

## **Meeting a Legislator in their Office or Local Constituent Hour**

*Personal contact with legislators is very effective. Some host open meetings in their districts on a regular basis, many are willing to set up a meeting with a constituent, and all have offices at Legislative Hall where they can receive visitors.*

### **Arranging the Meeting**

If your legislator does not have a regular meeting in your district or you cannot attend that, you can call or email them to ask for an appointment either in the district or at Legislative Hall when they are in session.

Some people may feel intimidated at the idea of asking for an appointment. Remember that it is their job to represent you and your input helps them do that job. Legislators genuinely like hearing from you!

### **At the Meeting**

You may only have a few minutes with your legislator. Introduce yourself and tell them about your family member with autism or why you are concerned about someone with autism. Explain how existing or proposed policies affect or could affect your family or others that you know. Ask them for their support.

Keep in mind that elected officials are responsible for a wide variety of policies and agencies and may not know the fine details of DDDS adult programs, insurance, or autism. Answer their questions as best you can, and don't be afraid to say "I don't know, but I will try to find that out for you." Then contact Autism Delaware with those questions and we will do our best to get the information.

### **After the Meeting**

Thank them for their time, and follow up with a thank-you note or email. While your communications with your legislator are of course personal, Autism Delaware does find it helpful to our own advocacy efforts to know how legislators respond to autism issues so if you'd like, let us know how it went!

### **How Autism Delaware Can Help**

If you want to address issues with your legislator that we are working on or support, we can:

- 👤 provide talking points;
- 👤 help secure an appointment in Legislative Hall or find out when your legislators are holding constituent meetings
- 👤 send a staff member or volunteer to Legislative Hall to go with you or provide moral support in advance or after your meeting.