



# GRASSROOTS MANUAL

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# LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

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Something we hear frequently is how intimidating the legislative process seems. However, your experience working in aging services is invaluable and something the legislative body looks forward to hearing about directly from you. Learning more about the process and general expectations or rules of decorum will assist you in feeling more confident to participate with guidance from your advocacy team.

## STRUCTURE & TIMELINE

The Kansas Legislature operates on a two-year cycle with a 125-member House of Representatives and 40-member Senate. Representatives serve a two-year term, while senators serve four. Kansas legislators are considered to serve in their positions part-time due to session beginning the second Monday of January and typically ending by May. This time of the year is when you are more likely to find all legislators in Topeka at the Capitol. During the weekends and off-season, you will typically find legislators back in their hometowns providing updates to constituents and working their everyday occupations.

Within the legislative body, the two chambers each have leadership teams that help to decide session timelines, calendars, which bills to vote on, and what special committees to approve during the off-season, also known as the interim.

Aside from the legislative body, there are five support agencies that assist in providing support including: Kansas Legislative Research Department (KLRD), Revisor of Statutes, Legislative Administrative Services (LAS), Office of Information Services, and Legislative Division of Post Audit.

Generally, this is the timeline to expect during active session:

January-February - Bill introductions and referrals to committees.

February-March - Committees hold public hearings and vote on amendments (if necessary) to proposed bills.

March-April - Conference committees meet to revise bill language on similar bills between House and Senate.

Late April-May - Veto overrides (if necessary).

## NAVIGATING THE CAPITOL

The State Capitol is the hub for most, if not all, legislative events. When visiting the Capitol, enter the basement level parking garage on the north side of the building. Parking here is free and while it says there is a 2-hour limit, it is not enforced during legislative session. If the parking garage is full, there are additional parking garages nearby on Kansas Avenue or you can park along the street but either of these options will require payment. Parking garages typically accept credit cards, while street parking typically requires change for the meters.

If you park in the parking garage, take the elevator to the ground level. This is where security is located. After parking, make sure you enter through the north side of the building on the ground level. You will put any bags you are carrying on the conveyor belt to be scanned, and if you only have keys and your phone on you then you will hold them above your head and walk through the metal detector. Security is always friendly and will help with pointing you in the right direction after you are done with that process.

From here, you will walk straight ahead, past the dining area and either turn left or right at the first hallway. This will take you to elevators (which are usually slow during session with so many people in the building), but will allow you to easily press what floor you are wanting. If this is your first time visiting the Capitol, go to the first floor, also known as the Rotunda, to get yourself oriented. The middle of the Rotunda will have a compass and directions to help you understand which way to go on each level to find your committee room. Rooms and offices are labeled by number and N (for North, E (for East), S (for South), or W (for West). Restrooms are typically located on the West side of each floor.

Below is what you will generally find on each floor:

Ground Floor - Security Checkpoint, Visitor Center, Auditorium and Classroom, Capitol Café, Dining Room, Revisor of Statutes, Legislative Research, Legislator Offices, News Media, and Document Room (this is where you can get a copy of the daily calendar or specific bill).

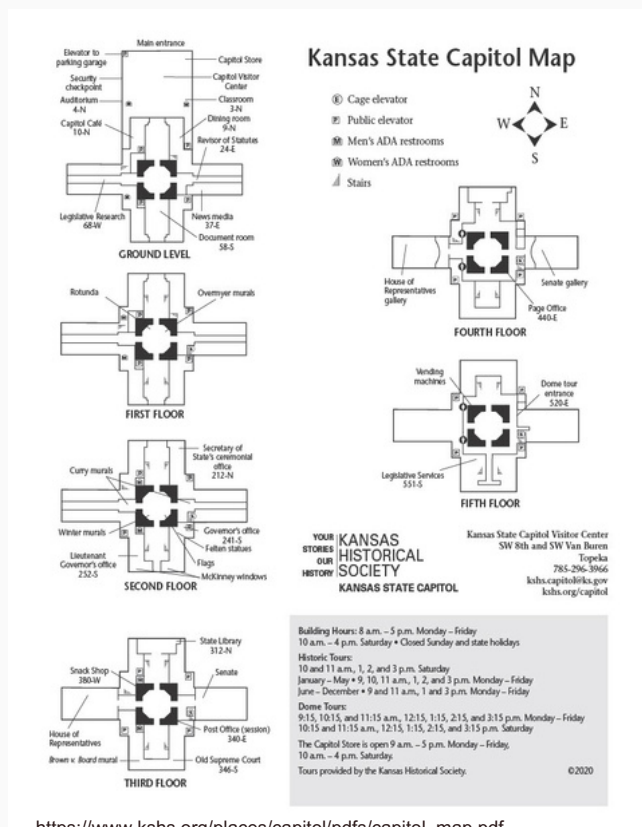
First Floor - Rotunda, Committee Rooms, and Legislator Offices.

Second Floor - Secretary of State's Ceremonial Office, Governor's Office, Lieutenant Governor's Office, Committee Rooms, and Legislator Offices.

Third Floor - State Library, House of Representatives Chamber Floor, Senate Chamber Floor, Old Supreme Court, Brown V Board Mural, Committee Rooms, and Legislator Offices.

Fourth Floor - House of Representatives Gallery, Senate Gallery (this is where you can go to watch the body as a whole vote on a bill or motion), Committee Rooms, and Legislator Offices.

Fifth Floor - Legislative Services, Dome Tour Entrance, Committee Rooms, and Legislator Offices.



[https://www.kshs.org/places/capitol/pdfs/capitol\\_map.pdf](https://www.kshs.org/places/capitol/pdfs/capitol_map.pdf)

## FROM BILL TO LAW

Any member of a legislative committee, whether standing, interim, or statutory, can introduce a bill. Any bills related to the state budget are introduced by House Appropriations and Senate Ways and Means Committees. Constituents can ask their legislator to introduce a bill which is often designated "By Request" and does not necessarily designate the legislator advocates for the bill.

After a legislative member requests a bill and receives an "RS" number, it is assigned to a committee by whichever chamber it was requested in. The committee chair decides which bills to receive a hearing on, which generally allows for public testimony. Sometimes, this is all the further a bill makes it during session. If the chair of the committee decides to do Final Action on a bill, the committee will suggest and decide whether to adopt amendments before voting to move the bill to the originating chamber for a floor vote. If the bill makes it on the calendar for a floor vote and passes, it then passes to the other chamber to go through the same process. If a bill makes it out of both chambers without amendments or acceptance of

the originating chamber's amendments in the second chamber, it then goes to the Governor to sign the bill into law or for Veto.

If the originating chamber passes a bill, to which the second chamber makes additional amendments the original chamber does not agree with, they can request a Conference Committee in which committee leadership (Chair, Vice-Chair, and Minority Leader) from each chamber come together to compromise on the bill language. They can also decide to add additional bill language in from up to 5 other bills. The result from these committees are known as Conference Committee Reports and must receive passing floor votes from each chamber to pass on to the Governor for final decision.

Any bills that are vetoed by the Governor can receive a motion for override by the chambers. Each chamber needs 2/3 of their body to vote in favor of the override for the bill to become law without the Governor's signature.

## GUIDELINES FOR HEARINGS

LeadingAge Kansas will present and coordinate testimony for all priority bills impacting aging services. If there is a bill you are interested in providing either written or verbal testimony on, contact us.

If you are testifying on behalf of LeadingAge Kansas, we will prepare testimony for you. If you are testifying as an individual or on behalf of your provider organization, we are happy to review and provide feedback on your testimony. We can also assist with submitting your testimony for you as sometimes hard copies need delivered to the Capitol.

Written testimony should be no longer than two to three pages, front and back. If providing oral testimony, do not read your written but rather provide a general overview hitting the main points you want the committee to know. You generally have three minutes or less to speak.

Remember to remain objective and for oral testimony be prepared to answer questions at the end of your testimony or at the time designated by the committee chair. If you are unsure of the answer, simply state that. Let the committee know you will be happy to find out the answer and follow back up with them. Dress attire is business casual or business professional.

It's good to research the committee you are going in front of and their rules of decorum before testifying. Committees we are generally in front of include:

- [House Appropriations](#)
  - [House Social Services Budget](#)
- [House Health and Human Services](#)
- [House Judiciary](#)
- [Senate Ways and Means](#)
  - [Human Services Subcommittee](#)
- [Senate Public Health and Welfare](#)
- [Senate Judiciary](#)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Use the following resources to learn more about the structure, timeline, and processes of the Kansas legislative process as well as navigating the Capitol.

[About the Kansas Legislature](#)

[State Capitol Map by Floor](#)

[How a Bill Becomes Law](#)

[Legislative Procedure in Kansas](#)

[Legislature At A Glance Video](#)

[Kansas Legislative Research Department \(KLRD\)](#)

[Revisor of Statutes](#)

[Legislative Administrative Services \(LAS\)](#)

[Office of Information Services](#)

[Legislative Division of Post Audit](#)

# GRASSROOTS

## ADVOCACY

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Despite having an advocacy team at LeadingAge Kansas, it takes a collective voice to make sure a message is shared with legislative members. There is power in numbers. The more we do together and with others aligned with our strategic vision, the more we can accomplish for the aging services industry. Here's how to get started on your grassroots advocacy journey.

### ACTION ALERTS

Make sure you are signed up in our LeadingAge Kansas system to receive Legislative Updates and Action Alerts. Being aware of what is coming up during session can help you ensure your testimony is in on time, speak with your legislative official before a vote occurs, and make accommodations to present testimony. If you have questions on how to get signed up for these alerts, contact the LeadingAge Kansas Director of Government Affairs. Also follow us on:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [TikTok](#)
- [AgingAdvocate Podcast](#)

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

There are different approaches to advocacy. At LeadingAge Kansas we like to utilize research and relationships to support our position and efforts. These relationships include engaging providers in our membership by networking during a Legislative Day event or mentoring each other on testifying.

These relationships can also include legislative officials since they are the ones who are determining which bills to prioritize and move forward. Below are effective ways of building relationships with legislative officials:

1. *Call your legislator.* Calling is more effective than sending an email as legislators receive hundreds of emails. It also shows you are taking time out of your day to make the call which to some can make an impact.
2. *Write to your legislator.* Write a postcard, letter, or email to your legislator introducing yourself or about a specific issue. In some cases, a legislator may give you a cell phone to text them at. Only do this if you've received their blessing.
3. *Invite your legislator for a visit at your facility.* Give them a chance to see you in action and your passion for caring for the aging population. This can also be a good time to point out visually how a specific bill or policy may impact your facility. We recommend doing this during interim months (July-December).
4. *Attend your legislator's district event.* During session, there are often breaks where legislative officials go back to their districts to provide updates. Attend and share feedback!
5. *Attend the LeadingAge Kansas Legislative Day or Coffee Chats.* This is a great way to network with other aging services providers, catch up with your legislative officials, and see session in action.

## CAMPAIGNS AND EDITORIALS

When the personal relationships you develop aren't enough, there's always power in numbers. Utilizing an effective email, phone call, text, or letter campaign with fellow colleagues or individuals with common interest can compel legislators to take notice of your issue. Another impactful way of raising awareness to your cause is writing editorials, or opinion letters, to your local newspaper. Often times an issue that may be important to you isn't to others because of a lack of knowledge or education. Utilizing campaigns and editorials allows that information to be shared with a wider base who can join your efforts and make your efforts more successful.

## POWER AND INFLUENCE

While relationships are important, don't feel the pressure to do it all. Call on contacts who hold influential board positions or city or county commission seats to take up your cause. These individuals often have a lot of face time with legislators and others in government and can make connections for your or advocate on your behalf. Besides those influential connections outside of the legislature, think about the key players who are making the decisions inside the legislature. These will be your House and Senate Majority and Minority Leaderships. In Kansas, we typically see Republicans hold a majority leadership and Democrats hold the minority. Within each leadership division, you'll see:

- House Speaker or Senate President
- House Speaker Pro Tem or Senate Vice President
- House and Senate Majority Leaders
- House and Senate Minority Leaders
- House and Senate Assistant Minority Leaders
- House and Senate Minority Whips

These individuals help form priorities for each caucus and determine what bills receive hearings in committee and on the floor. Find out more about who is in [House](#) and [Senate](#) Leadership.

## LOBBYING VS. ADVOCACY

Advocacy is education. Lobbying is power and influence. Not-for-profits should be careful not to make lobbying a major function of their operations to avoid jeopardizing their [tax status](#). As long as you are coming from a place of education, you should typically be okay. When in doubt, call the Director of Government Affairs for a consult.

## CONTINUATION OF EFFORTS

Advocacy is not a one-time thing. It's a process. As with any relationship, you have to nourish it even when you are not in need of something. Continuing efforts during interim, or off-season when legislators are home, can increase your chances of connecting with your legislative officials during session. Additionally, government processes move slow. It may take multiple years to see the legislation you have been advocating for become law. Don't be disheartened! Learn and adapt from your attempts.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Use the following resources to enhance your advocacy efforts:

[Testimony template](#)

[Email/Letter template](#)

[Tips for Calling Your Legislator](#)

[Letters to the Editor](#)

[How To Make The Most of Legislative Day](#)

[Hosting Legislators at Your Facility](#)

[Election Year Toolkit](#)

[Do's and Don'ts of Not-for-Profit Advocacy](#)

**“They always say time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.”**

**— Andy Warhol**

# GLOSSARY OF

## TERMS

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<b>ACTION ALERTS</b>	A message sent out to a specific group of people asking them to speak to government leaders on a specific issue.
<b>AMENDMENTS</b>	Modifications made to a bill changing its original contents.
<b>BILL</b>	A piece of legislation introduced in the state legislature or federal congress.
<b>CHAMBER</b>	Two divisions of the Kansas legislature: House and Senate.
<b>COMMITTEE</b>	A group of members from the legislature organized by each chamber to hear testimony and take action on certain issues.
<b>INTERIM COMMITTEE</b>	A committee that meets in the “off season” and is usually requested during the legislative session to work on specific issues or tasks and make recommendations for the future.
<b>STANDING COMMITTEE</b>	A committee that regularly meets on certain issues during session and does not <i>typically</i> change from year to year.
<b>STATUTORY COMMITTEE</b>	A committee created by law to oversee specific parts of the government and usually contain joint House and Senate members of the legislature ; example: Joint Bob Bethell.
<b>CONSTITUENTS</b>	Voting individuals who live or work in a district and have the ability to elect their legislators.
<b>FINAL ACTION</b>	Final vote either in committee or chamber floor determining whether a bill will or will not move forward.
<b>GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY</b>	The process of educating and engaging general members of the public or targeted individuals to contact their legislators and promote your cause or issue.
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	The individuals who are voted in by their parties (Republic or Democratic) to represent priority issues and determine committee makeup, scheduling, and bills to be heard.
<b>RS NUMBER</b>	An initial number a bill is filed with through the Office of Revisors of Statutes before it is formally introduced.
<b>TESTIMONY</b>	Verbal or written only comments provided during a bill hearing either supporting, opposing, remaining neutral or recommending amendments.
<b>VETO</b>	The Governor of Kansas can reject a bill passed out of the legislature if they feel it is bad for Kansans, however, the legislature can choose whether to attempt to override the veto and still pass the bill as law by getting 2/3 of <i>each</i> chamber to vote in support of its passage.



# YOUR JOURNEY **HAS BEGUN**

Let's Grow Our Grassroots Together

*LeadingAge*<sup>™</sup>  
Kansas