

What to Expect CDHA Legislative/Lobbying Events

CDHA has several organized advocacy events – called lobby days - providing opportunities for CDHA members to interact with legislators (lawmakers) and the legislative process. They may or may not occur every year but are particularly important when CDHA has sponsored a bill or is opposing a bill.

Below are examples of two types of events with an explanation of what a member may expect.

Please note that it may be prudent to block off the date when it is announced. Traditionally Capitol visits have been in March due to the availability of legislators. District visits may occur in October during National Dental Hygiene Month.

Capitol Lobby Day

This event takes place in and around our California State Capitol, usually on a Monday. Members may need to travel and potentially stay the night in Sacramento.

Prior to the event there may be a group meeting via zoom. Talking points and “leave behind” documents are introduced. This is a time for Q & A. At other times, information may be posted under “Advocacy” on cdha.org.

Behind the scenes, staff of Aaron Read & Associates (ARA) will be making appointments for the members, with the legislator who represents them or with a legislator important to the issue we are lobbying. The member may have an appointment with their representative in the Assembly, the Senate, or both. CDHA members will need to be flexible as often meeting time(s) maybe confirmed at the last minute.

Before setting out for the Capitol or Legislator’s office, a preliminary orientation meeting is held in the office of ARA across the street from the Capitol. Here we go over talking points, understand what is happening in the legislature that day and review the meeting list. There may also be an afternoon debriefing reception at that location.

With appointments confirmed, the member will be expected to arrive at the designated office early or on-time, but never late. They may have no more than 15 minutes with either the legislator or a staff person. Meetings with staff can be highly productive as they are appointed to advise the legislator on various issue areas, ask questions and relay detailed information to the legislator.

Before, after, or between meetings, a CDHA member may be able to sit in on or view a Legislative Committee meeting and experience their government at work. If not able to attend

the live meeting, committee sessions are often broadcast to off-site locations to be seen on monitors in auxiliary office buildings.

CDHA members are asked to take photos with their legislator and or staff. Many members and legislators have taken part in these events over the years and feel it very much worth their time and effort. Photos are shared on social media. The meetings produce great networking opportunities.

District Lobby Day

This event takes place in legislators' district offices throughout the state. In this case, the CDHA member will visit the District Office of the Legislator. Senators have the largest districts which often require the member to travel quite some distance. However, Assembly Districts Offices may be not be convenient either. Components can locate District Offices in advance and try to find members living close by.

This event is usually scheduled on a Friday when most legislators have left Sacramento and returned to their home districts. Even if the legislator is not present or able to meet, district staff should be available. These staffers are extremely knowledgeable and listening to constituents is part of their job description.

Legislators really want to hear from their district constituents. District Lobby Days are held during the fall between legislative sessions. It is during this time that planning for the next session takes place and CDHA may need to find a legislator to introduce a bill or the legislature to hear about an issue important to CDHA.

ARA works to secure appointments for CDHA members to meet with legislators and staff. Both parties (CDHA members and legislators/staff) are working full schedules that are often filled in advance. CDHA's goal is to plan lobby days months in advance, allowing for more flexibility in making their appointments and more opportunity for CDHA members to participate.

As with the Capitol event, there may be preparatory meetings for explanations, questions and answers. Preliminary meeting will be on-line. Members will receive talking points and "leave behinds" or be directed to their location on cdha.org.

CDHA members are encouraged to attend with another CDHA member or constituent. Larger groups are discouraged unless approved by the legislator's office in advance. Photos from the meetings are encouraged.

As with the Capitol event, CDHA members must not be late or fail to keep their appointment. However, should an emergency occur, the CDHA member should call the office of ARA immediately.

Post Meetings

CDHA members are encouraged to upload their photos to an assigned site. Images taken on cell phones should be uploaded full-sized for the best reproductive quality.

Members will be asked to complete a post-event survey.

Any questions, problems, or suggestions should be sent to the chair of the Government Relations Council.