

Advocacy 101: How to Meet with Your MPP¹

Setting Up the Meeting:

- Find your MPP: <https://www.ola.org/en/members> ;
- Many local government MPPs may be cabinet ministers: it is frequently more difficult to get a meeting with a cabinet minister. You can also try to get a meeting with their constituency office staff, or indeed their Ministry staff if their portfolio relates to the issue at hand.
- In your request, include your name, contact information (including postal code) and what it's about.

Preparing for the Meeting:

- Do some research on the issue (See this 6-part series on rent control in Ontario, starting with <https://monitormag.ca/reports/rent-control-in-ontario-part-1>)
- Join with members of neighbouring churches/faith communities if possible.
- Find out if your MPP is an active member of a faith community. See if you can get a member from their specific faith community to come with you.
- Prepare questions you have for the MPP / specific proposals you'd like them to adopt.
- How does this affect their local constituency? Use examples from what you're seeing in your parish outreach ministry.
- Prepare a brief (1-page) handout you can leave with the MPP. Include your contact information on this handout.

In the meeting:

- Focus on one or two main issues. Present your case clearly and concisely. You will probably have no more than 30 minutes – one hour at most.
- Be prepared to listen – the MPP will probably talk 2/3 of time!
- MPPs may try to deflect from the issue and talk about what else they are doing (if government) or how it's not their fault (if opposition). Be prepared to bring them back to the point and ask for a straight answer on what THEY are willing to do to address the issue. You may want to designate one member of your group who is skilled at bringing meetings back to the point to take the lead on this.
- Take notes.
- Aim for a calm & respectful dialogue, even if you disagree. Show where you are willing to work with them.
- Thank them for their time and the opportunity to meet.
- Remember – they work for you! Relax!

Following up:

- Send a follow-up letter after the meeting to thank them again
- Summarize any commitments
- Ask for an update on any developments.

¹ This handout has been adapted from "Meeting With Your MP" in the [Advocacy Toolkit](#) published in 2014 by Citizens for Public Justice, www.cpj.ca