

Meeting with your Local Legislators

An in-person meeting is a great way to make a lasting impression on your local representative. Meetings are generally scheduled for one half hour. Following are recommendations for making the most of your time with your local representative.

Before The Meeting:

- Review the representative's platforms and agenda.
- Know the bills for which he or she voted.
- Prepare notes to help tell your story and practice telling your story.
- Contact your local Be The Match® representative and invite them to attend the meeting with you. You can email legislation@nmdp.org to be connected with a local representative.
- Gather any compelling materials that you would like to share. For example, photos of you or a loved one during treatment are ideal to bring to the meeting. Also, ask your local Be The Match representative about available brochures, fact sheets, or even a sample registration kit to show the process of joining the Be The Match Registry®.
- Be prepared to adjust your meeting. Your legislator may be running late, or there may be many other constituents seeking her/his attention. Be flexible and ready to adjust your message and your schedule.
- Go with the flow. Legislators may have to change their plans at the last minute. Be gracious. If the legislator asks you to speak with the staff, please accept the offer. Legislative staffers are effective gate-keepers and information-gatherers.

During the Meeting:

- Arrive early.
- Introduce yourself and the reason for the meeting.
- Build rapport. Reference the current events in lawmaker's political career or ask about a particular project that he or she is overseeing.
- Share your story. Be sure to relate your situation to the rest of your state's population. Blood cancers can affect everyone. Every four minutes, someone is diagnosed with a blood cancer, such as leukemia or lymphoma.
- Ask questions, be engaging. For example, "do you know anyone who's had cancer?" or "What have you heard about donating marrow?"
- Allow the Be The Match representative to answer any technical questions, and direct any questions you don't know to the Be The Match representative. If you are attending alone, take note of any questions and follow up with your local Be The Match representative to get the information.
- Show the lawmaker any materials you brought to the meeting. Pass out photos and leave any brochures with them or their staff.
- Conclude the meeting by asking if they have any questions, and thank them for their time.

After the Meeting:

- Always send a thank you letter. In the letter reference any memorable parts of the conversation.

If you have any questions while preparing for your meeting, contact a member of Be The Match's advocacy team at legislation@nmdp.org.
