

2026 August Congressional Recess

Meeting Guide for NCJW Advocates

What is the August Congressional Recess?

Congress is out of session in August and members of Congress return to their home districts for at least part of the month — making it the perfect time to schedule in-district visits with your lawmakers or their key staff. The goal of these meetings is to build relationships with senators and representatives (and their staff) and advocate for NCJW priorities.

Timing

The House recess begins July 24, 2026 and the Senate recess begins on August 10, 2026, with lawmakers returning to Washington, DC following Labor Day. ***We encourage you to reach out to schedule in-district meetings as early as possible!***

How to schedule a meeting with your senators and representative

- Call or email your federal lawmakers' in-district offices to set up a meeting. You can find their district office information on their website.
- Explain who you are, whom you represent, and that you and a delegation of [#] NCJW members would like 30 minutes to meet with the senator or representative to discuss your priority issues (***please select two to three issues from [this list](#)***).
- Be persistent — you may need to call the office and/or send a follow up email a few times to set up a meeting. While follow-up is important, always remember to be polite and patient as the staff is juggling many priorities.
- If the lawmaker is unavailable, always request to meet with an appropriate staff member who works on the relevant issue. Staff are important members of a congressional team and are heavily relied upon by the lawmakers themselves.

Make sure to confirm your meeting

- Confirm your meeting, including its location, in writing with the scheduler or staffer. Be sure to provide your cell phone number so that they can contact you with any last-minute changes.
- Share meeting details with everyone attending the meeting.

- Bring a business card, if you have one, and print a copy of the meeting confirmation to bring to the visit or have it handy on your phone in case the scheduler doesn't see your appointment in their calendar.

Planning and leading your meeting

- Refresh your advocacy skills by reviewing NCJW's [Advocacy 101 training video](#).
- Focus your meetings on one or two of our [2026 August Recess Priorities](#). Speaking about fewer issues during your visit will maximize your impact.
- Research your representative and senators' history on these issues before the meeting and tailor your asks accordingly.
- If lawmakers are already supportive of the legislation you are discussing, ask them what more you can do to build broader support for the legislation or issue.
- Do not forget to ask your lawmakers or their staff how we can be helpful to them. They might have ideas as to what support is needed to advance legislation that matters to them, particularly from the faith or Jewish community. Remember, we are building long-term relationships.

What to bring to the meeting

It is important to leave a folder of information with the lawmaker or staffer. Below are suggested materials to include. These resources will also be helpful to you in preparation.

- [NCJW's Key Policy Issue Areas](#)
- Issue talking points
- Information about your SPA or section
- Business card

Following up and sharing your story

After your meetings, post photos and videos on social media and explain the policy priorities you highlighted at the meeting. Don't forget to tag NCJW and your lawmakers!

Send a thank you note to the staff and/or lawmakers restating your asks so you can hold them accountable to any promises made during the visit. Also include any information you promised to provide as follow-up. **[Please fill out this Lobby Report Form following your meeting.](#)**

Thank you for your advocacy! In-district visits provide a great opportunity to build relationships with members of Congress and their staff, which you can nurture long after your visit is over.

If you have questions or need support in scheduling meetings, please reach out to Alannah Boyle, Associate Director of State Policy Advocacy, at aboyle@ncjw.org. Don't forget to tell us how your meetings went!