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VISITING THE LEGISLATURE



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/Visiting the legislature



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Making Arrangements

The House Public Information Office will be happy to make arrangements for groups visiting the Capitol. Write to us at the House of Representatives, Statehouse, Des Moines, Iowa 50319 or call us at 515-281-5129. Please use the form in this folder to give us details about your visit. We will let your legislator know of your plans.

Planning Your Time

The legislature is in session from the 2nd Monday in January until approximately mid-May. We suggest allowing three to four hours for groups who plan to see the Capitol, the General Assembly in session and the State Historical Building. If your group exceeds 60 people, it will be divided and it will be necessary to plan to spend more time on Capitol Hill.

Observing Lawmakers (30 minutes)

When your group visits the Capitol they should make it a point to observe floor debate in the House of Representatives. Visitors are welcomed to view the session from the gallery. Your group should allow as much time as possible to listen to debate. We suggest a *minimum of 30 minutes* be set aside for this.

Your school group will be introduced to the legislators by the Speaker of the House if your leader submits a slip of paper to the Sgt. of Arms (who is located just inside the door of the House) reading as follows: "(Twenty) students and (three) chaperones from (Franklin school in Cedar Rapids) are visiting as guests of (name of representative)."

Touring the Capitol (45 minutes)

Capitol tours are conducted by personnel at the rotunda information desk on the first floor of the Capitol. Telephone 515-281-5591. Capitol tours include: the Governor's office, the Supreme Court, the Law Library, and the House and Senate Chambers. The guide gives a brief history of the building and a description of its art. Tours may be scheduled in the mornings from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. The Capitol is also open on weekends from 8 a.m.-4 p.m., but there are no tour guides on duty, and offices are closed.

Touring the Dome (15 minutes)

Dome Tours are given from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and need not be scheduled in advance. They leave *on the hour only* from the second floor rotunda. (Also available weekends, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., with security guards in charge.)

Touring the State Historical Museum

(60 minutes with guide or
15 minute talk plus self-guided tour)

Museum Tours are given Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on a scheduled basis. Telephone 515-281-5111. A tour guide will assist students and adults to understand the meaning of displays — from the transportation area in the basement through the civil history and natural history areas on the second floor, to the geology and Indian exhibits on the third floor. (Also open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. weekends; no tours available.)

Touring the Capitol Grounds (30 minutes)

Historical markers and monuments on the Capitol grounds are an interesting addition to a visit. The grounds are unusually spacious and afford a leisurely walk and an impressive view of the city in good weather. A walking tour map is available at the second floor rotunda information desk.

Also available:

If you wish to tour Terrace Hill, the governor's mansion, you should plan to be in Des Moines *at least* one hour longer in order to include it in your day. Terrace Hill tours are arranged through Jerome Thompson, Terrace Hill, 2300 Grand Avenue, Des Moines, 50312, or 515-281-3604. Hours are ONLY: Sundays 1 until 4 p.m. and Mondays and Tuesdays 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. The mansion is located 20 minutes from the Capitol via the freeway (235 west), and the 31st St. exit.

Eating Arrangements

Your group may eat in the Statehouse dining cafeteria on the ground floor, or in the Lucas Building cafeteria on the sixth floor. Visitors should understand these are state employee cafeterias and should avoid taking large groups through lines from 11:45 a.m. until 12:15 p.m. If reserved space is desired, it may be arranged IN ADVANCE by calling Joan Sloan at 515-281-5520 for the Lucas Building facilities, or Sylvester Nemmers at 515-281-5500 for the Statehouse facilities. Many groups choose to bring sack lunches to eat on the grounds when weather permits, or in cafeteria areas. Vending machines are available.

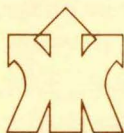
Arrival, Parking, and Restrooms

Visitors arriving from the East on Interstate 235 should exit on East 14th Street. If coming from the West, exit on East 6th. Follow your exit street to Grand Ave. Buses take the west ramp to the Capitol steps, where your group may disembark. Buses may park at the foot of the Capitol. A public parking lot is East of the Capitol in front of the Robert Lucas Building.

Public restrooms are located on the ground floor of the Capitol.

Calling your Representative and Senator

Your representative can be contacted by calling 515-281-3221. You may call your senator at 515-281-3371. The Public Information Office will inform your state representative and your state senator of your plans for visiting the legislature.



This pamphlet produced by the
House of Representatives
Public Information Office
Statehouse
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