



Making a submission to a parliamentary committee inquiry

Who can make a submission?



Any member of the general public or organisation can make a submission.

Why make a submission?



Your submission helps inform the committee about what you, your community or organisation thinks about an issue. Submissions may also help the committee when making its recommendations to Government. Your submission may be quoted or referred to in the committee's report. Most submissions are made public and published on the committee's webpage.

Making a submission allows you to participate in the work of the Parliament and express your opinion on a particular matter.

How do I format my submission?



There is no set form for submissions. Your submission may take the form of a letter, email, paper or report. You should consider the following when writing your submission:

- Make it clear, concise and relevant**
If your submission is long, it would help to include a summary of your key points. It should be relevant to the terms of reference and not contain offensive remarks.
- Make it readable**
It should be A4 size and typed so it's easily read and scanned. Pages should be numbered. Documents should be submitted as Microsoft Word or PDF files. Handwritten submissions should be legible and also suitable for scanning purposes.
- Additional material**
Articles, letters or research papers may be included. A list of all appended material should be included.
- Clearly identify who is making the submission**
If making a submission on behalf of an organisation, please include your name and your position within the organisation.

What should I say in my submission?

Your submission may contain facts, opinions, arguments, suggested solutions or tell of your personal experience.

The inquiry's terms of reference are a good basis for structuring your submission. They are on the committee's webpage. You should address at least one of them – you don't have to address them all.

When are submissions due?



Submissions should be lodged by the advertised closing date. If an extension of time is needed, contact the committee manager as soon as possible to discuss your request.

How do I lodge my submission?



Most submissions are lodged online or by email. To lodge online, go to www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees and follow the links to the relevant committee webpage and select the submissions tab/portal.

The online portal allows you to enter your personal information and your comments in the relevant fields. You can also upload your submission as a Microsoft Word or PDF file. Note that the portal is unavailable once the submission closing date has passed.

To email your submission, you will find the committee's email address on its webpage.

Hardcopy submissions can be posted to:

Committee name
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

However you lodge your submission it must include the name, address (email or postal) and contact telephone number of the person(s) or organisation making the submission. This is helpful if the committee needs to contact you about your submission.

An acknowledgement of your submission will be sent once it is processed by committee staff.



Are submissions published?

Submissions that are not relevant to the committee's inquiry or that contain offensive remarks may not be accepted. You will be informed if the committee decides not to accept your submission.

Usually the committee will authorise for all submissions to be published. This means the submission will be published on the committee's webpage and may be quoted in the committee's report.

Before publishing submissions, the committee checks each one to ensure it doesn't reflect badly on third parties, or is subject to legal proceedings. The committee may decide to keep certain parts of a submission confidential and not publish it.

Personal contact information, signatures and sensitive private information is not published as a matter of course. Previously published material that may be appended to your submission may not be republished by the committee.

Once a submission is received by a committee it must not be published or otherwise disclosed in that form without the committee's authorisation. Unauthorised publications are not protected by parliamentary privilege (see below) and may be subject to the laws of defamation.

Am I protected by parliamentary privilege?

Committee proceedings, including making a submission, are proceedings of Parliament and accorded the same protection as proceedings in the House.

The Parliamentary Papers (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1975 provides that no action of any kind may be taken against a person for making a submission. However, parliamentary privilege applies only to those submissions accepted by the committee and the committee authorises their publication on its webpage.

Any submission republished in another form, for example on your own website, is not protected by parliamentary privilege. You can direct people to the submissions published on the committee's webpage.

Can I give evidence at a public hearing?

Committees also hold public hearings where they speak to interested parties. Individuals and organisations who made a submission may be invited to appear before the committee to give evidence at a public or private (*in camera*) hearing.

For more information about giving evidence at a public hearing, please refer to *Giving evidence at a parliamentary committee hearing*.

Making a submission to a parliamentary committee inquiry

LAC18/319.05

Can I make a confidential submission?

You can request for all or part of your submission to be confidential. You can also request that your submission be published in full but with your name kept confidential. You should state your preference when lodging your submission. Also, clearly identify the parts of the submission you want to remain confidential.

If identifiable personal information must be included we encourage you to include it in a covering letter or appendix and not in the submission itself. This allows for the body of the submission to be published in full.

Please contact the committee manager if you would like more information on how to keep part or all of your submission confidential.

If, after your submission is published, you change your mind and want your submission made confidential, contact the committee manager as soon as possible. You should provide a reason for requesting confidentiality.

Further information

Visit the Parliament's website for more information on the work of parliamentary committee inquiries and follow the link to the relevant committee.

The contact details for each committee are listed on its webpage.

You can also follow the work of the Legislative Assembly online:

www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees

 facebook.com/parliamentnsw

 youtube.com/NSWParliament

 [@nswparliament](https://instagram.com/@nswparliament)

 [@NSWParILA](https://twitter.com/@NSWParILA)



Version 1 - July 2019