

Defending Life Day- FAQ

Why meet on Wednesday, February 1?

The Virginia Pro-Life Day is being held on February 1, 2023 and will be the biggest pro-life advocacy event in our state's history! We are focusing on making a statement in support of life that will be heard loud and clear by our legislators. Our message of love for unborn children and their mothers will be heard by every member of the legislature as they come to Richmond that day during the very middle of the legislative session; a key time when your senators and delegates are debating potentially life-saving bills.

What is the schedule of events?

- 7:30am Doors Open at Greater Richmond Convention Center
- 8:30am Gather in constituent groups
- 9:15am Short walk to General Assembly Offices (*Shuttle available with prior registration for those unable to walk*)
- 10:00am Senate Meetings
- 10:30am Delegate Meetings
- 12:00pm Appear in House or Senate Galleries to be announced during GA session
- 12:00pm March for Life Rally (@ clocktower)
- 1:00pm Virginia March for Life
- 2:00pm Prayer & Praise Rally (@ clocktower)

How do I find out who my Senator and House member are?

Visit whosmy.virginiageneralassembly.gov to find who represents you.

Will there be breakfast?

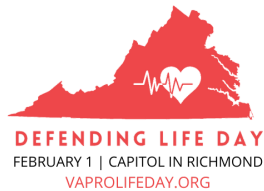
Participants joining for morning advocacy are encouraged to eat beforehand or bring a snack that can be kept in their bag. We will gather in district groups at the Richmond Convention Center where there will be coffee, hot tea and water provided.

Congregation leaders and pastors are welcome to the Virginia Pro-Life Day [Pastor Breakfast](#) in Room E.10 in the Convention Center from 8:00-9:30am. Contact erica@familyfoundation.org for more info.

Where are the offices we'll be visiting?

The member's offices are located in the [Pocahontas Building](#), located at 900 East Main Street (across the street from Capitol Square). Before entering, all visitors are screened by a magnetometer and all items that are permitted inside the building are screened by an x-ray device.

The General Assembly office directory can be found [here](#).



Where can I find stable Wi-Fi?

Some offices have requested Zoom or Zoom-hybrid meetings. All Defending Life Day participants are welcome to use the auditorium on the fourth floor of the Truist Building across the street from the offices. There you will find the Wi-Fi passcode for the building.

Because the Wi-Fi is unreliable inside the General Assembly office building, we recommend downloading the Zoom app on your phone beforehand, or using the Truist auditorium. This space can hold up to 200 people.

What are some tips on how to meet with a member?

The Virginia Catholic Conference has advocacy tools to know before you visit offices! Some things to keep in mind:

- Introduce yourself to the elected official or staff – if you are a constituent, make that known.
- Be polite, friendly and respectful, even when disagreements arise.
- Do not be disappointed if you are only able to meet with staff. Schedules are in constant flux during the legislative session. Staff can be an ally and are best positioned to advocate your position with their member. Ask the staff member for their business card— if they do not offer one.
- You should be able to convey your message in under 15 minutes. Identify the issue and explain how the legislator can be helpful, using the talking points VSHL and VCC have prepared. Practice what you and your district group will say before the meeting begins.
- Always thank the legislator/staff for their time regardless of the outcome of the meeting and follow-up with a thank you letter.

What do I wear?

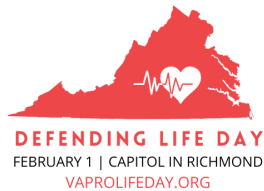
February can have some pretty chilly weather so we recommend flat shoes and layers that you can easily take off after a 10-minute walk while you make member visits inside the Pocahontas Building.

There are coat closets on each floor of the Pocahontas building, near the elevators. But please use these at your own risk.

*And please join us in wearing **RED** to stand out at the capitol – whether it's a hat, scarf or whole outfit, red is the color of Defending Life Day and we want everyone to know it!*

What are the Galleries?

The Senate and House will be conducting their floor sessions starting at noon. Advocates are welcome to be present in the galleries to be recognized by the House and Senate for Defending Life Day at the



Capitol. Both chambers can be observed from above in the House or Senate Gallery, located on the 3rd floor of the capitol building. Gallery rules can be found [here](#).

The visitor entrance can be found on the corner of Bank Street and 10th Street. See the Capitol map [here](#).

Can I be Guided to the Galleries?

If you would like to be led by the Defending Life Day team to be seen and recognized in the House and Senate Galleries, **please meet by the Capitol Gift Shop by 11:30am**. From there, leaders will escort you and the group participants into the Capitol to be recognized during the floor session.

The former [Capitol Gift Shop](#) is located on the lower level of the capitol, in the Capitol Extension. The entrance is on the corner of Bank and 10th Street. After walking through security, continue walking and you will find leaders waiting to meet you in the empty foyer between the former gift shop and committee rooms. The Capitol Extension also features a "grab and go" food service and restrooms located in the Visitor's Center.

Where is the Virginia March for Life Rally?

The Virginia March for Life Rally will begin at 12:00pm at the clocktower in Capitol Square, followed by the March for Life. More information on the Virginia March for Life can be found at va.marchforlife.org.

Where is Bus Drop-Off?

If your group is attending the morning advocacy of Defending Life Day, buses can drop off advocates at 5th street at Marshall. This section of the road will be closed for normal traffic for bus passenger drop off.

Address: 500 E. Marshall St., Richmond

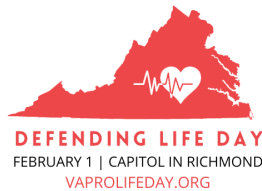
The buildings on this corner include: the Downtown Marriott, the Greater Richmond Convention Center, and a few Parking Garages.

Bus drop-off for the March for Life will be at E Main Street between 9th and 10th Street.

Where is Bus Parking?

Between dropping off and picking up participants, buses can park all day for free at the Richmond Flying Squirrels stadium.

Buses can utilize the [Yellow Lot](#) at the Flying Squirrels stadium, utilizing the entrance off Arthur Ashe Boulevard under Funnville arch. [Click here](#) for the parking map.



Yellow Lot Address: The Diamond, 3001 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd. Richmond, VA 23230

Where can I park my vehicle?

Please note there is no public parking on the Capitol Square grounds.

Greater Richmond Convention Center is a good option for parking – it is where we will gather in the morning and it is a just a 10-minute walk to the Capitol Square grounds. The address for the Parking Garage of the Convention Center is 351 N. Third Street. More detailed directions can be found [HERE](#). Cost is \$7.00 per vehicle for the entire day.

Public Parking: A limited number of metered public parking spaces (2 hours) are on Bank Street, between Governor and 14th Streets, on the south side of Main Street, between 9th and 12th Streets and on 12th Street between Main and Bank Streets.

Pay parking lots and decks are nearby on 8th and Grace Streets and 7th and Marshall Streets. Downloadable [maps of nearby parking lots and decks](#) are available, as well as rates for these areas.

Note: Due to ongoing construction projects in Downtown Richmond, some parking lots listed on the links above may not exist any longer. If you have any questions about parking lots in the Capitol vicinity, please call the Capitol Tour Desk at (804) 698-1788.

Can I bring signs?

Defending Life Day is an advocacy-centered event, so large signs or banners are not appropriate for this day. But they are fully encouraged during our state March for Life later in the day!

Where is Mass?

Daily mass is celebrated at the [Pro-Cathedral of St. Peter](#) at 12:05pm. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will take place before mass starting at 11:00am in the church.

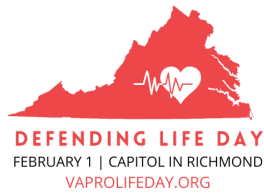
Address: 800 East Grace Street, Richmond, VA 23218

Where can I eat?

Downtown Richmond has a variety of dining options within walking distance of the Capitol.

The [Truist Place](#) building features a cafeteria (Meriwether's Market, located on the 3rd Floor) and coffee shop (Meriwether's Coffee & Sundries, located in the 1st Floor Lobby) located at 919 E. Main Street.

The [James Center](#) features multiple dining options: Chopt Salad Restaurant Co. (One James Center Lobby) and in the Atrium: The Pit and the Peel, Sesame Sushi, Trevi's Grille, The Market.



Other grab-and-go options:

- Pot Belly Sandwiches (800 E. Canal St)
- Subcentral & Capitol Waffle Shop (1110 E. Main St)
- Subway (30 N. 8th St)
- Dunkin' (600 E. Canal St)
- 7-Eleven (1001 E. Main St)
- Food trucks located near the intersections of 10th St and Cary.

Vending machines are also available in the Pocahontas Building on the Ground Floor, 2nd Floor, 3rd Floor Pantry, and 4th Floor.

Where can I find more information on the Capitol tours?

The Capitol is open to the general public from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. The Capitol Tour Guides are located in the Rotunda on the 2nd floor of the Capitol.

More tour information and maps can be found [here](#).

How can I keep up with pro-life legislation after February 1st?

Join the advocacy networks of [VSHL](#) and [VCC](#) to get alerts for pro-life legislation and General Assembly updates. This is a great opportunity to use the personal connections made from Defending Life Day and follow up with your members when an important bill is up for a vote.

Watch the General Assembly virtually using the [House](#) and [Senate](#) streaming sites.

Have more questions?

Email info@vaprolifeday.org