

IN-DISTRICT EVENT TOOLKIT

Your guide to engaging your Members of Congress and their staff at home

WHAT IS AN IN-DISTRICT EVENT?

An in-district event is any advocacy activity that takes place in your Member of Congress's home district or state. Members of Congress regularly return home, often during "recess" or district work periods, to meet with constituents, attend community events, visit organizations, and stay connected to local issues.

Here's a few examples of ways to connect with your representatives:

- Meet at their local office
- Invite them to tour a hospital, cancer center, or research facility
- Host a roundtable with patients, caregivers, and providers
- Invite Members or staff to a community awareness event
- Attend a town hall and ask a question about colorectal cancer

MEETING WITH YOUR LAWMAKERS AT HOME IS A GREAT WAY TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS HELP MOVE YOUR ADVOCACY FORWARD!

BOOKED YOUR MEETING?

*We want to hear about it!
Share all the details with us at
advocacy@fightcrc.org*



WHY IN-DISTRICT EVENTS ARE IMPORTANT

- Members of Congress want to meet with their constituents.
- Your story becomes local and that's powerful.
- Staff are key decision-makers.
- It reinforces the importance of our issues.
- They help secure congressional champions.

When a Member of Congress has a memorable conversation and sees the local impact on patients and their families, they are more likely to support our ongoing CRC efforts!



NEED DEEPER BACKGROUND OR TALKING POINTS?



Look for advocacy resources and toolkits in the Community of Champions Advocacy Space.

KEY POLICY ASKS

When engaging with your Members of Congress in their home districts, be prepared to ask for their support on these **three key policy asks**:

- 1. Create a Colorectal Cancer Research Program within the Department of Defense.**
This program would widen for local patients to access cutting-edge care.
- 2. Increase funding for the CDC's Colorectal Cancer Control Program.**
Awareness and screening initiatives can prevent CRC and save lives in your community.
- 3. Join the Colorectal Cancer Caucus.**
Colorectal cancer impacts every state and every congressional district, and we need champions in Congress to help advance policies to support this community.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR POLICY GOALS [FIGHTCRC.ORG/POLICY](https://fightcrc.org/policy)

BUILDING YOUR ADVOCACY AUDIENCE

ENVISIONING YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

When planning your advocacy outreach, it helps to prioritize your audience and focus on the people who can make the biggest impact.

- **Members of Congress (Federal)**

Your House Representative or two Senators who can directly influence federal policy and funding.

- **District Staff of Members of Congress**

Staffers who manage health, appropriations, or constituent issues and can support follow-up, logistics, and policy questions.

- **Local or State Elected Officials**

State legislators or local officials who can champion related policies and programs in your state and community.

ADVOCACY TIP:

Start with your top priority, but keep other levels in mind to strengthen your advocacy network and build broader support.

ASSEMBLE STAKEHOLDERS

Who will help you tell the story? Never underestimate the power of community when engaging with lawmakers. Inviting additional voices into the conversation brings a new perspective and strengthens your message. Some people to consider include:

- Advocates in your state
- Physicians in your community
- Local employers

CHOOSE A VENUE

Think about places where your Member of Congress has previously held public events. If it worked well before, it's likely a great choice again! Consider locations easy to access such as:

- No-cost meeting rooms in municipal buildings or community centers
- Local libraries or town halls
- Spaces that are central, familiar, and accessible by public transportation
- Your Member of Congress' office could be a great option

THE KEY TO A SUCCESSFUL EVENT IS TO MAKE IT CONVENIENT, WELCOMING, AND INCLUSIVE FOR EVERYONE!

SAMPLE IN-DISTRICT EVENTS

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

A roundtable is a great way to bring together multiple stakeholders in the colorectal cancer community including patients, caregivers, medical professionals and others to give a broad perspective on the colorectal cancer experience in your state.

- **Welcome**

Identify a host who will kick off the meeting, welcome everyone and share what you hope to accomplish.

- **Introductions**

Go around and have everyone briefly introduce themselves and their connection to colorectal cancer.

- **Explain the challenge**

If the focus of your meeting is on funding for research for example, you could have a researcher or physician describe the challenges with the current research landscape.

- **Allow time for questions**

These events are really successful when they allow for questions and meaningful discussion.

- **How they can help**

This is where you make your ask and explain why it is important.

- **Close & next steps**

Thank everyone for attending and recap next steps.

ADVOCACY TIP:

You can adjust and adapt this agenda based on attendees and issue(s) you plan to discuss.

AWARENESS EVENT

Awareness events are great opportunities to engage members of Congress and their staff. Doing a flag installation? Hosting a fundraiser? Participating in a 5k? This is a great opportunity for your member of Congress to see the colorectal cancer community in action!

- Invite your member of Congress to attend and give remarks
- Invite your local newspaper or tv station to cover the event
- Share information about our policy priorities

GET CREATIVE!

Is there an event, business or landmark in your community that often draws elected officials? Meet them where they are! You could host a discussion at your town's favorite diner or include your member of Congress in a local health fair. It doesn't have to be a formal meeting.

FEELING STUCK? REACH OUT TO FIGHT CRC'S ADVOCACY TEAM AT ADVOCACY@FIGHTCRC.ORG!

HOW TO SCHEDULE YOUR IN-DISTRICT EVENT

HOW TO SCHEDULE YOUR IN-DISTRICT EVENT

Reaching out may feel intimidating, but Members of Congress *want* to hear from you! They have fully staffed offices in their home districts specifically to engage with constituents. Follow these steps to start the process:

1. Confirm your federal representatives

You will have two U.S. Senators and one Member of the House of Representatives.



Confirm representatives by entering your zip code at govtrack.us

2. Select “Official Website” below the entry of the elected official you are looking to invite

You will then be directed to their official website. From there, search for a dropdown menu for “Contact”, which often will show a list of district offices.

3. Call the district office

Ask about the best way to schedule your event and invite the Member of Congress.

4. Confirm a preferred communication method

Ask which method is preferred for sending the official invitation:

- a. General office email inbox
- b. Scheduler’s email
- c. District director’s email

5. Send the official invitation (See *template on page 6*)

Submit your request via their preferred email or online request form. Be sure to include:

- Location & requested date
- Format of the event (ex: roundtable discussion, awareness event, tour)
- Purpose
- Expected attendees
- Your contact information

6. Send follow-ups

If you don’t receive a response within a week or two, send a polite follow-up email.

Advocacy Tips: Mondays and Fridays are the best days to reach staff due to lighter schedules. If you want, Fight CRC can review your outreach email before you send!

Reach out to us at advocacy@fightcrc.org.

SAMPLE INVITATION

SUBJECT LINE: Constituent Invitation: In-District Meeting on Colorectal Cancer in [City, State]

Dear [Representative/Senator] [Last Name],

I am a constituent from [City/Town] and an advocate for colorectal cancer patients and families in our community. I am writing to invite you to participate in a small, local event in [Location] where you would have the opportunity to meet directly with colorectal cancer patients, survivors, and caregivers.

This conversation would highlight the real impact of colorectal cancer in our district and the critical importance of sustained federal funding for colorectal cancer research. Hearing these personal stories can help inform policies that save lives and improve outcomes for patients nationwide.

We would appreciate the opportunity to work with your district office to identify a time and format that fits your schedule. Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your City/Town]

[Optional: A Fight Colorectal Cancer Advocate]

[Your phone number or email address]



SAMPLE THANK YOU NOTE

WITHIN 24-48 OF YOUR MEETING, DON'T FORGET TO:

- Send a thank you email
- Restate your specific asks
- Offer to be a resource
- Track outcomes and next steps
- Send Fight CRC a quick recap so we can help you keep momentum!

SUBJECT LINE: Thank you for meeting with Fight CRC advocates

Dear [Staffer Name, Representative or Senator Last Name],

Thank you for meeting with me on [Date] in [City]. I appreciate the time and attention your office gave to colorectal cancer and the impact on people in [State or District].

As we discussed, I shared my connection to colorectal cancer and why this issue matters to families in our community. I am grateful for your willingness to listen.

My request is that [Member Name or the office] please

- [Ask 1, choose one Fight CRC priority]
- [Ask 2, optional]

Next steps:

Your office will [any commitment or next step shared].

I will follow up by [date] with [materials, data, story, or resource].

Thank you again for your service to our community. Please consider me a resource on colorectal cancer issues.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your City/Town]

[Optional: A Fight Colorectal Cancer Advocate]

[Your phone number or email address]

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

CUSTOMIZE FOR YOUR COMMUNITY

Your in-district work is even stronger when your community sees it. Use these templates to rally support online:

PRE-EVENT SAMPLE POST

🗨️ I am meeting with **[tag elected official]** to talk about colorectal cancer and what our community needs. Local voices matter. Follow along and join me in the fight!

#FightCRC #PrioritizeCRC

Tag: **@FightCRC**

DURING THE EVENT

Showing up today in **[City, State]** to share my colorectal cancer story with **[tag elected official]** and ask for action that saves lives here at home. Proud to advocate with **@FightCRC!**

#FightCRC #StrongArmSelfie

Tag: **@FightCRC**

POST-EVENT

Grateful for the conversation today with **[tag elected official]** about colorectal cancer in our community. Advocacy works when we show up and follow through. Want to do join me? Visit fightcrc.org/takeaction and **@FightCRC** will help you get started!

#FightCRC #StrongArmSelfie

Tag: **@FightCRC**

A FEW ADDITIONAL IDEAS:

- Take a photo with attendees if allowed
- Get one quote you can share publicly
- Write down what the staffer or Member said they would do next
- Share a simple post social media. Include photos and a call to action like “Get Screened!”

Fight CRC regularly encourages supporters to **tag @FightCRC** so the team can share your post. And don't forget to include your **#StrongArmSelfie!**

FIGHTCOLORECTALCANCER.ORG

FIGHT CRC



3 in 4

Patients younger than 50 are diagnosed with advanced CRC.

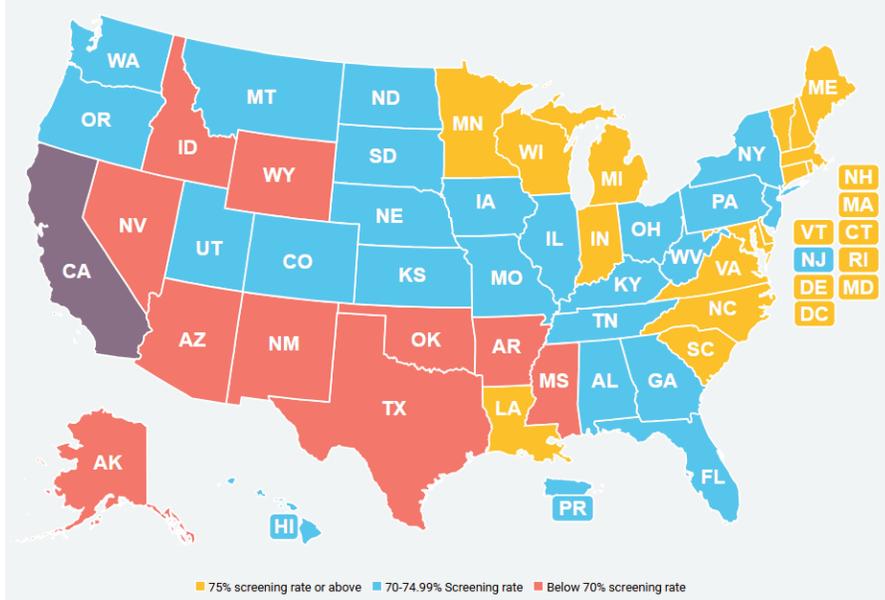


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There is power in community. We don't have to do this alone.

Courtney Smith
stage 3c rectal cancer
survivor

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



CHECK OUT OUR ADVOCACY MAP!

Learn about colorectal cancer screening in your state and how state law impacts screening efforts.

[FIGHTCRC.ORG/CRCMAP](https://fightcrc.org/crcmap)

FIGHTCRC'S NEWSLETTER

Get updates on advocacy, events, and ways to take action.
fightcrc.org/subscribe

WEBINARS & EVENTS

Find virtual and in-person events led by Fight CRC staff and our volunteer community.
fightcrc.org/events

SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow [@FightCRC](https://twitter.com/FightCRC) on social media for action alerts and to help amplify our message.

COMMUNITY OF CHAMPIONS

Get updates on advocacy, events, and ways to take action.
community.fightcrc.org

NEED HELP?

Fight CRC's Advocacy Team is here for you! Reach out to us at advocacy@fightcrc.org and we are happy to help with any part of the process.

**Thank you for being such an essential part of this fight.
Together, we will create a future where everyone has the chance for more time.**