



Information for Attendees of NAADAC 2021 Virtual Hill Day

Thank you for joining us for NAADAC's **2021 Virtual Hill Day** on April 15, 2021. The world is changing, and so is the addiction profession. Now more than ever, your voice is needed to help your fellow addiction professionals and the clients you serve!

Over the past year, the COVID-19 public health emergency has limited travel to Washington, D.C., Congressional offices are meeting with constituents virtually via phone or video conference. Virtual advocacy meetings can be very effective, safe, and easily coordinated from home by following these tips and best practices. This unique virtual experience will allow attendees to speak directly with lawmakers on Capitol Hill about the issues that affect the addiction profession and those it serves - all from your home or office! **NAADAC will be providing talking points, specific asks for the Members of Congress, and one pagers about important topics affecting the addiction profession and those it serves as the event nears.**

How to Request Appointments with Your Members of Congress

Below is a step by step process for requesting appointments with your elected officials. Please reach out to your State Captain with any questions.

Who will you be meeting with?

Your State Captain will let you know if he or she has secured a meeting with your Senators or if you should reach out to your Senators directly to request a meeting.

You should reach out to your U.S. Representative to request a meeting unless your State Captain tells you otherwise. Your State Captain will let you know if there are any other Hill Day attendees from your Congressional District; if so, please work together to request and schedule a single meeting.

STEP 1: Identify your Senators and U.S. Representative.

Visit https://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm to look up your Senator and <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative> to look up your U.S. Representative, and to obtain their contact information for their Washington, D.C. office.

Although you will be contacting your Senators and U.S. Representative's offices to request meetings, there is a good chance that the meeting will take place with the staff member who handles healthcare policy for the Senator/Representative. This can be a good thing! Staff – particularly those who specialize in various areas related to healthcare – can be instrumental in figuring out how our asks can fit into the Senator/Representative's policy and decision making. They are key people to get to know on the Hill.

How & when will the meeting take place?

Some offices prefer video conferences and some offices prefer phone conferences. Plan on being flexible to accommodate their preferences, but feel free to offer to set up a Zoom meeting or other type of video conference. *If you need assistance setting up a video conference, please contact Kristin Hamilton, NAADAC Director of Communications, at khamilton@naadac.org.*

We encourage as many meetings as possible to take place on April 15, 2021, NAADAC's official Virtual Hill Day, but if your Member(s) of Congress are only available on another day, you are welcome to schedule the meeting as your schedule allows.

When is the best time to request your meetings?

It is best to begin sending meeting requests **three weeks prior** the date of your desired meeting. Keep in mind that Congressional offices are busy fielding many meeting requests, so follow up is extremely important in securing your virtual meeting. Following up once a week until you have secured a virtual meeting is recommended. If you have issues, please alert your state team captain.

If you have trouble getting a response from the office, please contact your State Captain and he or she will provide you with additional support or assistance.

What should you say to request a meeting?

STEP 2: You can either call or email the office. Using either form of communications, include the following key pieces of information:

1. Identify yourself as a constituent of Senator or Congressperson.
2. Say that you are joining a group of over 150 addiction professionals participating in a Virtual Hill Day on April 15, and that you would like to speak with your Member of Congress or his/her staff about addiction & healthcare-related policy. Mention that you are happy to speak by phone or video conference. Ask who the best person would be to speak with about this.

You may be directed to either the scheduler or a staff member who handles healthcare policy.

If you are directed to fill out a form online, you can instead ask for the name of the staff member who handles healthcare related policy. Once you get the name, ask for the email address.

If you are emailing the scheduler or a staff member, you can use the following template. Please be sure to fill in the required sections!

Hello _____,

I am a constituent and addiction professional from _____ (*city, state*) and am joining over 150 other addiction professionals for a Virtual Hill Day on April 15th organized by NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals. NAADAC represents the professional interests of over 100,000 addiction professionals. *[If you are writing on behalf of any other attendees, you should include their names, titles, and city/state – Members of Congress are often more likely to take meetings with multiple constituents.]*

[I/We] would like to meet with you to discuss the increased need for substance use disorder services and the importance of supporting the addiction workforce.

I hope you will be able to meet with *[me/us]* on April 15th. I would be happy to help coordinate a virtual meeting platform, so please let me know if you have a preference for video or teleconference.

I look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,
Your name
Your home address *[This shows you are their constituent.]*
Your title/job role and employer
Your phone number
Your email address

When can I expect a response?

Some offices will reply very quickly, but others may take a while. If you have not heard back in two days, send a follow up email to your original email and/or call the office and ask for the person you are emailing.

If you have trouble getting a response from the office, please contact your State Captain and he or she will provide you with additional support or assistance.

What should I do after I schedule a meeting?

After you schedule your meetings, be sure to confirm the date, time, and digital location with the Congressional staffer.

STEP 3: Tell your State Captains about your meeting(s).

We need to keep track of all of your meetings and will reach out to connect you with additional Hill Day attendees from your Congressional District as they register. Email your with the meeting times, expected attendees, and meetings type (Zoom, conference call, etc.) for all meetings

Important Things to Know

We ask that you please refrain from reaching out to your Senators' offices unless advised to do so by your State Captain. It is important to approach these meetings as a cohesive group to better advocate for our cause. If you have an existing relationship with your Senators' office and can provide assistance in securing a meeting, please reach out to your State Captain.

Remember to follow up if you do not receive a reply to your initial contact. Congressional offices are very busy, so it is important to follow up if you do not receive a response within two days. Many of the staffers at congressional offices are working remotely!

If you have any other questions during the process, please contact your State Captain or NAADAC Director of Communications Kristin Hamilton at khamilton@naadac.org.

How to Prepare for Your Meetings

It is important to be prepared for your meetings. There are several things that you can do to prepare.

- **Attend the [2021 Advocacy in Action Conference](#) on April 13-14th.** The conference will feature [trainings from government and industry experts](#), as well as provide information about how to effectively advocate.

- **Read the one-pagers.** You will be sent one-pagers about the important topics to discuss in your meetings with Members of Congress about a week before Hill Day. These one-pagers will contain timely information that you need to know about the topics that affect the addiction profession and those it serves.
- **Review the [NAADAC Advocacy Updates and Action Alerts](#).** Read about recent action NAADAC has taken to support bills and legislative efforts.
- **Learn about your Members of Congress.** Visit your Senators and U.S. Representative's websites and read about any work that they have done related to the addiction profession and those it serves.

After Your Meetings

You will be provided with a Meeting Debrief Form. Please use it to let us know about the meetings that you had with your Members of Congress.

Send a follow up email to thank the Members of Congress and/or their staff members for their time. Include your contact information in the email and send them the one-pagers provided by NAADAC that cover the topics that you discussed during your meeting. Let them know that you are willing to serve as a continuing resource about the addiction profession and community.