

Home Days: How to Get Started

The goal of Home Days is to get all 132 Ohio legislators into the libraries in their district in order to see for themselves the quality services, valuable tools, and technological impact their library holds for the community. In this packet are different ways to introduce your library to your legislator. Choose one of these formats and incorporate the following to maximize the effectiveness for your legislator and the media.

- Identify a target list of people to invite to a Home Days activity, including trustees, Friends of the Library, local and county elected officials, and key business and education professionals
- Coordinate your Home Days activities with other libraries in your legislative district or county so you are not competing with other libraries for your legislator's time
- Choose a day that ensures high attendance (National Library Week Children's Book Week, or other large programming event)
- Draft and distribute a news release to announce the event. Follow-up afterward with a detailed story in the local paper about the event, accompanied by pictures and captions
- Utilize the services of the Ohio Library Council and its Government Relations Committee

Please forward pictures of the event to the Ohio Library Council.

Home Days: Events

The following are programs/events that could provide the appropriate setting for hosting your legislator:

- **Open House.** Host a theme open house each season (e.g., in October have a ghost story reading for families; in December, celebrate an old-fashioned English Christmas based on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*). Provide tours and a brief synopsis of the services the library offers.
- **Library Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner.** Invite your legislator and other influential community members.
- **Behind the Scenes Tour.** Demonstrate the services you provide. Offer a ride on the bookmobile or visit your Outreach staff in action at the senior center.
- **Candidates Forum.** Host a forum of local candidates seeking office prior to the general election.
- **County/District Bus Tour.** Visit all of the libraries in the legislator's district.
- **Constituent Meeting Place.** Host a monthly meeting at which your legislator can update constituents on events in Columbus.
- **Annual Friends of the Library Meeting.** Ask your legislator to speak.
- **Customer Appreciation Days.** Present the legislator an award for his/her hard work on behalf of libraries.
- **OhioReads.** Provide information on your library's OhioReads grant program. Emphasize the community collaboration involved in the project and the leadership role provided by your library.
- **Partnership/Collaboration Tour.** Take your legislator to meet your community partners who are helping to promote the library's message.
- **Personal Librarian.** Assign a librarian to work specifically with the legislator and his/her staff on local issues. Send out a letter introducing the librarian and give examples of research and local demographics that can be accessed easily through a phone call to this librarian.
- **Community Recognition.** Lobby local officials to adopt resolutions or to offer proclamations recognizing your library for its efforts within the community. Issue press releases promoting the recognition and provide copies to your legislators.