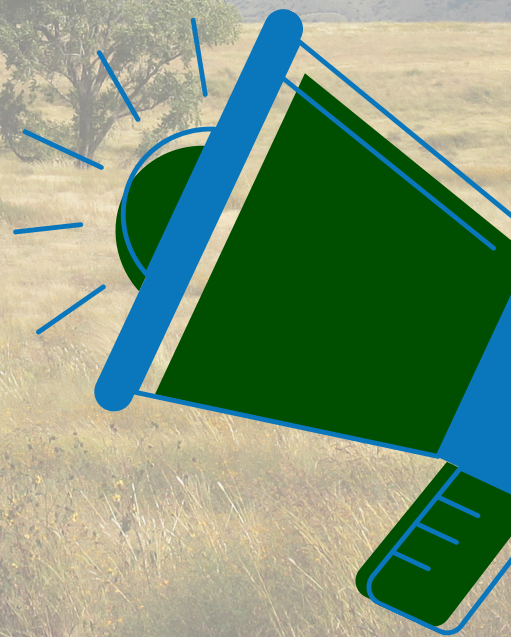


PROMOTING RURAL HEALTH

✧ADVOCACY TOOLKIT✧



☀️ TABLE OF CONTENTS ☀️

4-5 ☀️ **Template Letter to Legislators**

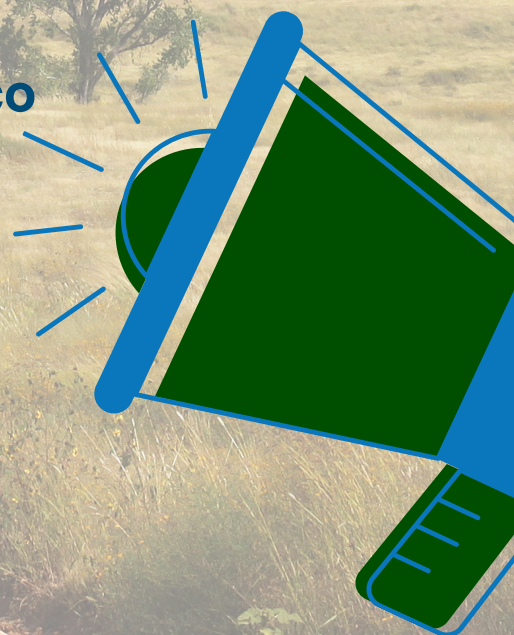
7-19 ☀️ **Education vs. Lobbying Information**

21-22 ☀️ **Sample Infographic of Tobacco Revenue vs. Funding**

24 ☀️ **Legislative Meeting Tips**

26 ☀️ **NYS Indoor Concourse Map**

28 ☀️ **Empire State Plaza Visitor Parking Map**



TEMPLATE LETTER TO LEGISLATORS



Your Logo

February 5, 2021

RE: Executive Budget-Impact on Rural Health Programs

Dear Name:

Intro paragraph about your organization, list service area, and population served, etc.

Paragraph on rural challenges, use statistics, paint a picture of region

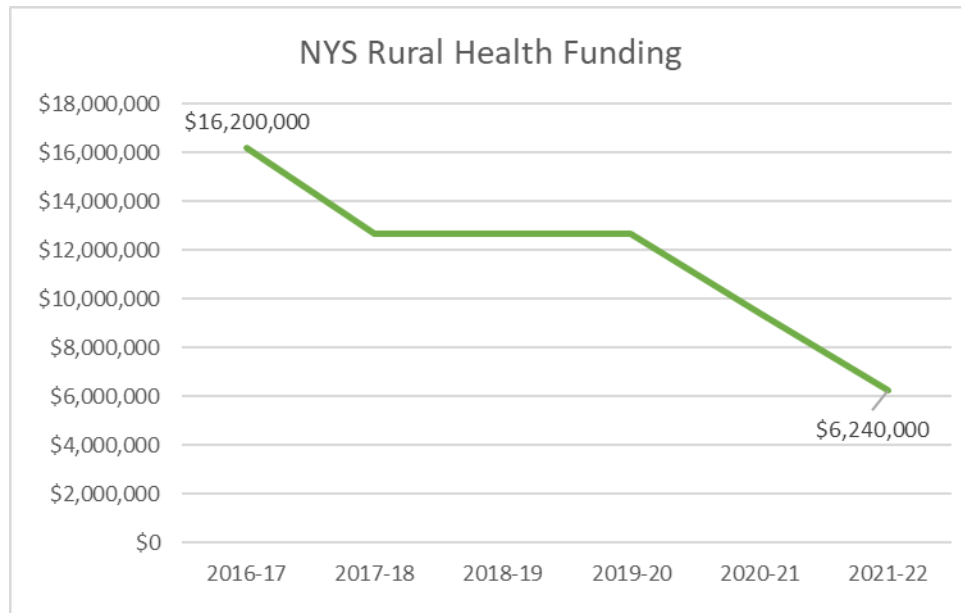
Example: Approximately 12% of New York residents live in rural communities, making them vulnerable to numerous health disparities and poor health outcomes attributed to rural communities by a substantial body of evidence. The geographic and demographic factors unique to rural regions can present significant barriers to rural residents' ability to access vital healthcare, social supports, and resources. The population of rural service areas are, on average, older and with higher rates of poverty and low income in comparison to many urban populations in the state, and to New York State as a whole.

Name and Information about your rural health network (suggest bold)

- Bullets listing actions/initiatives, successes, partnerships, etc.

Include your ask and background information, use NYSARH materials provided, etc.

Example: *We urge you to reinstate Rural Health Care Access Development Program and Rural Health Network Development Program funding to the previous year's level by restoring the 34 percent proposed budget reduction. A reduction in funding of this magnitude would adversely impact the reach and scope of the vital resources Rural Health Networks provide to key regional partners and the communities they serve. Funding for RHN and RAH was \$12,680,000 at this time last year. We saw a reduction of 24% in the 2020-21 budget and if the 2021-22 Executive Budget is adopted, it will be \$6,240,000, a total reduction of 51% over two years. We urge you to restore the total reduction as this will have a debilitating, negative impact to the health of our rural New Yorkers.



Closing statement: acknowledge the pandemic, tough fiscal year/reaffirm how your network can assist.

Example: The toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on individuals, families, and communities across New York State is evident, and it has undoubtedly created unprecedented challenges for New York State's government. We recognize the severe economic impact of the pandemic and the fiscal burden it has generated for the State. During this difficult time, the coordinated, targeted community health improvement efforts of rural health networks can optimize resources and enrich supports available to rural communities, and the dedicated healthcare and public health professionals who serve them.

Sincerely,

Name, Title
Organization

EDUCATION VS. LOBBYING

INFORMATION





Understanding
the Differences

Education vs. Lobbying

This presentation is provided by BRiDGES Tobacco Prevention Program (BTPP).

What do we want
to accomplish?

Knowing we are doing this right

The goal of this session is to increase our knowledge in the difference between lobbying and education.

Understanding the difference will help us to be more confident and relaxed when we communicate with our elected officials.



Educate

To provide information, to communicate knowledge to, to make known.

Implications



That **you are sharing information with me** that I might not know, or you are providing me with facts about something that I should be aware of.

That **you are sharing information** about tobacco, and the problems associated with tobacco. You share information about the communities you serve and share what you are seeing there. You are sharing information about what has been successful.

Lobby

To conduct activities aimed at influencing public officials and especially members of a legislative body on legislation.

Implications



That **you are asking me** to take a specific action on specific legislation.

You are asking me to support level funding for the NYS Tobacco Control Program. You are asking me to ban the sale of all flavored tobacco products including menthol.



Why Can Big Tobacco Lobby But We Cannot?

It is a right protected by the U.S. Constitution, the 1st Amendment gives individuals, groups, and companies the right "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." This translates into modern times as a right to lobby.

BUT.....there are limitations....

We as a New York State Tobacco Control Program Grantee cannot lobby, specifically "make any attempt to influence the passage or defeat of any local law, ordinance, resolution, or regulation by any municipality or subdivision thereof; or the adoption or rejection of any rule, regulation, or resolution having the force and effect of a local law, ordinance, resolution, or regulation."

WHY?

We are funded through the state from the general budget, which are taxpayer dollars. Government dollars cannot be used to lobby. It is unethical to use taxpayer dollars to lobby because not every taxpayer may agree with what we would be asking.

Guiding Questions to Ask Yourself?

Am I making a legislative ask, or could I be construed as doing so?

Do I control the message and facilitate the ask?

Am I asking someone to do something that I myself cannot do?





Important things to know!

Working with Advocates

It is OK to schedule a meeting and invite an advocate to attend. The rules prohibit us from contracting and/or paying someone to come with us to lobby, but voluntary is OK.

Just be sure we are asking ourselves the Guiding Questions:

- *Am I asking someone else to do what I cannot?*
- *Did I control the message and facilitate the ask?*

Important things to know!

Grassroots Lobbying

- *We cannot fund (paying for a ride, buying them dinner, etc.) for volunteer trips where they would be doing any type of legislative ask.*
- *Petitions could be considered grassroots lobbying if:*
 - *The petition makes a statement about government action and takes a clear position on that action.*
 - *The statements in the petition make a legislative ask that is submitted to a public official.*
 - *If the petition is used to do something you otherwise cannot do/or say?*



Important things to know!

Communications with the media

When communicating with the media make sure that:

- *We do not suggest or state a specific policy ask.*
- *We do not provide contact info, a link, or imply that we are asking people to communicate specific asks to an elected officials.*
- *We do not state a clear position about government action.*
- *We do share about the problem.*
- *We do share the facts that we have.*
- *We do share how other communities have solved the problems you share.*

Avoid the appearance of impropriety.

It matters less what you intended versus what your actions may look like if raised.



How can we engage others?

We can ask the public to share concern about the problem.

We can ask the public to tell elected officials that they are concerned about the problem.



**What if an elected official
asks us what we think?**

***Stick to your language
that says:***

- *The evidence supports...*
- *Other communities have
solved this problem by...*



Scenarios

Which scenarios are lobbying,
Which are educating?

1

A legislator asked if you are asking for an increase in funding, you tell them you are not allowed to lobby, but what you can share is the amount that NYS receives and how much is currently allocated for tobacco control in NYS

2

You put a link to support tobacco-free legislation in your newsletter.

3

Reality Check youth circulate a petition to stop selling Vape products in their community.

4

You inform your legislators about policies that have passed in your catchment area.

5

You tell a municipality that you will provide them with nice free signage if they pass a tobacco-free policy.

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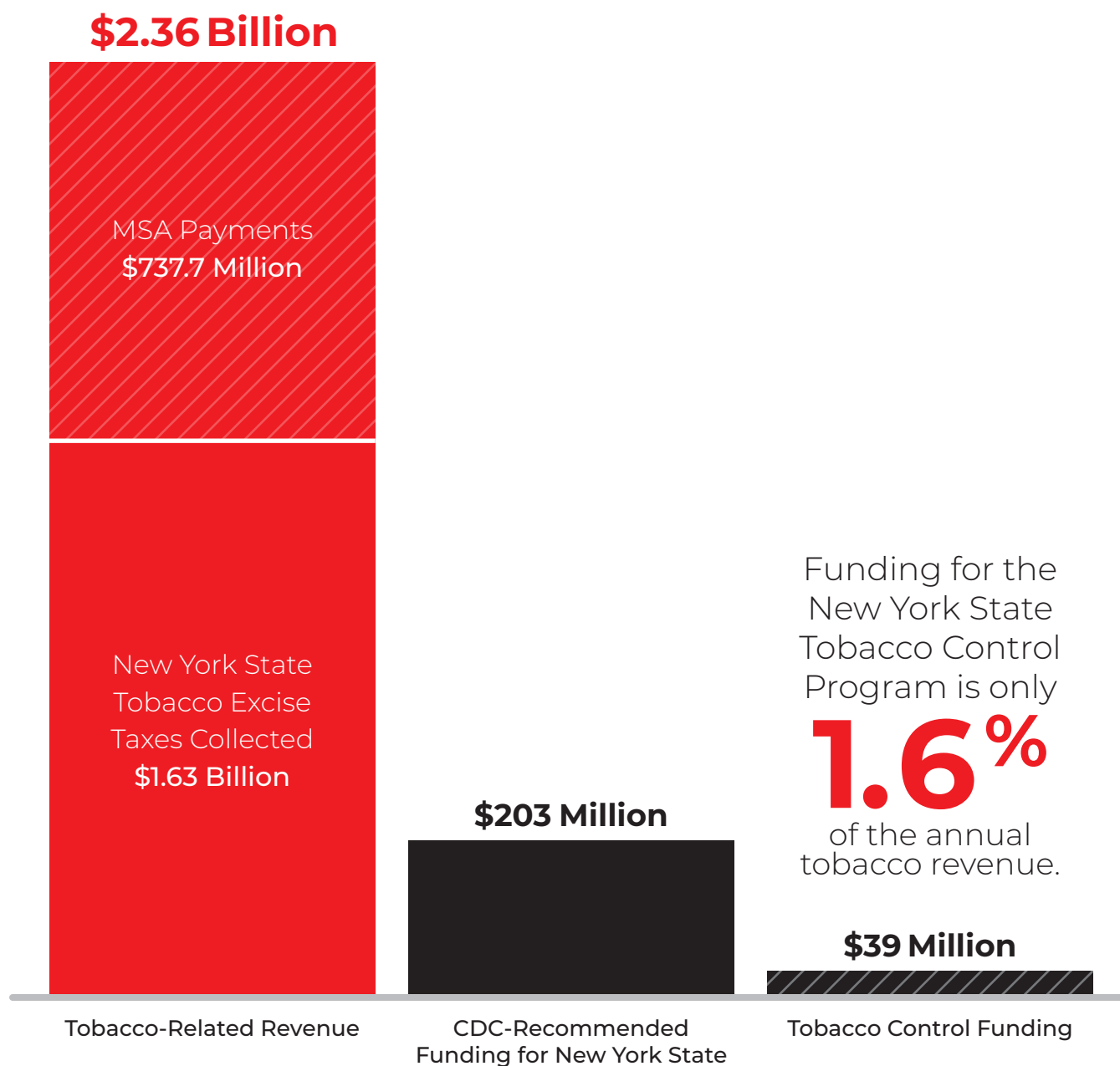
You've Got This!



SAMPLE INFOGRAPHIC OF TOBACCO REVENUE VS. FUNDING



Tobacco Revenue vs. **Tobacco Funding**



Annual Revenue from Tobacco in New York State	
MSA payments	\$737.7 Million
New York State tobacco excise taxes collected	\$1.63 Billion
Total tobacco-related revenue	\$2.36 Billion

Annual Funding for Tobacco Control Program in New York State	
CDC-recommended funding for New York State	\$203 Million
Actual funding for Tobacco Control Program in New York State	\$39 Million
New York State Tobacco Control Program funding as a percentage of the annual tobacco revenue	1.6%

The Real Cost of Tobacco in New York State

Current Rates of Tobacco Use in New York State

Adults in New York who smoke ¹	12.8% (1.9 Million)
Percentage of adults in New York who smoke AND make less than \$25,000 per year ¹	20.4%
Percentage of adults in New York who smoke AND report frequent mental distress ²	27.7%
Percentage of adults in New York who smoke AND have less than a H.S. diploma ¹	21.5%
High school students who smoke ³	4.8% (35,000)
High school students who use electronic cigarettes ³	27.4% (187,000)
Kids (under 18) who become new daily smokers each year ⁴	4,900

The Burden of Tobacco in New York State

Number of adults who die each year from smoking-related disease ⁵	22,000 Adults
Kids now under 18 and alive in New York who will die prematurely from smoking ⁴	280,000 Kids
Annual health care costs in New York directly caused by smoking ⁵	\$9.7 Billion
Medicaid costs caused by smoking in New York ⁵	\$2.7 Billion
Smoking-caused productivity losses in New York ⁴	\$7.33 Billion
Residents' state & federal tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditures* ⁴	\$1,375 per Household

*Amounts do not include health costs caused by exposure to secondhand smoke, smoking-caused fires, smokeless tobacco use, or cigar and pipe smoking. Tobacco use also imposes additional costs such as workplace productivity losses and damage to property.

**BIG TOBACCO
CAN'T HIDE
THE FACTS**

Revised: 1/29/2021

¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health. BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data [online]. 2018. URL: <https://nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSSPrevalence>

²New York State Department of Health Bureau of Tobacco Control BRFSS Number 2021-01 Cigarette Smoking NYS Adults 2018 https://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/brfss/reports/docs/2021-01_brfss_cigarette_smoking.pdf

³Bureau of Tobacco Control StatShot Vol. 12, No. 1/Jan 2019 https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/reports/statshots/volume12/n1_electronic_sig_use_increase.pdf

⁴Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/new_york

⁵New York State Department of Health Bureau of Tobacco Control https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/tobacco_control/

LEGISLATIVE MEETING TIPS





Legislative Meeting Tips



#1: Have an Ask

- Be specific in your ask: Cosponsor S. 1234.
- Be able to articulate the problem, potential policy solution(s), and how you want them to help.
- You are building a relationship with this request, so take the time to discuss the data, your facility and how this bill will help your facility, community and state.

#2: Talk to the Right Person

- Make a request in person, in addition to written requests.
- Understand the jurisdiction of the individual you are speaking with.
- Staffers can be your greatest asset. Get to know them!

#3: Know Your Legislator

- Do your homework! Know the issue, data/impacts, and how your member can engage.
- Know the member: Committee assignments, past legislative initiatives, rural health background.
- Do not assume they are experts in an issue. Allow questions!

#4: Explain its Importance

- How is this important to your state or region?
- What data and research can you use to support it.
- Personalize it! How does your experience support the data?

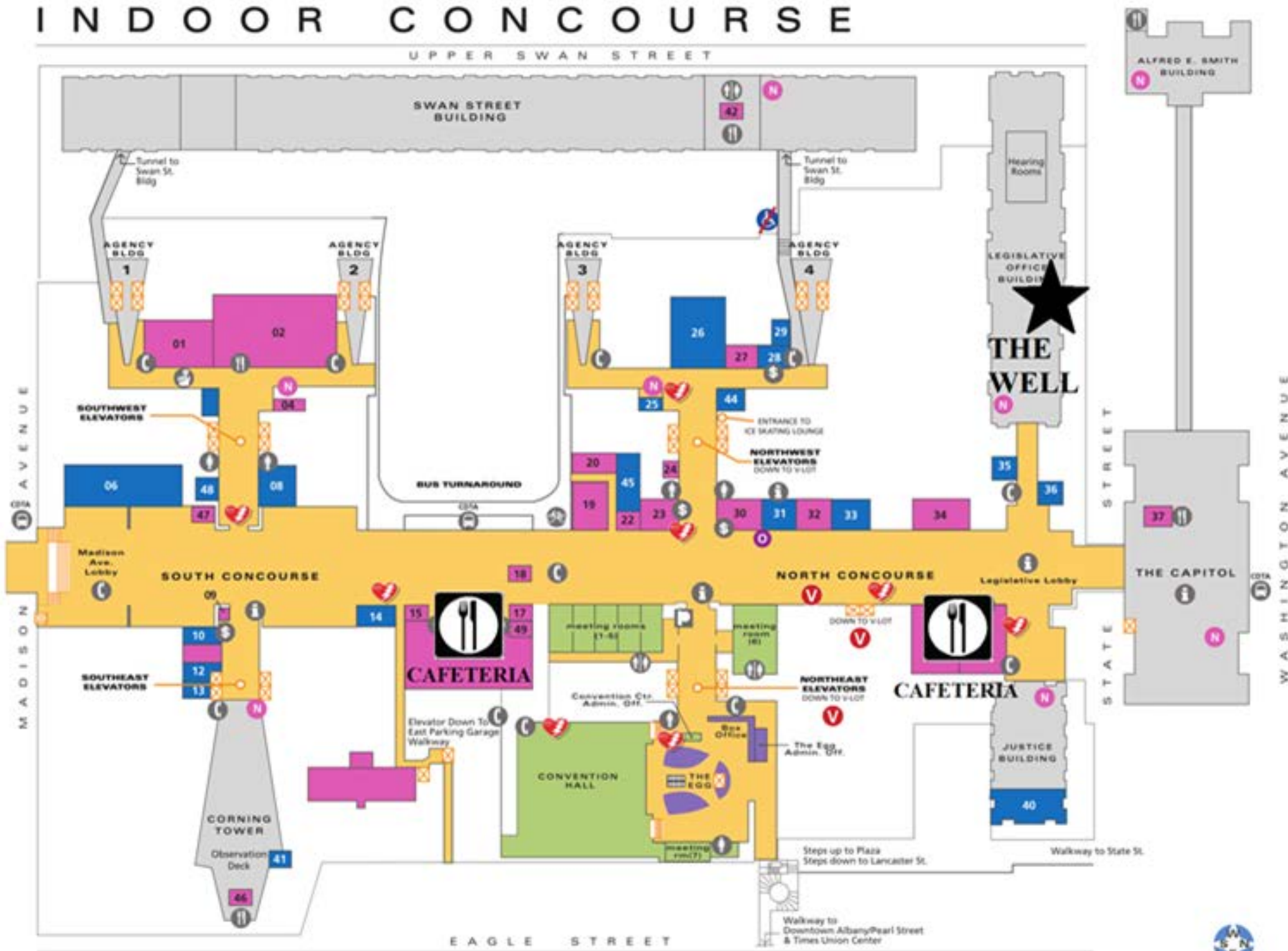
#5: Be Concise & Follow Up

- Understand time constraints.
- Follow-up by email—send important information and handouts with follow-up email.
- Make yourself an information resource.

NYS INDOOR CONCOURSE MAP



INDOOR CONCOURSE

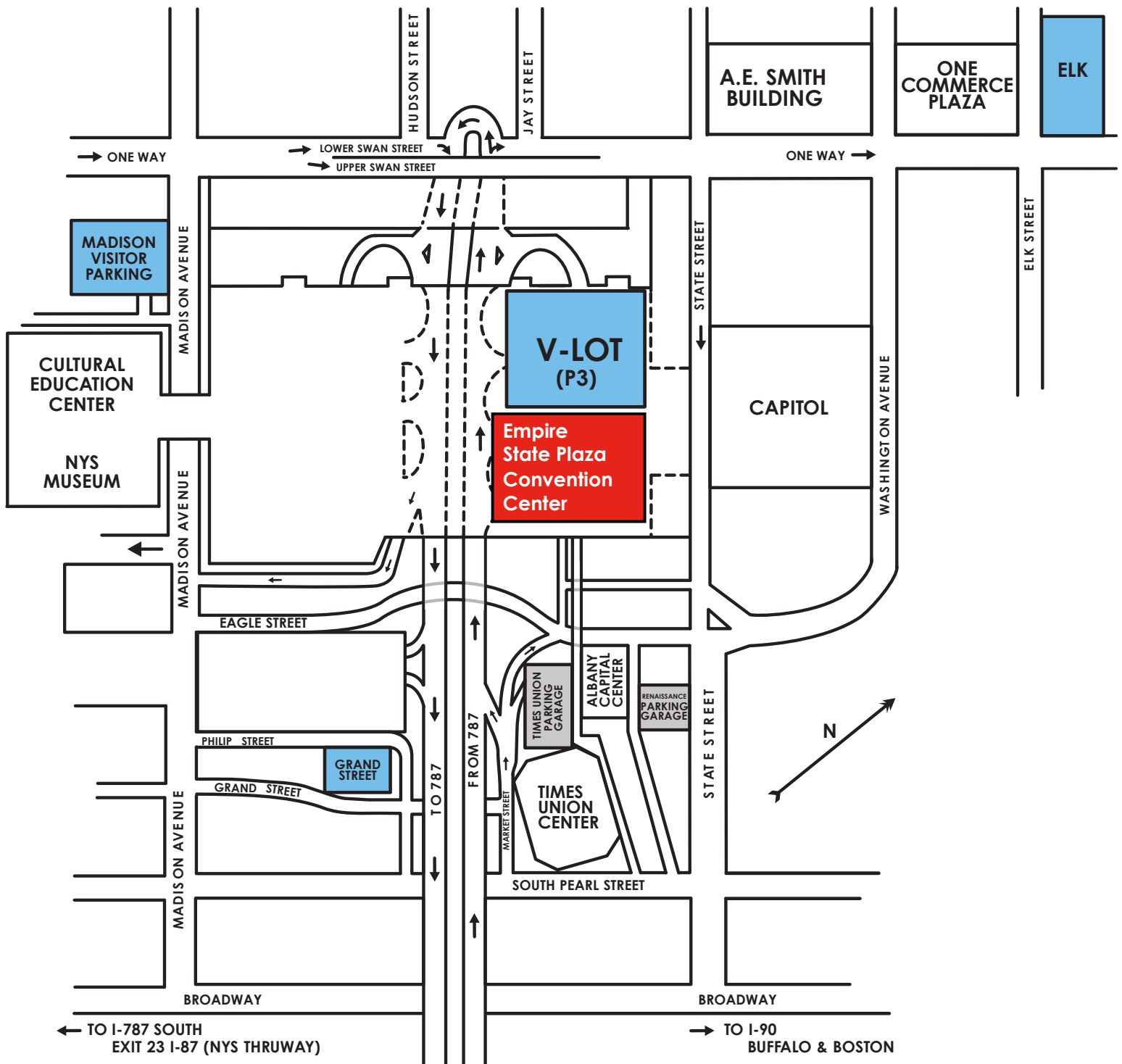


EMPIRE STATE PLAZA VISITOR PARKING MAP



Empire State Plaza Visitor Parking

parking.management@ogs.ny.gov
518-474-8118



Visit <https://empirestateplaza.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/10/visitor-lots.pdf> for more information.

The Times Union and Renaissance Hotel parking garages are not OGS-managed parking facilities. Fee upon entry applies.



Office of
General Services