



## Kentucky General Assembly 2023 Accessibility January 30, 2023

As an advocate for your issues in Frankfort, knowing how to maneuver the rules in place for Capitol Campus visitors and how to access your legislator, whether one-on-one or in a public hearing capacity, is important to advocating for the issues important to you or your organization. There are currently 31 newly-elected state legislators – 25 in the House and 6 in the Senate. Following the Special Elections for both Senate Districts 19 and 28 later this year, there will be two additional new members at that point. The open seat in Senate District 19 (Jefferson County) will be filled in a Special Election on February 21st. The other Senate seat (District 28) will not be filled until the May 16th Primary Election.

Below is a summary of how we expect the session to operate in light of adjustments made during the COVID-19 pandemic, and ongoing changes the Kentucky General Assembly is placing on accessing the legislative process.

**GENERAL ACCESS:** General public access to the Capitol Annex and to the Capitol Building is permitted. All individuals can enter either building with their standard identification, and upon entering the Annex especially will be asked where you are going (e.g. committee hearing, Annex cafeteria, legislator appointment, other meetings).

Once security has scanned your identification, you will enter your name into the digital kiosk near the metal detector. Enter the name you wish to have on your nametag. It is our understanding you do not have to wear the nametag printed for you at the door; however, we strongly suggest you at least keep it on your person for the duration of your visit that particular day.

In areas where you will be in close proximity to others, signage is still posted encouraging masking and/or social distancing, but those rules are no longer enforced.

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESS:** Wheelchair access for the Annex is at a rear entrance to the basement, the door underneath a white awning nearest the main visitor parking lot on the east side of the building. Wheelchair access for the Capitol is at the basement entrance on the west-end/Floral Clock side of the building. At both entrances, you will find a security desk where you will check in as described above. [Here is a Capitol Campus map](#) that shows each entrance as well as parking options.

**SCHEDULED ANNEX MEETINGS:** Each individual legislator determines how many people they are willing to meet with at one time. For slightly larger groups, conference rooms will occasionally be used. When you arrive at the main visitor entrance of the Annex, you will let the security desk know you are there for a meeting and go through the check-in process. Give yourself ample time to park, get through security and to the floor needed for your meeting. There will occasionally be long lines to get through the security process and into the entrance of the building.

**ANNEX EVENTS:** There will be ongoing social calendar events and committee hearings open to the public. Various groups may also choose to organize rallies, forums or other special events throughout session. If you are interested in reserving an Annex committee room or other meeting space, reach out to Kate Talley at [kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov](mailto:kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov) to make this request and complete a reservation form. Please

know that space is extremely limited and many days there are simply no remaining available options so the farther in advance you can make your request, the better chance you have at securing a space.

The legislative calendar of meetings can always be found [HERE](#). During active session (Jan. 3rd-6th and Feb. 7th-Mar. 30th) it is updated daily, and during recess periods it is updated weekly, similar to how the interim legislative calendar is managed. If you wish to receive or add an event to the social calendar, contact Melissa Scott in the Speaker's Office at [melissa.scott@lrc.ky.gov](mailto:melissa.scott@lrc.ky.gov). If you wish to receive email updates for the latest committee agendas, meeting rooms and times, contact Kate Talley at [kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov](mailto:kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov).

**ROTUNDA, MEZZANINE & CAPITOL EDUCATION CENTER EVENTS:** There are currently no known limitations to events scheduled in the Rotunda, Mezzanine (the 2nd floor veranda space of the Capitol), or Capitol Education Center. If you would like to schedule an event, reserve these spaces, or have questions, contact Linda Stevens of Historic Properties with the Capitol Tour Desk at 502.564.3449 or [linda.stevens@ky.gov](mailto:linda.stevens@ky.gov).

**HOUSE/SENATE CHAMBERS & GALLERIES:** The House gallery is open to the public on a first come, first serve basis. Senate gallery passes and the process to acquire those continues to be unchanged. You are not allowed to have food or drink in the galleries, to hold signs, or take photos. For questions on acquiring Senate gallery passes, individuals can contact the Senate President's Office at 502.564.3120, their respective State Senator, or visit Capitol Room 319 the day they are in Frankfort like usual. Members of the Senate must be present in the chambers in order to vote. Currently, House Rule 67A is disabled and although they have the option to authorize remote voting for members if a need arises in the future, members of the House must also be present in the chambers in order to vote. Complete rules related to discussion or debate can be found [HERE](#) for the House and [HERE](#) for the Senate.

**SESSION CALENDAR:** The [session calendar](#) has been approved by the Legislative Research Commission as of September 19th, 2022. It reflects the "typical" short-session calendar of session dates including January's legislative recess period, bill request and bill filing deadlines, March's veto recess period, concurrence days and Sine Die Adjournment (the last day of session), which, in an odd-numbered year session, must occur by March 30th.

**COMMITTEE MEETING CALENDAR:** The [standing committee meeting calendar](#) looks similar to the schedule in previous legislative sessions, but with some changes. Meeting rooms and times may be changed. This year, the Senate Health and Welfare and House Health and Family Services Committees have split and both the House and Senate now have a Health Services Committee and a Families and Children Committee. Learn more about the membership, committee jurisdiction, and access meeting materials for all legislative standing committees [HERE](#) for the House and [HERE](#) for the Senate.

In recent sessions, Committee Chairs had confirmed that committee meetings would be limited to only one hour each in order to accommodate cleaning of the rooms between meetings. However, with many COVID-19 precautions and safety protocols lapsed and the return to "business as usual", we have already encountered at least two committee hearings that have lasted two-hours or more. It is unclear at this point in time if there will be an attempt at uniformity on committee meeting duration, or, if committee meeting times will simply be at the discretion of the chair. With a shortage of meeting rooms, most committees are not able to go beyond two hours during the session because another committee meeting is scheduled in that room.

**COMMITTEE AGENDAS:** We understand that the committee agenda will be available 48 hours prior to the committee meeting. Contact committee staff to request to be added to their agenda distribution listserv. The names of these individuals can be found on each corresponding landing page for [House](#)

[Standing Committees](#) and [Senate Standing Committees](#) and you will need to call 502.564.8100 and ask for them by name, or, you can email them by using the [FirstName.LastName@lrc.ky.gov](mailto:FirstName.LastName@lrc.ky.gov) method. The upcoming day's Legislative Calendar [can be found here](#) that will have agendas listed as well, and you can email Kate Talley ([kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov](mailto:kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov)) to be added to the larger LRC distribution list, however, depending on the timing of when committee staff issue their emails with agenda information, there is occasionally a delay on when you would receive agendas and other committee updates which is why being on committee staff's email lists is typically the most efficient. A **rule change made by both the Senate and the House in 2021** allows bills to be placed on the agenda with only 24 hours' notice. This means that the agenda you receive online or via email may not always reflect the agenda that is used during the meeting. Use [Bill Watch](#) to track bills, get updates, and follow the action through your organization's legislative activity.

**ACCESS TO & PARTICIPATION IN COMMITTEE MEETINGS:** We understand that all committee meeting rooms will be equipped to broadcast committee meetings, testimony, etc. Since committee proceedings have returned to pre-pandemic standards, we anticipate most testimony will be delivered in person. To watch committee hearings, you can access live meeting coverage via the [LRC livestream channels](#) (YouTube, KET). If you miss the meeting, both YouTube and KET will have archived committee meetings that you can watch within 24 hours after the meeting.

**VIRTUAL/REMOTE COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION:** Requests for virtual/remote testimony should be made directly to the Committee Chair and/or Committee Staff Administrator (CSA); the COVID-19 request portal is no longer available. Before preparing your testimony, presentation or other materials including handouts you wish to disseminate to committee members, individuals should utilize the LRC's ["Presenting to Legislative Committees"](#) guidelines and recommendations page.

Legislators will participate and vote in committee meetings in person this year. The previous COVID-19 flexibility of allowing members to vote from their Annex office ended and pre-pandemic committee standards have resumed.

**PUBLIC BILL ROOM:** The [Public Bill Room](#) is open to the public, located in Room 085 in the basement of the Capitol. Individuals can pick up copies of bills, of the *Legislative Record*, and more - full subscription and prices [HERE](#). If you would like to have a regular subscription of materials in the Public Bill Room, please email James Baggett [james.baggett@LRC.KY.GOV](mailto:james.baggett@LRC.KY.GOV) with questions.

**ACCESS TO LEGISLATORS:** Communications with legislators can be done remotely or in-person. See this [LRC memo](#) from December 2022 for additional details.

- You are encouraged to use legislators' LRC email addresses and to leave messages for them by calling the MESSAGE LINE: 1-800-372-7181.
- **New this year!** A Spanish language line for legislative information will be available throughout the General Assembly's 2023 session by calling 1-866-840-6574.
- You can also call individual legislator offices at 502-564-8100 and speak with their receptionist to leave a message or try to catch your legislator by phone. If you are calling your legislator, be sure that the receptionist you speak with knows that you are a constituent.
- If you are reaching out to your Representative or to your Senator for the first time, we suggest that you send them an email with this Subject Line: "I am Your Constituent!" Be sure to include your home address and a phone number so they can get in touch with you.
- Newly-elected legislators should now have LRC email addresses. You can find current contact information for all legislators [HERE](#).
- The process by which materials are approved for dissemination to members of the General Assembly are outlined in this [LRC Memo](#). Please note that this policy does NOT apply to handing

materials directly to legislators when you meet them in person; it only applies to when you wish for LRC to handle the physical distribution of your materials.

- o Note: The LRC Business Office is located in Room 076 of the Capitol Annex basement.
- o The memo explains notification to legislators of events such as receptions, luncheons, etc. Prior submission of event notification (e.g. put on the General Assembly Social Events Calendar) means that any printed materials regarding the same event, will not be disseminated.
- o Questions about the materials dissemination process should be directed to LRC Project Center Supervisor Lisa Broaddus at 502.564.8100 ext. 59149.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** We will continue to update you with further information or clarification as it becomes available. If you have other information to share or questions, please contact us!

Sheila Schuster  
[kyadvocacy@gmail.com](mailto:kyadvocacy@gmail.com)

Emily Beauregard  
[emily@kyvoicesforhealth.org](mailto:emily@kyvoicesforhealth.org)