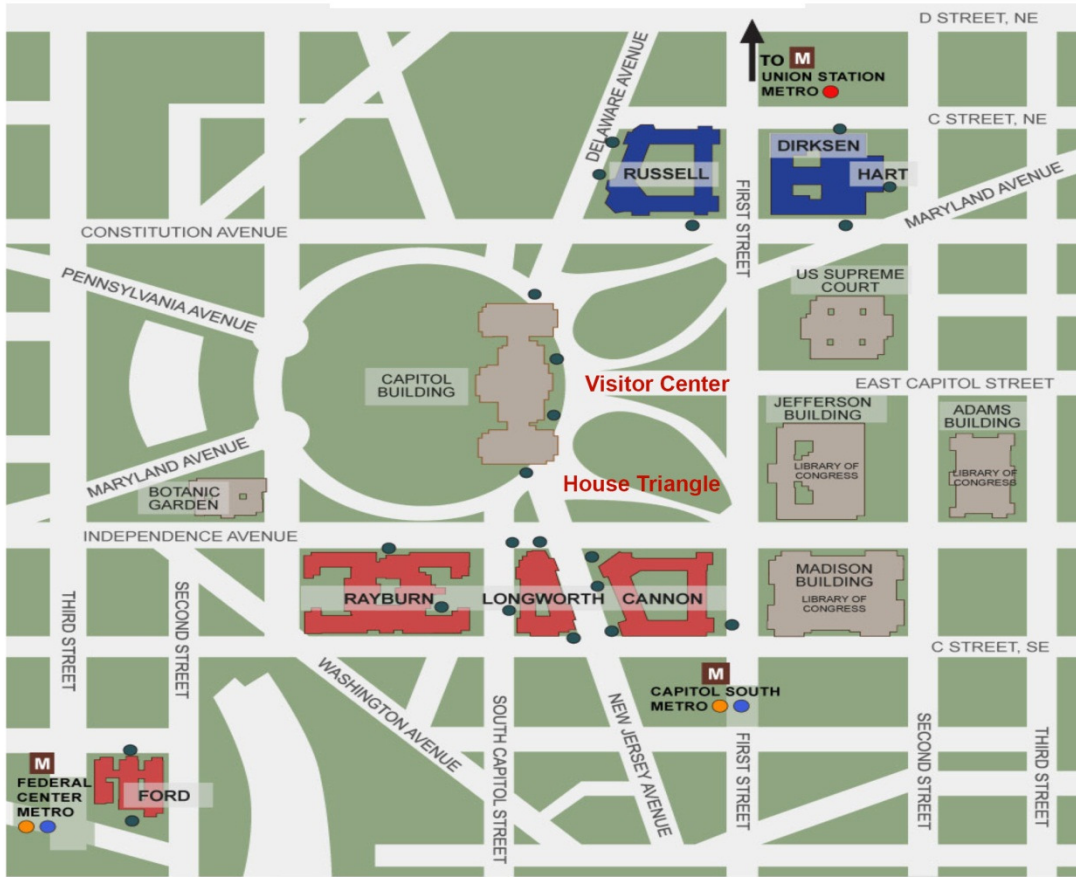
Other Staff Positions

Other positions may include Executive Assistant, Legislative Correspondent, Executive Secretary, Office Manager, or Receptionist.

Congressional Staff



Capitol Hill Complex Map



- **House office building** (Rayburn, Longworth, Cannon, Ford)
- **Senate office building** (Russell, Dirksen, Hart)
- **Building entrances**
- M Metro station**
 - Red line
 - Blue line
 - Orange line

Navigating Capitol Hill

House and Senate Buildings: Senate Office Buildings (Russell, Dirksen, Hart) are north of the Capitol. Union Station is the closest Metro station. House Office Buildings (Rayburn, Longworth, and Cannon) are south of the Capitol. Capitol South is the closest Metro station. Capitol South is the Metro station to take to the Tuesday Congressional Breakfast in Rayburn HOB (Room B 338-339).

Getting to meetings: Do your best to get to meetings a few minutes early, and let staff know your group has arrived. If you get separated from your group and are running late, call ahead to your next appointment and let them know. Call the Capitol Switchboard (202-224-3121) to reach offices.

Quick Tip: The Hill has ears! Remember you are generally surrounded by staff and members of Congress in elevators and hallways. Stay positive in your comments about your meetings.