



# Giving written evidence to a Legislative Assembly committee



Parliamentary committees are made up of members of Parliament. They investigate matters of public importance and they report their findings and recommendations to the Parliament.

You can participate in an inquiry by making a written submission. Submissions are an important source of information for committee inquiries. Submissions help committees to understand an issue from many different perspectives.

They can influence the findings and recommendations that a committee makes.

You can make an important contribution to the work of the Legislative Assembly's committees by sharing your views in a submission.

These notes will help you to put your submission together and then submit it to a committee.

## Who can make a submission?

Any person or organisation can make a submission to a parliamentary committee.

It is important to remember that an anonymous submission will not be accepted, so make sure you include your name and up-to-date contact information.

## Make sure your submission responds to the Terms of Reference

Each inquiry has terms of reference which set out the issues the committee will consider. Your submission should address one or more parts of the terms of reference, which can be found on the committee's website or obtained from the committee's office.

Anyone preparing a submission for the first time may find it useful to seek advice from the committee's staff. Submissions which address the terms of reference directly, avoid unnecessary repetition and include recommendations that stand out clearly from the surrounding text are particularly appreciated. Long submissions should include a summary of the key points.

## Things you need to know

### The committee might not accept your submission

If the committee concludes that a submission does not address the terms of reference, or that it is abusive, disrespectful or frivolous, the committee may choose not to accept a submission.

### Generally, submissions are published by committees

Submissions are part of a committee's public record and are usually published on the Parliament's website. If you do not want your submission published, see the section on confidential submissions below. To protect the privacy of submitters, the secretariat will remove signatures and personal contact details before publishing submissions.

## Confidential submissions

While committees prefer that evidence be given in public whenever possible, you can request that all or part of your submission remain confidential. This should be indicated clearly on the front of the submission.

It is a good idea to talk to the committee's staff before submitting if you would prefer your submission to remain confidential. They can advise you on the options available.

## Make sure you submit on time

Committees have tight timelines for completing inquiries, so it is important that you send your submission by the advertised due date. If you are unable to meet the submission deadline, please contact the committee's office as early as possible.

## Parliamentary privilege

Parliamentary privilege protects you from being taken to court and questioned about what you write to the committee in your submission. This is important so that you are able to be honest and direct in your submission to a committee, without fear of being sued for defamation or fear of harassment, intimidation or improper influence by anyone. In return, the committee expects you will provide evidence that is directly relevant to its inquiry and the questions asked, and not abuse the protection you have.

Parliamentary privilege applies only to submissions published by the committee. If you choose to publish your submission in another form, for example on your website, that publication will not be protected by parliamentary privilege. You can, however, refer others to your submission on the committee's website.

## Further guidance is available

Some committees provide guides for submitters that give further detail on the specific information being sought from submitters. These guides can be helpful in refining your thinking prior to submitting and they can be found on each of the individual inquiry webpages.

You can also consult our FAQ, which answers a number of questions relating to committees:

[www.parliament.wa.gov.au/laco/faq](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/laco/faq)

## How do I submit?

Submissions should be made online via the e-submission portal at:

[www.parliament.wa.gov.au/laco/submissions](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/laco/submissions)

Alternatively, they can be emailed to the relevant committee. Contact information is available on the committees website:

[www.parliament.wa.gov.au/laco/committees](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/laco/committees)

Committees will also accept hard copy submissions, which can be sent to:



Legislative Assembly of Western Australia

Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace, West Perth WA 6005

Telephone: 08 9222 7222

Website: [www.parliament.wa.gov.au](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au)