



ARIZONA REALTORS®
KEY CONTACT
PROGRAM

HANDBOOK

WELCOME

Congratulations on being selected to be a part of the Arizona REALTORS® Key Contact Program!

The Arizona REALTORS® serves as the leading voice of the real estate industry and REALTORS® throughout the state of Arizona through advocacy and education. As an organization with over 54,000 members across the state, the Arizona REALTORS® look to advocate for policies that make a positive impact for the industry at all levels of government.

While a strong direct lobbying presence in Phoenix is important, the real power of the real estate industry resides with its individual members. With that in mind, the more than 54,000 members across the state give the Arizona REALTORS® the potential to be a compelling force in our state's capital. However, it takes substantial amounts of grassroots engagement and political momentum to accomplish our legislative and regulatory goals. This is why we need you.

Regardless of the issues facing the real estate industry, there will always be a group or association opposing our position on key issues. As a Key Contact, you are our industry's most effective advocate. As the expert on real estate issues and with a personal relationship with a lawmaker, your legislator wants to hear your input on important policy issues.

State lawmakers want to know how a particular policy issue will affect their districts and they look to you as a Key Contact to serve as a resource to help them find answers. Your voice and your hands-on experience will help guide their decision-making process when it comes to policies that impact the real estate market. As Key Contacts, you are active in numerous legislative districts across the state of Arizona. This is an incredible responsibility with significant power to make a difference.

Your efforts to build and maintain relationships with targeted lawmakers can make a significant difference when it matters most. When an important issue arises, we want your lawmaker to pick up the phone and reach out to you – their Arizona REALTOR® Key Contact whom they can trust when it comes to real estate policy. This handbook will serve as your guide to being a successful advocate and Key Contact, providing you with all the essential resources and information you need to participate. Your involvement is vital to the success of the Arizona REALTORS® advocacy efforts across the state.

KEY CONTACT RESPONSIBILITIES

An Arizona REALTOR® Key Contact's most valuable contribution to the program and the broader industry is the development of a relationship with their designated lawmaker(s). In addition to regular contact with their designated lawmaker, the Key Contact network is expected to perform specific tasks to help achieve the goal of building/forming strong relationships with elected officials but to also educate lawmakers year-round on important policy issues.

- ▶ **Sign a Key Contact Pledge** committing to represent the Arizona REALTORS® and the broader real estate industry for your designated legislative district/lawmaker.
- ▶ **Consistently advocate** on behalf of the Arizona REALTORS®, and properly represent the REALTOR® Party, and REALTORS® across the state of Arizona in all interactions with your designated lawmaker.
- ▶ **Contact your designated lawmaker(s)** at least once per quarter via email, phone call, or in-person/virtual meeting to discuss important real estate issues, and to check-in.
- ▶ **Respond to at least 75%** of any/all state and federal calls to action.
- ▶ **Serve as a subject matter expert** as a REALTOR® in Arizona and educate your lawmaker on important real estate issues.
- ▶ **Participate in at least one** Arizona REALTOR® Key Contact Program Training per year.
- ▶ **Regularly submit Key Contact Field Reports** via the Arena application. Reports should be submitted at least once per quarter.
- ▶ **Meet with your designated lawmaker** at least twice per year. Participate in REALTOR® Day at the Capitol.
- ▶ **Involve your designated lawmaker** in appropriate local or state association events.



HOW TO BUILD & MAINTAIN A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR STATE LAWMAKER

Some Arizona Key Contacts participate in a wide variety of efforts to maximize their influence on state lawmakers. Here are just some of the ways you can build stronger relationships with your designated state lawmaker and expand your influence:

- ▶ **Personally interact with and involve your state lawmakers** in local or state association events: potentially inviting them to speak at an annual meeting, attend openings of new offices, open houses, etc.
- ▶ **Volunteer for a lawmaker's campaign activities.** This will help foster personal connections with that official (volunteering to make phone calls, knock doors, etc.). It will help add credibility to your grassroots communications and help you as you look to build a stronger relationship with the elected official.
- ▶ **Support Arizona REALTOR® get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts,** encouraging other Arizona REALTORS® in your legislative district to vote for your designated lawmaker if they are an ally of the real estate industry.
- ▶ **Consider making a personal contribution to your lawmaker's re-election campaign.** Supporting your lawmaker's campaign can increase your personal influence on behalf of the Arizona REALTORS® at the state house.
- ▶ **Be sure to send follow-up "thank you" messages** for key votes and positions if your lawmaker sides with the Arizona REALTORS® on a particular issue.
- ▶ **Drop off or send key Arizona REALTOR® media releases, Arizona REALTOR® re-search publications, etc.** to help educate your lawmaker.



THE DO'S & DON'TS OF MEETING WITH STATE LAWMAKERS

DO:

BEFORE THE MEETING

- ▶ Prepare by researching your state lawmaker and reading up on recent events they've attended or positions that they've taken.
- ▶ Learn your state lawmaker's committee assignments, what specialties they have, as well as some of their personal interests if possible.
- ▶ Plan your strategy ahead of time. If multiple people are attending the meeting, decide who will lead the meeting and what talking points each individual will cover.
- ▶ Study your talking points. The Arizona REALTORS® will provide you with comprehensive talking points prior to meetings.
- ▶ Organize by making sure you know where and when the meeting is taking place. Arrive on time, be polite, and dress appropriately.
- ▶ Make sure you submit a Key Contact Field Report after your meeting to keep Arizona REALTOR® staff apprised of the conversation.

DURING THE MEETING

- ▶ Be sensitive of the amount of time allotted to your meeting. Make sure to ask upfront about how long the meeting will run. Any amount of time is extremely beneficial.
- ▶ Present the need for what you're asking the lawmaker to do. Use data and specific examples that you've found or that Arizona REALTOR® staff have provided to you.
- ▶ Share your story. Storytelling about how a specific policy has impacted you or your business is a great way to educate lawmakers on a particular issue.
- ▶ Relate situations in their home district to the broader policy issue. Lawmakers care about their constituents first and foremost.
- ▶ Ask the lawmaker their position on the issue.
- ▶ Listen carefully to any counterarguments from your lawmaker and be prepared to respond accordingly or tell them that you will follow up with them. Always be respectful if disagreements arise.
- ▶ Admit what you don't know. Offer to try to find the answer and send information back to them after the meeting (Arizona REALTOR® staff can help with follow-up information).

END OF THE MEETING

- ▶ Get the name and business cards of any/all individuals who participated in the meeting. This will help you should you need to follow up after the meeting.
- ▶ Give the lawmaker any handouts or materials you have related to your talking points (Arizona REALTOR® staff can help compile materials and leave behind documents).
- ▶ Thank the lawmaker for their time and any support they may have offered during the meeting. Also, thank them for any positions they may have taken in the past in support of the real estate industry if applicable.

AFTER THE MEETING

- ▶ Write a thank you email to your lawmaker and offer to be of any assistance on real estate issues in the future.
- ▶ Follow through on any promises or commitments you made to the lawmaker.
- ▶ File a Field Report on the meeting.
- ▶ Send the lawmaker a note of support when they do or say something that is helpful to the Arizona REALTORS®. This is especially important if the lawmaker was not initially supportive of an issue and worked with us even if it was unpopular.



DON'T:

- ▶ Fail to show up for your scheduled meeting. Call if you are running late.
- ▶ Overload a lawmaker with too many issues in a single meeting. Focus on your priorities.
- ▶ Confront, threaten, pressure or beg under any circumstances.
- ▶ Be argumentative. Speak with calmness and commitment so as not to put them on the defensive.
- ▶ Overstate the case. Lawmakers are very busy, and you are likely to lose their attention if you are too wordy. Concise points get the job done.
- ▶ Expect your lawmaker to be a specialist in real estate. Their schedules and workloads tend to make them generalists when it comes to policy.
- ▶ Be put off by long-winded answers. Bring the lawmaker back to the point of the conversation and maintain control of the meeting.
- ▶ Be afraid to take a stand on the issues. As a Key Contact, you represent thousands of REALTORS® whose views on these issues are important to the lawmaker, so respectfully stand your ground if need be.
- ▶ Be afraid to say "I don't know". Offer to follow up with them after the meeting when you can obtain the correct information.

HOW TO SCHEDULE MEETINGS WITH YOUR LAWMAKER

The following is a guide for scheduling appointments with your elected officials whether in-district or at the state house.

- ▶ **Lawmaker's Contact Information:** If you do not have a way to contact your designated lawmaker, reach out to Arizona REALTOR® staff, or use the Arena application to search for your lawmaker.
- ▶ **Send an email to your lawmaker** requesting a meeting. A sample letter is provided on the next page to help you keep the request formal and informative.
- ▶ **Include pertinent information.** Be sure to remind your lawmaker of your relationship and/or previous interactions. Make sure to include the preferred date/time for when you'd like to meet with them. Include the name or bill number of any legislation you'd like to discuss with them to allow them time to brush up on the topic before your meeting. Be sure to include a phone number and/or email address where they can get back to you if need be.
- ▶ **Follow up with a phone call** in one week if you have not heard back from your lawmaker regarding your meeting request. A few days before the meeting, you may want to reach out again to make sure the meeting is still scheduled as planned. Schedules, especially during legislative session are fluid and may move around.
- ▶ **Thank you.** Please remember to send a thank you note after the meeting that includes any follow-up items for discussion.
- ▶ **Remember to file your Field Report** after the meeting, or if the meeting is canceled for any reason in a timely manner to keep Arizona REALTOR® staff apprised.



SAMPLE MEETING REQUEST EMAIL

Dear Senator or Representative [NAME],

I hope you are well. As you are aware, I am a constituent and member of the Arizona REALTORS®. As such, I am writing to request an opportunity to meet with you on [INSERT DATE], in your [INSERT OFFICE LOCATION]. As a REALTOR® in Arizona, I am interested in discussing issues related to the real estate industry. Specifically, I would like to discuss [INSERT TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION].

I know that you have a busy schedule, so I am happy to find a time and day that works best for you; however, the best time for my schedule is between [INSERT TIMES]. If you are not available to meet on [INSERT DATE], I would like to explore other dates when you have more availability.

Thank you for your consideration of my request, I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please feel free to reach me at [INSERT PHONE NUMBER] or via email at [INSERT EMAIL].

Sincerely,

[SIGNATURE]

WRITING AN EMAIL TO YOUR LAWMAKER

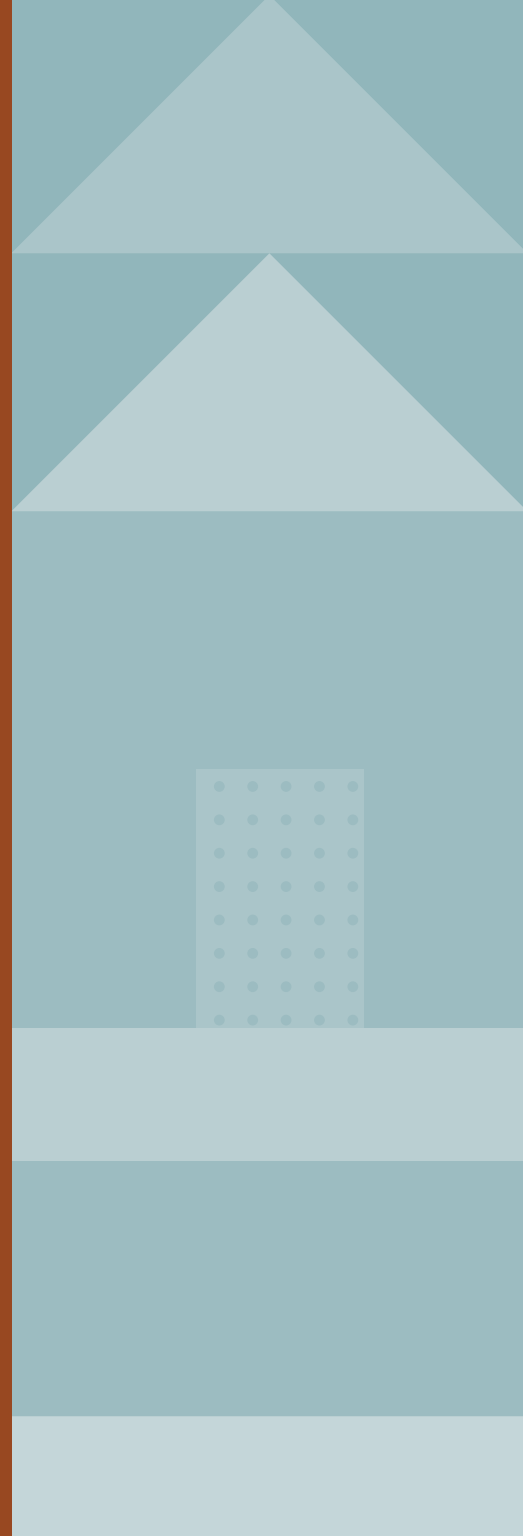
While it is always most impactful to communicate with your lawmaker in-person, there are many instances where an email is appropriate and even necessary. The following list will help you craft effective communications to your designated lawmaker quickly and easily on important policy priorities.

- ▶ **State your purpose.** Your purpose for writing the email to your lawmaker should be stated in the first paragraph of the communication. The email pertains to a specific piece of legislation, identify it using the appropriate bill number or official name of the legislation.
- ▶ **State your position.** Explain how the bill would affect you, your family, your business or even your community as a whole.
- ▶ **Focus on one issue.** Address only one issue in an email using facts and examples to support your position, and if possible, keep your email as concise as possible.
- ▶ **Be courteous, but firm, confident and positive.**
- ▶ **Ask for a reply** and indicate to your lawmaker that you would appreciate a reply containing their position on the particular issue. As a constituent, you have the right know their viewpoint.
- ▶ **Follow up appropriately.** If your lawmaker's position on a policy issue pleases you, thank them. By the same token, you can let them know that you unhappy with a particular vote or position they've taken if it is done in a respectful manner.



The Arizona REALTORS® Key Contact Program is a vital component when it comes to advocating for REALTORS and the real estate industry here in Arizona. You are your own best advocate, so whether you have an existing relationship with a state lawmaker or are willing to build a relationship with an elected official, the Arizona REALTORS® are here to help you succeed as a Key Contact or a Contact Team member.

As a part of the Key Contact network, you will be tasked with representing the more than 54,000 REALTORS® across the state of Arizona before your designated lawmaker to ensure that the real estate industry is spoken for at the state house.





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