

Workforce Wednesdays

How to Contact Your Legislator

Who are Your Legislators?

- **Find out Who Your State Representative and State Senator are.** There are several options to find out who your legislators are:
 - a. Visit the Legislative Website's homepage: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>. In the center of the homepage there is a section that says "Who Are My Legislators?" that has a text box where you can enter your address.
 - b. Use the Legislative Map: <https://maps.legis.wisconsin.gov/> and enter your address in the text box on the upper right-hand corner of the webpage.
 - c. Call the Legislative Hotline: 1-800-362-9472
 - d. [Map of State Representatives by County](#). [Map of State Senators by County](#).
- **How to Find Your Legislator's Contact Information.** The state legislative website (<https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>) includes a comprehensive profile of each legislator that includes their phone number and email address. Look up State Representative contact information [here](#), and State Senator contact information [here](#). Click on "details" below the legislator's headshot to see their full profile, including office address, committee assignments and staff names.

How to Provide Input to Your Legislators About the Direct Care Workforce Crisis

- **You can Email or Call Your Legislator to Provide Input on State Budget or Legislative Items**
- **Whether you send an email or call your legislator, you want to make sure you cover the following:**
 - a. Who are you?
 - i. Are you---a direct care worker, a direct care provider, a family caregiver, etc.
 - b. What is your issue?
 - i. Wisconsin's direct care workforce crisis
 - c. Why does this matter?
 - i. Provide examples of how the crisis is impacting you or people you know. I.e. people don't have access to needed care; family members have had to quit their jobs to care for people; providers may need to close their doors; etc.
 - d. What can your legislator do to address the issue / What is your ask?
 - i. Invest in the direct care workforce as part of the 2021-23 state budget

- **Sample Script / Email to Give You Ideas---Direct Care Workers**

Dear Senator / Representative [insert name]

My name is XXXXXXXX, and I am a direct care worker {specify personal care, CNA, nursing home, etc} that lives in your district. I currently provide care to XXXX people.

I am reaching out to ask for your support of higher pay for direct care workers. I do this work because [insert reason], but the low wages mean that I cannot make a living as a caregiver. I could make more working at Kwik Trip. [provide any examples of financial challenges—lack of benefits, working a second job, etc].

Many people in need of care have lost good workers because the pay is just too low. [provide examples of challenges faced by clients if they can't find workers—i.e. can't get out of bed, can't work, etc.]

Please increase the pay for direct care workers as part of the state budget to help address the workforce crisis.

Sincerely,

NAME
ADDRESS

- **Sample Script / Email—Providers**

Dear Senator / Representative [insert name]

My name is XXXX, and I work for [name of agency], which provides [specify what type of direct care--personal care/ supportive home care/ nursing home care] to XXXX people living in your district.

I am reaching out to ask for your support of initiative that will lead to a direct care reimbursement rate that covers the true cost of providing care. This includes a higher reimbursement rate for [your type of direct care—i.e. personal care, nursing home care, etc.] and a statewide minimum rate band for long-term care.

Without a fair reimbursement rate, my agency [insert what will happen without a better rate or what you can't do because of the current rate—i.e. can't find good workers, might need to close, etc. Provide any real-life examples of the direct care workforce crisis's impact on your agency—challenges for clients, challenges for workers, etc.]. The true cost of care for my agency is currently \$XX.XX per hour and the current reimbursement rate is \$XX.XX per hour.

Please increase the reimbursement rate for [insert service] and create a statewide minimum rate band for long-term care as part of the state budget.

Sincerely,

NAME, ADDRESS

How to Set up a Meeting with Your Legislators

- **You can Request a Formal Meeting with Your Legislator**
 - a. Default meeting length is 30 minutes in the Wisconsin State Capitol.
 - b. Due to COVID, you will likely have a choice about whether you would like to meet virtually or in-person. You should specify if you want a virtual meeting when you set it up.
 - c. You can also request to meet with your legislator at a place your community like a coffee shop or even your direct care agency (called an in-district meeting).

- **Tips for Requesting a Meeting with Your Legislator:**
 - a. When you call your legislators office, ask to speak to the person who handles scheduling.
 - b. Let them know your name and that you are a constituent.
 - c. Tell them that you would like to set up a time to discuss issues impacting Wisconsin's direct care workforce with the Representative / Senator
 - d. Specify if you would like the meeting to be virtual, at the Capitol or in the district
 - e. Let them know the names of anyone else who may be joining the meeting with you

- **Sample Meeting Request Email**

Subject Line: Meeting Request

Dear Senator / Representative XXXXXXXXXXXXX

My name is XXXX, and I am a constituent of yours. I was wondering if you had any time available within in the next week or two to meet virtually to discuss several issues of importance to Wisconsin's direct care workforce.

Your Name

Your Address