

Virtual Hill Advocacy Day Frequently Asked Questions

ATTENDEE CHECKLIST

- Register** for LegCon by Feb. 4th to secure your spot in PTA Virtual Hill Day!
- Attend a Virtual Hill Day **overview webinar** on Feb. 8th or Feb. 11th (or watch the recording)
- Attend the Virtual Hill Day **leadership training** on Feb. 25th (*only open to PTA Federal Legislative Chairs & PTA State Presidents*)
- Check your email for your **preliminary schedule** of meetings on Friday Mar. 5th
- Watch the video explaining this year's **Hill asks** (will be emailed to attendees in early March)
- Attend the Virtual Hill Day **in-depth workshop & practice session** (Mar. 9th, 1:10 – 3:10 pm EST)
- Check your email for your **final schedule** of meetings the morning of Mar. 10th
- Attend **PTA Virtual Hill Day** on Mar. 10th from 9am-5pm EST!

SCHEDULING QUESTIONS

Q: Do I need to schedule any meetings with my Members of Congress for Virtual Hill Day?

A: No - National PTA will schedule your meetings for you. Since meetings are virtual this year, National PTA is working with a vendor (Soapbox) who specializes in scheduling virtual meetings with congressional offices. If you registered for LegCon by the deadline (Feb. 4th) you are automatically registered for Virtual Hill Day and your Hill meetings will be scheduled for you. Look out for an email from Soapbox on March 5th that will include a link to access a website where you can view your preliminary schedule of meetings, the roster for your meetings, the links to your meetings, the bios for your Members of Congress, feedback questions and the email addresses of others in your group. Please note that congressional appointments can and do change up until the last minute, so your schedule will not be final until the day before or the day of the event. Because of this, we highly recommend reserving the entire Virtual Hill Day for potential Hill meetings (9 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST on March 10th).

Q: Who will I be meeting with on Virtual Hill Day?

A: National PTA will be using home addresses submitted during registration to match each attendee with their Members of Congress. You will be automatically scheduled to meet with your two Senators and your Representative in the House. Whenever possible, you will be placed in a group with a group leader. The reason for scheduling based on constituency is that congressional offices prefer to meet with their own constituents (some even *require* it). That said, if you have a relationship with a particular Member of Congress where you are not a constituent, please submit a “non-constituent meetings request” to legcon@pta.org. National PTA will attempt to accommodate such requests, schedule permitting, but cannot guarantee non-constituent scheduling for Virtual Hill Day. Please note that attendees will usually meet with a staffer, but on occasion will be joined by their Member of Congress especially in the Senate.

LOGISTICS QUESTIONS

Q: How do I sign up for Virtual Hill Day meetings with my Members of Congress?

A: If you registered for LegCon by the deadline (Feb. 4th) you are automatically registered for Virtual Hill Day and your Hill meetings will be scheduled for you (see scheduling question above for more details). If you or someone you know did *not* meet this deadline, they should register as soon as possible and reach out to National PTA's Government Affairs Team at legcon@pta.org with a "late Hill Day sign up request." National PTA will do everything to accommodate a late request, but cannot guarantee a spot in Virtual Hill Day for anyone registered after February 4th.

Q: How long will each Virtual Hill Day meeting last?

A: Your group can expect to speak with your Member of Congress or their staffer for fifteen to thirty minutes.

Q: What platform will I need to join my Virtual Hill Day meetings?

A: All virtual Hill meetings will be hosted through [GoToMeeting](#). Please note, you will not need to set up a GoToMeeting account in order to join meetings. On Virtual Hill Day, all you will need to do is click on the link for the meeting in your schedule using a device with a reliable internet connection. If for any reason you are unable to access a meeting through GoToMeeting, there will be a back of call-in option provided to join by phone. In order to ensure that everyone is comfortable with the platform and technology, National PTA encourages all attendees to join the Virtual Hill Day in-depth workshop and practice session on Mar. 9th (1:10 – 3:10 p.m. EST) where attendees will get the opportunity to test out the platform on their devices.

Q: How will Virtual Hill Day meetings work? Will there be a script to follow? A designated group leader for each meeting? How do we prevent people from hijacking meetings?

A: Each congressional meeting will be led by a group leader (typically your state's Federal Legislative Chair or their designee). The group leader will have the primary speaking role during the meeting and the ability to mute participants in the event of hijacking. National PTA will provide leadership training for group leaders on Feb. 25th followed by a training for all attendees in early March where we will review this year's Hill asks and answer policy questions. There will also be an in-depth workshop and practice session on Mar. 9th from 1:10 – 3:10 p.m. EST. Workshop attendees on the 9th will learn how to prepare for and run a successful virtual Hill meeting, how to read their schedule, how to use the mobile tool, and how to give feedback after each meeting. National PTA Government Affairs staff and Legislative Committee members will also provide handy tips for meeting with members of Congress and staff, highlight PTA Hill Asks and answer any questions. It is essential that you attend the March 9th workshop even if you have been to Capitol Hill before, as critical last minute information will be provided.

PREPARATION & TRAINING QUESTIONS

Q: Will there be any training or guidance provided, especially to help prepare PTA members who have never attended a legislative advocacy event?

A: Yes - If you have not “lobbied” before, do not worry! National PTA will provide an overview training for everyone who registered for Hill Day on February 8th and 11th, as well as a training for Federal Legislative Chairs on February 25th to coordinate leadership roles for Virtual Hill Day. On March 9th, from 1:10 – 2:10 p.m. EST, National PTA will host an in-depth workshop for all Hill Day attendees titled “Hill Day Preparation: Opportunity to Take Action for Every Child.” Workshop attendees will learn how to prepare for and run a successful virtual Hill meeting, how to read their schedule, how to use the mobile tool, and how to give feedback after each meeting. National PTA Government Affairs staff and Legislative Committee members will also provide handy tips for meeting with members of Congress and staff, highlight PTA Hill Asks and answer any questions. Following the workshop will be an hour-long Virtual Hill Day Practice Session where Soapbox will open up all of the virtual meeting rooms for each group and will staff a “help desk” so anyone can call them for help using the system. If you have any additional questions or remain confused after any of these trainings, please reach out to National PTA at legcon@pta.org.

Q: How should I prepare for Virtual Hill Day?

First, make sure to watch all of National PTA’s Virtual Hill Day training sessions, including the overview session hosted the week of February 8th, the policy session hosted in early March, and the in-depth skills workshop on March 9th. If you are a Federal Legislative Chair, make sure to also attend the Hill Day leadership training on Feb. 25th.

Second, keep your eyes on your inbox over the next few weeks for emails from legcon@pta.org and Soapbox with additional resources, details, and reminders. Check your Spam or Junk email folders regularly to make sure our emails are not being erroneously filtered as Spam.

Third, on Virtual Hill Day make sure you are in a quiet room that is well lit and absent of distractions. Please wear business attire and make sure your background doesn't contain anything distracting, partisan, or personal that you may not want to share. It’s wise to also test out your device’s video, audio, and internet capabilities ahead of time. In no circumstances should you be multitasking during the meeting, even if you do not have a speaking role, as it will be obvious to the Member of Congress or Hill staffer. Direct any questions to your group leader and/or National PTA’s Government Affairs team at legcon@pta.org.

Finally, remember that our annual Hill Day is an opportunity to get our issues front and center for our elected officials, but it is also an opportunity for you to develop a relationship with your Members of Congress and their staff. During the meeting make sure to stay attentive, be respectful of the Hill staffer and your fellow PTA advocates, and also have fun!