

Making a submission

Your chance to have your say

One of the ways parliamentary committees investigate an issue is to call for submissions from the public and any relevant organisation. This provides everyone with a valuable opportunity to have their say.

Alerting committees to the facts

Submissions alert committee members to facts or information relevant to an inquiry. Committee reports usually refer to - or quote directly from - the information and the arguments presented in submissions.

Submissions show how you, your organisation or your community feels about an issue. They may also help to decide who should be called to give evidence at committee hearings.

You will find more details about giving evidence in Committee hearings. You can get a copy from the committee offices listed on the back of this brochure or on the NSW Parliament's Internet site (details on the back cover).

Addressing the committee's terms of reference

Each inquiry has clear terms of reference which define the scope of an inquiry. Your submission must address any or all of the terms of reference. Your submission can include:

- facts,
- opinions,
- arguments, and
- recommendations for action.

Presenting your submission

While most submissions are written, this is not essential. Other formats are acceptable, such as videos and audiotape.

If you are making a submission on behalf of an organisation, please indicate who has authorised it, for example, the executive committee, president or chairperson.

Putting it in writing

There is no set format for a written submission. You can write a brief letter or a substantial research paper. If you want, you can attach appendices and other supporting documents.

Preferably your submission should be double-spaced and typed on A4 paper. If your submission is more than five pages, please include a brief summary and a contents list.

You can send your submission by post, fax or email to the relevant committee office. Their contact details are listed on the back of this brochure.

Remember to keep a copy of your submission. You may find it useful if you are called to give evidence.

Please ensure that your name, address and phone numbers are included with your submission.

Keeping it confidential

During an inquiry, a committee may decide to publish any or all of the submissions it has received. Once a committee's report is tabled in Parliament, submissions will generally be available to the public. If you want all or

part of your submission to be kept confidential, you must state that clearly in your submission. A committee will usually agree to such a request but this can not be guaranteed.

Protecting you from being sued

Parliamentary committees are an extension of the Parliament. A committee's proceedings, including the presentation of submissions and evidence, are protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that your submission and any oral evidence you give before a committee can be made freely and honestly without any threat of legal action for defamation.

Your submission and evidence to a committee become the property of the committee. This means you cannot publish or disclose it without the committee's authorisation. Parliamentary privilege only extends to submissions or evidence that is published by a committee.

Contacting the committees

Law and Justice Committee

Telephone (02) 9230 3311

Fax (02) 9230 3371

Email: lawandjustice@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Social Issues Committee

Telephone (02) 9230 3078

Fax (02) 9230 2981

Email: socialissues@parliament.nsw.gov.au

State Development Committee

Phone (02) 9230 2641

Fax (02) 9230 2981

Email: statedevelopment@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Getting more information

Making a submission is one of three brochures about the work of standing committees.

The other two brochures in the series are:

- Standing committees
Taking Parliament to the people
- Committee hearings
Giving your evidence in person

You will also find a selection of committee reports, inquiry transcripts, hearing schedules and other information about these committees on the NSW Parliament's Internet site at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au