

Interviewing your Alderman

To find contact information for your alderman and to set up an interview, check with the City of Chicago website: <http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/about/wards.html>. **Please let the office know when you are visiting your alderman. If possible, plan your visit with another League member in your ward.** To find other members who live in your ward, contact the office. Aldermen always like to talk to their constituents, and it might be easier to go to the interview as part of a team. Your alderman will have an office in the ward, and also an office in City Hall.

The primary purpose of interviewing your alderman is to strengthen communications and to make him/her aware of the League of Women Voters of Chicago – that we are an active participant in city government and we follow the activities of the City Council. Be prepared to discuss the purposes of LWV Chicago:

- To educate its members and the public to lobby government on selected issues,
- To observe the functioning of government bodies to monitor their accountability and transparency.
- To help the public understand how democratic government functions, and
- To educate the public about the election process by providing information about candidates and voting rights and procedures.

Know something about your alderman before you go. What committees does he/she serve on? What is their primary interest? Don't focus on negatives – be positive. Remember that you are there to share ideas. Be sure to let him/her know what you think of your ward; what is working well, what isn't.

Suggested questions to ask (you might want to pick three areas to discuss):

1. What should be done to balance the city's budget?
2. What can be done about gun violence and crime?
3. What are his/her views on the Chicago Public Schools in your ward, the new CPS management, the school budget, charter schools?
4. What specific goals does he/she want to accomplish in the ward?
5. What is the most pressing issue in the ward?

Be sure to send a thank you after the interview. Write up a report of your meeting and send it to the office. It will be posted on the LWVChicago website and summarized in the Voter.