

Plan a climate action meeting with your MP



Show up. Speak up.
Make climate action work for us.

This guide was designed by Leadnow.ca for local organizers and participants in the People's Climate Plan campaign in the spring and summer of 2016. This fall, set up a meeting with your MP to tell them we want a science-based climate plan that brings justice and 100% renewable power.

To get involved with Leadnow's work for a fair economy, a working democracy, and a safe climate, visit we.leadnow.ca.

How to plan a meeting with your MP

Step One: Finding your MP's contact information

You may already have a relationship with your Member of Parliament, from coordinating around this summer's climate town halls or other work in their constituency. If not, it's easy to find contact information for your MP and, (especially if the request comes from a constituent), they are likely to agree to meet with you.

You can [find contact information for your MP with your postal code](#) at the Parliament of Canada website. They keep both constituency offices in the communities they represent and legislative offices in Ottawa. In most cases, you will want to contact and meet with them at their constituency office.

Step Two: Plan your Meeting

Before asking for a meeting, plan out what you hope to accomplish, which key points you'll raise, and who you'll bring and what they will do at the meeting. Time spent planning and rehearsing with your meeting partners will help you make the most of your time with your MP.

Avoid visiting your MP alone. Always aim to include a resident of the riding the MP represents and have them make the ask of your MP. Decide ahead of time who will raise which key points.

Encourage those who represent key communities or areas of expertise and experience to join your meeting. For instance, public health workers and climate scientists can speak

with authority about the impacts of climate change and fossil fuels on people and the planet. Younger people and elders can address questions of intergenerational equity and long-term planning. Energy workers and business owners can address the pace of the decarbonization transition and the need to support workers during it. Homeowners can speak about the opportunities of energy efficient retrofitting; renters about the unique opportunities reducing the carbon footprint of multi-family living, like neighbourhood district energy systems. This will allow your MP to return to Ottawa and their party caucus to report that constituents in their riding are informed, organized, and care enough about climate action to meet with them in-person.

Sample Agenda for MP Meeting

1. Introductions

- Goal: Build relationships with your MP. Find ways to connect on shared values; emphasize why you are at the meeting, rather than what made you come.
- Each attendee at the meeting should introduce themselves, briefly mention where they live and what they do, and offer a short values-based explanation for why they're present.

2. Listen to the MP

- Goal: Understand MP's position and areas of agreement where a request for additional action or follow-up can be made.
- The MP is likely to offer an extended introduction and frame the conversation around their own priorities. Listen attentively to get a sense of their values, objectives and priorities.

3. Discuss your Climate Action Ambitions

- Introduce the Three Pillars of the [People's Climate Plan](#). If you brought a handout to leave behind, share it now.
- Bring one clear key point for each pillar. Where possible, make a direct link to local opportunities or threats, like local employment in retro-fitting and public transit or the cost of climate adaptation for coastal and flood plain communities.
- Use local data and analysis from local researchers where possible, from universities, environmental groups, and industry associations. Tell local stories about First Nations, workers, families, small businesses.

4. Make a clear ask

- Are you looking for a specific commitment? A public statement? Support for a private member's bill? A letter to a Committee or Minister?
- Decide ahead of time how you intend to follow-up. Will you call to confirm in a month? Try to plan a follow-up meeting in several months before you leave.

5. Thank the MP and Commit to Follow-Up

- Thank the MP, share your contact information, and make a commitment to follow up.
- Following the meeting, debrief what happened with your team and share your experience with others to increase the impact of similar meetings.

At the start of your meeting, make sure to introduce everyone and leave time for them to share a brief story about their work with the People's Climate Plan. Did they help organize a briefing or attend an MP-led town hall? Explain how that experience led to this meeting through a story.

Use the three pillars of the People's Climate Plan to help draft your agenda. Make one clear point or ask about each pillar, linking it to local solutions and challenges where possible.

Research your MP's background, current responsibilities, and recent public statements prior to the meeting. Search social media, the web, House of Commons records, news stories, and other sources for information about their interests and concerns. Understand your riding, too. What are the big industries and employers? How are the local and provincial government taking action (or not) on climate? Use this information to plan the 3-4 key points you plan on raising with the MP.

At the close of the meeting, leave time to identify any follow up items and be sure to share your contact information. Don't forget to thank them for meeting with you, even if the meeting didn't meet your expectations. Remember that this is just one meeting in ongoing engagement with your MP about federal climate action.

Step Three: Ask for a Meeting

Now that you have a plan for your meeting make the ask of your MP. Draft an email and calling script to help you secure a meeting.

Sample Email for MP Meeting

Hello [Name of MP]:

This summer, I took part in the government's national climate change consultation by organizing with the People's Climate Plan. Our goal is to secure a national climate plan that is based on science, brings justice for workers and affected communities, and delivers 100% renewable energy by 2050.

I would like to set up a time to meet with you and some of the people I worked with this summer to call for Canadian climate action. Are you able to meet with us between now and [ideal date]? Please feel free to reply directly with a date, time and location that works for you to meet with us.

We would like to tell you more about 100+ MP and citizen-led town halls that took place this summer and discuss how we think Canada should take action on climate change. We also want to hear from you about what's needed to prepare [name of riding] for climate change and the plans of your [government/party] for future action.

We look forward to hearing from you and meeting to discuss.

Sincerely,

[Name of primary contact person] and [name of organization or other people attending]

Send the email first. Then, if you don't hear back within 48 hours make a phone call. Begin your phone call by mentioning the email and ask to secure a date and time to meet with your MP.

Step Four: At the Meeting

Meet at a nearby location with your partners ahead of time. Rehearse how the meeting will flow and agree to who will discuss which points and answer which questions from the MP. Organize any and all printed materials you're bringing ahead of time -- file folders or sealable bags help keep materials dry and fresh until they're needed.

When you show up, be respectful of their staff. The tone you set is very important. While you want to be direct and clear about our concerns for bold, urgent climate action these meetings should demonstrate your willingness to engage respectfully and sets a contrast should you choose to escalate your tactics following the meeting.

Be cautious about extended pleasantries with your MP. Avoid getting bogged down with long discussions not related to Canadian climate action.

Assign someone to take notes. Assign another person to lead the introductions and facilitate your team's contributions to the conversation. Other attendees should know which points they're talking to ahead of time.

Step Five: After the Meeting

Have a debrief call or meeting with your team where you summarize what you learned and said. Make note of any follow-up commitments or tasks and assign them. Ask your team members to write follow-up letters, emails, or phone calls to individually thank the MP and reiterate key points made during the meeting. Be clear about the urgency and ambition we expect of government and provide additional information or resources to address any objections or resistance they raised during the meeting.