HOW TO GIVE A CAPITOL TOUR

This resource is part of the Autistic Person’s Guide to Hillternships project and is brought to you by SARTAC and NCIL
PARTS OF A CAPITOL TOUR

• Meeting constituents at your office
• Leading them from your office to Capitol Hill using the underground tunnels
• Getting visitors passes for your group
• Watching the official tour video (optional)
• Showing Emancipation Hall
• Showing the Crypt
• Showing the Old Supreme Court (optional)
• Showing the Rotunda
• Taking a photo on the Speaker’s Balcony (if open)
• Showing the Old Senate Chamber (optional)
• Showing Statuary Hall
• Visiting the House or Senate Chamber balcony
MEETING CONSTITUENTS AT YOUR OFFICE

• When the staff assistant sets up the tour, they will tell the constituents to meet you at your office
• Be prepared for the constituents to accidentally go to the Capitol Hill Visitors Center instead of your office
• Be friendly and welcoming to your guests. You are representing your office.
• The tour starts here: Show your guests around the office
• Leave banned items in the office
THE HOUSE AND SENATE OFFICE BUILDINGS

• After showing the constituents your office, start moving toward the tunnels in the basement of your building.
• Tell them about the history of the buildings while you walk. You can also talk about your office and issues your member cares about.
• Point out anything in the Capitol that has ties to your state. People love hearing about them.
• Constituents need permission to use the tunnels on Capitol Hill.

• There is a circular room in the basement of the House and Senate office buildings. Find this room.

• Take your group to the security screening line. A metal detector and a Capital Police officer will be at the end of the line.

• Your group will need to go through a metal detector to enter the next tunnel.

• Your group will get visitor clips to place on their clothes.

• Banned items will not be allowed past this point (food, water, weapons, etc.)
Note: There is a similar room in the basement of the Russell Senate Office Building.
CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION WINNERS WALL

• The hallway from the House office buildings to the Capitol Building shows the winners of the Congressional High School Art Competition.

• Every district picks a piece of art to put on the wall.

• Find the picture from your district and show it to your group.

Note: This is only for tours starting on the House side.
THE SECRET TRAINS

• Take the Capitol Subway from the Russell Senate Office Building to the Capitol Building.

• You should not have to wait more than a few minutes for a train.

• Watch out for celebrities at the train stop.

• Learn more about the Capitol Subway System [here](#).
GETTING VISITORS PASS

• Take your group through the tunnels to Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitors Center.
• Tell your group to wait somewhere where you can see them.
• Go to the help desk in the picture and exchange the CVC Clips for tour tickets.
TOUR VIDEO

• Take your group to see a video about the History of America.
• You do not need to watch the video.
• Wait at the theater exit.
• Use this 10-15 minutes to decompress.
TOUR OUTLINE

• Go to the Crypt
• Go the the Old Supreme Court Chamber
  • Go up the Inaugural Steps
  • Enter the Rotunda
  • Go to Statuary Hall
• Go to the Old Senate Chamber
• Exit using the stairs by the 9/11 memorial
WATCH THE VIDEO IN THE NEXT SLIDE TO TAKE A VIRTUAL TOUR
OPTIONAL: THE SPEAKER’S BALCONY

- The Speaker’s balcony is right outside the rotunda by the American flag
- Knock on the Speaker’s balcony door to see if it is open (sometimes it is closed to the public)
- Take your group to the balcony and take a picture. This is the best view in Washington D.C.
OPTIONAL: GALLERY TICKETS

- Congressional offices give out tickets to watch Congress from the chamber balconies.
- Your group will need to pass through extra security to get into the gallery.
END OF TOUR

• Thank your group for their time.
• Unless someone left items in your office, then leave your group at the Capitol building.