

# HOW TO GET TO KNOW YOUR LEGISLATOR

Utilize this resource to research your legislators (or any elected official), what power they hold, and (most importantly), what influences them. This worksheet's goal is to help you create a complete picture of your elected officials as you prepare to engage with them on civil liberties issues.

## QUESTIONS

Consider the following questions and how you can use the answers to inform your advocacy. You may not know the answers to some of these questions - and that's okay! Instead, consider what you could do to get those answers.

### Details about your legislator:

- What is their political party?
- How long have they been in office?
- When are they up for reelection?
- Who are their major donors?

### What does your representative/senator's personal life and history look like? How do they impact their worldview?

- Where did they go to school?
- Where did they grow up?
- What is their religion? Do they belong to a congregation?
- Do they have employment outside of the legislature? If so, what do they do?
- Do they volunteer their time? If so, how?
- Do they have family members or other people they have close relationships with who have significant community influence?

### What issues does your legislator prioritize?

- What issues have they given public statements about?
- Do they have a newsletter? Is there a common thread to what they write about?
- Are there specific organizations your legislator supports? What issues do those organizations focus on?

### What legislative committees is your representative/senator on? Legislators usually serve on one to three committees. A legislator's ability to influence legislation depends largely on whether they are a member of the committee that oversees related issues.

- Do they have a leadership position?
- Have any of their committees considered previous versions of bills the ACLU has supported or opposed in past legislative sessions?
- If your legislator was in office then, check out the [2019-2020 ACLU of Iowa Legislative Scorecard](#) to see how your lawmaker voted on civil liberties during the last general assembly.

## CONTACT US!

HAVE A QUESTION?

Email us at [outreach@aclu-ia.org](mailto:outreach@aclu-ia.org).

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Iowa