



Making Contacts for Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

This information provides some basic tips for anyone who wants to talk with decision makers about the importance of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach's educational programs and applied research.

Who should be contacted?

Your state representative and senator

- You can find information about your senator at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/senate>
- For information about your representative, go to <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/house>.
- If you do not know which senate or house district you reside in, you can locate them using tools at <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/Legislators/find.aspx>.

The governor

- You can find contact information for the governor at <https://governor.iowa.gov/contact>. Email is a convenient option for communications and will usually yield a timely response. It is also acceptable to phone or send mail.

Board of Regents, State of Iowa

- You can find information about board members and public meetings at <http://www.iowaregents.edu/>.
- You can find contact information for the Board of Regents at <https://www.iowaregents.edu/contact-us>.

Other opinion leaders and decision makers

- Talk to others who may have good contact with legislators and/or the governor.

Organizations and agencies

- As you meet with and work with others, it is appropriate to talk about the importance of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. Encourage anyone interested to help share that message with decision makers.

What are the basic ground rules?

- Be brief, concise, and polite. Treat the office with respect.
- Thank him/her for listening.
- Follow up with additional information if appropriate.
- Use your own words to explain why Iowa State University Extension and Outreach is important to you, your family, the community, particular industries, etc.
- Be reasonable and constructive. Indicate that you understand the complexity of the issue(s) and be willing to consider trade-offs.

What is the best way to make a contact?

There is no one best way. The main point is to do it! Choose whatever method you prefer.

Making a personal contact – Talk directly with your legislator if it can be arranged. Be prepared to share your views briefly and clearly. You may want to follow up with a note and/or more information. Remember that a conversation with a legislator's aide also can provide a valuable contact.

Writing a letter – Write about only one issue. Keep it brief and tell why this issue is important to you, outlining your own experiences. Use your own words. The letter can be handwritten, but it needs to be easy to read. Give your address and sign your name clearly. Here's how to address your letter.

Sen. (Name), (XXth Senate District)

State Capitol
1007 East Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50319

Rep. (Name), (XXth House District)

State Capitol
1007 East Grand Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50319

Salutation: Dear Senator (Name):

Salutation: Dear Representative (Name):

Sending email – This is an effective method for contacting your legislators. The hints for writing letters also apply here. It is extremely important to send email to only your own legislators and to include your complete address so that they know you are a constituent. You can find email addresses through the Web sites mentioned at the beginning of this document.

When do I need to make contact?

Now and anytime! Visit <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/> for information on the current legislative session. It is imperative that legislators and the governor hear from citizens while state budget decisions are being made in committee. It is extremely important they continue to hear from constituents about Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and how it affects their lives. They also need to hear how Iowa State University Extension and Outreach can help them serve their constituents.

Thank you for making contacts on behalf of Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. It is crucial that policy makers hear from their constituents.