

Capitol Hill Terms and Definitions

(Adopted from www.Congress.org)

Congressional Staffers - Each Member of Congress has staff to assist him/her during a term in office. Offices are typically designed to be effective and efficient in meeting and communicating their constituents' needs.

Chief of Staff - The Chief of Staff reports directly to the member of Congress, and usually is responsible for evaluating the political outcome of various legislative proposals and constituent requests. He/she is also usually in charge of overall office operations, including the assignment of work and the supervision of key staff.

Legislative Director, Legislative Assistant/Aide, Legislative Correspondent - The Legislative Director is usually the staff person who monitors the legislative schedule and makes recommendations regarding the pros and cons of particular issues. In most congressional offices there are several Legislative Assistants whose responsibilities are assigned based on particular expertise in specific areas. For example, depending on the responsibilities and interests of the member, an office may include a different Legislative Assistant for natural resources-environmental issues, education, appropriations, etc. Legislative Correspondents are junior staffers, typically not directly responsible for specific issue areas, who support Legislative Assistants/Aides and have responsibility for constituent communications.

Scheduler or Appointment/Personal Secretary - The Scheduler is usually responsible for allocating a member's time among the many demands that arise from congressional responsibilities, staff requirements, and constituent requests. He/she may also be responsible for making necessary travel arrangements, arranging speaking dates, coordinating visits to the district, etc. There may also be a scheduler in state offices.

Caseworker - The Caseworker is the staff member usually assigned to help with constituent requests, typically focused on helping to resolve problems constituents present in relation to federal agencies, e.g., Social Security and Medicare issues, veteran's benefits, passports, etc. There are often several Caseworkers in a congressional office.

District Director – The District Director oversees all district office operations, represents the Member or assigns other staff to represent the Member in the District and travels throughout the District at regular intervals to keep abreast of local concerns.

Field Representative/Field Director – The Field Representative acts as liaison with federal, District, and local agencies for the Member and constituents, assesses casework for problems requiring legislative action and makes recommendations to the District Director and Chief of Staff .