

Kentucky General Assembly 2024 Accessibility

Updated as of March 6, 2024

As an advocate for your issues in Frankfort, knowing how to maneuver the rules in place for Capitol Campus visitors and how to access legislators, whether one-on-one or in a public hearing capacity, is critical to advocating for the issues important to you and to your organization.

Every session, adjustments are made by the Kentucky General Assembly that impact your ability to participate and be a part of the process. Below is a summary of how we expect the session to logistically operate and how you can best access the legislative process in 2024.

GENERAL ACCESS & PARKING: General public access to the Capitol Annex and to the Capitol Building is permitted. [Here is a Capitol Campus map](#) that shows where you can find general public parking, as well as locations for reserved parking (staff and legislators) and handicap sticker accessible parking. **AS OF THE WEEK OF MARCH 4TH, 2024, Capitol Campus construction developments will begin to further impact parking and entrance availability to the Annex.**

- **March 4th-9th:** Construction fencing will be installed, several dozen parking spots on the top level and behind the Annex will be closed, but please note that ADA spots will remain open and the walkway from the parking lot to the Annex will be open.
- **March 11th-16th:** approximately 6 additional parking spots on the top level will be closed, but please note that ADA spots will remain open and the walkway from the parking lot to the Annex will be open.
- **March 18th-23rd:** The walkway on the top level from the parking lot to the Annex will be closed. There will be no direct sidewalk access to the front of the Annex and all visitors will have to walk around the fence line.
- **April 15th-20th:** ALL parking in the east lot (top level of the parking structure) will be closed. An additional 11 spots in the rear lower lot behind the Annex will be closed. Traffic will be diverted around the outer perimeter of the top of the parking structure.
- [Please see these slides](#) that include corresponding maps to match the above timeline.

There is limited street parking near the Capitol Campus including on Capital Avenue, State Street, Shelby Street and so forth. Please observe and adhere to any City of Frankfort parking restrictions or limitations if you choose to utilize street parking.

PLEASE NOTE that as of 2023, general public access to the underground tunnel connecting the Annex and Capitol buildings is no longer allowed. Individuals must enter each building at public entrance guard desk checkpoints at both the Capitol and the Annex. Please see the 'wheelchair access' section below for information about limited access badges.

All individuals can enter either building with their standard identification, and upon entering the Annex will typically be asked where you are going (e.g. committee hearing, Annex cafeteria, legislator appointment, other meetings). Once security has seen and/or 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.

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 side of the building (near the floral clock). 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 the nearest parking options.

As of February 2023, there is a new “limited access badge” option for Kentuckians using a wheelchair or who have other mobility issues and would like to access the lift in the basement tunnel that connects the Annex and Capitol buildings underground. [Information about this process and the form needed to complete your request for the limited access badge can be found here](#). All other mobility questions and inquiries should be directed to Mike.Wynn@lrc.ky.gov.

We encourage individuals in need of a limited access badge to go through the process of completing and submitting this form prior to their visit to Capitol Campus where they wish to attend meetings or other events as doing so on arrival could delay your ability to make any scheduled meetings or appointments on time. If you only wish to attend Annex meetings and do not have a need to access the Capitol, you do not need to complete this form and can attend Annex meetings using your standard form(s) of personal identification.

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, if available. 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 to enter the building. At times during the 2023 Regular Session, the line to enter the Annex was long and took some individuals 45-minutes or more before they could get into the building and to the meetings they were there to attend.

ANNEX EVENTS: Committee hearings are open to the public; the usual schedule for committee meetings can be found [HERE](#). Various groups may also choose to organize rallies, forums or other special events throughout the 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 to make this request and she will send you the necessary reservation forms to complete. 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 of securing a space. Food is only allowed in on Annex meeting room, either for a legislator breakfast or for lunch. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

The daily legislative calendar of meetings can always be found [HERE](#). During the active session (Jan. 2nd-Apr. 15th), the calendar is updated daily, and during the interim, the legislative calendar is updated weekly. If you wish to receive or add an event to the social calendar to which legislators are invited, contact Melissa Scott in the Speaker’s Office at melissa.scott@lrc.ky.gov. If you wish to receive email updates for the latest committee agendas, meeting rooms and times for all committee meetings, contact Kate Talley at kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov and request to be added to the LRC distribution list.

You can also contact specific committee staff if you are only interested in receiving a handful of committee communications and not updates for all committees. Please call 502.564.8100 and ask to speak with the staff person assigned to the committee you are interested in for assistance in being added to their committee distribution list.

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.

HOUSE/SENATE CHAMBERS & GALLERIES: The House gallery is open to the public on a first come, first serve basis and access is granted on the third floor of the Capitol. When you are looking at the entrance to the House Chamber on the third floor of the Capitol, access will be on the left-hand side of the Chamber entrance. Senate gallery passes and the process to acquire them has not changed. 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. You are not allowed to have food or drink in the galleries, to hold signs, to be disruptive, or to take photos.

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. At the time of this guide being updated, complete rules related to discussion or debate for 2024 have not been added to the LRC website, however when they are, you can find them [HERE](#) on the right hand set of links.

SESSION CALENDAR: The [session calendar](#) has been approved by the Legislative Research Commission as of December 28th, 2023. It reflects the "typical" long-session calendar of session dates including any observed legislative holidays, bill request and bill filing deadlines, concurrence days, March and April's veto recess period, and Sine Die Adjournment (the last day of session), which, in an even-numbered year session, must occur by midnight on April 15th. Toward the end of the session, there are sometimes slight changes made in the session calendar which will be noted on an updated version.

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. Last year, the Senate Health & Welfare and House Health & Family Services Committees split and both the House and Senate now have a Health Services Committee and a Families & Children Committee, respectively. 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 have limited committee meetings to only one hour 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 multiple committee hearings that have lasted two-hours or more. It is unclear at this point in time if there will be an attempt to get uniformity on committee meeting duration during the 2024 Regular Session, 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. For these reasons and others, it is important to be early for meetings you wish to attend since they will typically be prompt in beginning on time.

COMMITTEE AGENDAS: Committee agendas are supposed to be available 48 hours prior to a scheduled committee meeting. Contact committee staff to request to be added to their agenda distribution list using the process described above, or, the names of these individuals can be found on each corresponding landing page for [House Standing Committees](#) and [Senate Standing Committees](#) pages. 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 method. The upcoming day's Legislative Calendar [can be found](#)

[here](#) and will have agendas listed as well. You can also email Kate Talley (kate.talley@lrc.ky.gov) to be added to the larger LRC distribution list to get information on all committees. However, depending on the timing of when committee staff issuing agenda information, there is occasionally a delay on when you would receive agendas and other committee updates. Typically, being on a particular committee staff's email list is going to be the most efficient at receiving timely updates.

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 an agenda you receive online or via email may not always reflect the agenda that is used during the meeting. We have also seen expedited bill movements using discretionary motions on the floor of both the House and the Senate, in order to quickly hear a bill they wish to vote on the same day it was passed by the committee. Use [Bill Watch](#) to track bills, get updates, and follow the action through your organization's legislative activity. [Watching the live-streams](#) of committee activity also helps keep up with the latest bill movements.

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, but virtual participation throughout the 2023 Interim Session was still allowed and will likely be permitted as needed in 2024. 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.

[Please review the LRC Policy Guidelines for Legislative Committee Rooms here](#) that describes the do's and don'ts preferences of the legislature on both decorum and technical use of meeting spaces in the Annex.

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, and has MOVED locations in recent months. It is no longer in the basement of the Capitol, but is instead located in Room 029 in the basement of the Annex. 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 Lawrence Tyree at Lawrence.Tyree@lrc.ky.gov with questions.

WHO IS YOUR LEGISLATOR AND HOW DO I CONTACT THEM? There are 100 House members and 38 Senate members, however, there is currently one vacancy in the House for House District 26 following Rep. Russell Webber's resignation to become Deputy State Treasurer. Rep. Brandon Reed has also announced he will be departing the legislature soon, but he is still currently a member of the House of Representatives. In 2024, all House members will be up for election, and half of the Senate seats will be on the ballot as well. Many legislators are not seeking reelection this year so will effectively retire at the end of their respective terms on December 31, 2024.

Communications with legislators can be done remotely or in-person. See the latest [LRC news related](#) from December 2023 for useful tips on navigating the legislature.

- You are encouraged to use legislators' LRC email addresses and to leave messages for them by calling the MESSAGE LINE: 1-800-372-7181.
- A Spanish language line for legislative information is available by calling 1-866-840-6574.
- Kentuckians with hearing loss can use Kentucky Relay at 7-1-1 to share feedback with their legislators.
- You can also call individual legislator offices at 502-564-8100 and speak with their legislative assistant ("LA") to leave a message or try to catch your legislator by phone. If you are calling your legislator, be sure that the LA 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.
- All legislators 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.
 - Note: The LRC Business Office is located in Room 076 of the Annex basement.
 - 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.
 - If you plan to share materials with all legislators, the LRC Business Office requests that you do NOT individually address or label these documents.
 - Questions about the materials dissemination process should be directed to LRC Deputy Director for Business Operations Joy Kiser at 502.564.8100 ext. 59948.

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!

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