

Making a Written Submission

What is a Submission?



Proposed changes by government, local government, or an organisation are presented in various forms, such as a parliamentary bill, a change to a district plan, or an organisational review. A timeframe for submissions is offered along with information as to how to make submissions, and sometimes a template is provided. A submission allows you to express your views on proposed changes. These views may be in support of or in opposition to parts or all of a proposal.

Submissions can be made in writing, with opportunity often given for an oral submission to a panel or select committee at a hearing. You will need to indicate if you wish to give an oral submission. Although submissions are usually written, you may prefer to submit a voice or video recording. This guide focuses on written submissions.



Oral or Written Submission

Preparing to Write a Submission

Planning:

Identify the aspects of the proposal you agree with and those you do not agree with, and why. Decide on the order of your points. This usually follows the order of recommendations or clauses in the proposal.

Purpose and audience:

Consider the purpose and audience of your submission: Submissions are made to influence decision-makers regarding a proposed change. They may be to support the proposal or to request changes to a part or the entire proposal. Your audience is those who, after receiving all submissions, have power to make recommendations or final decisions relating to the proposal.

Format of a Written Submission

Written submissions may be by way of letter, email, an online form, or a document. They might also include a covering letter.

1. Identify the proposal

Include the name of the person/organisation you are making the submission to as well as the title of the proposal.

2. Identify yourself

Include your name, contact details, and any relevant personal or professional details that allow the reader to understand your perspective. State any conflicts of interest.

3. Content of your submission

Write statements that outline the aspects of the proposal to which you agree and disagree. Support each statement with reasons for your opinion which may include relevant stories, statistics, examples, and facts. You may also acknowledge counter arguments and identify how compromises might be made to accommodate opposing views.

4. Recommendations

Write statements that outline your suggested changes or recommendations, and briefly reiterate aspects that you do not want removed or altered.

Writing Style

- Direct and focused: Be specific and to the point.
- Logical: Keep your points in logical order. Following the order of the points in the proposal may help you clarify your ideas. Although you may need to write more than one paragraph to make a point, you should always start each new point in a new paragraph.
- Tone: Use a polite and professional tone.
- Clear: Use simple, plain language and correct grammar and spelling to ensure your message is not misinterpreted.
- Constructive: Use language that is constructive to show you are seeking a positive outcome.
- Headings: Use headings and subheadings to give structure to your submission and to help your reader grasp your main points.

Suggested Sentence Starters:

I/we support ... because ...	Although I/we agree with ... I/we do not agree ...
I/we oppose ... because ...	The proposal to ... has merit/is problematic because ...
I/we agree with the intention ...	The proposed change to ... has merit/is problematic because ...
I/we do not agree with the intention of ...	
I/we agree in part with ... but disagree with ...	
I/we suggest ... because ...	

Further reading

- <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/how-to-make-a-submission/>
- <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/make-a-submission/>
- <https://ngo.health.govt.nz/what-we-do/priorities-and-issues/consultation-and-submissions#choose-a-format>
- https://community.net.nz/resources/community-resource-kit/communicating-with-central-government/#submission_select
- <http://iportal.huttcity.govt.nz/Record/ReadOnly?Uri=3677351>
- <https://www.alcohol.org.nz/in-your-community/take-action/make-a-submission>

Bibliography

Health Promotion Agency—Te Hiringa Hauora. (n.d.). *Make a submission*.

<https://www.alcohol.org.nz/in-your-community/take-action/make-a-submission>

Hutt City—Te Awa Kairangi. (n.d.). *Guide to making a submission*.

<http://iportal.huttcity.govt.nz/Record/ReadOnly?Uri=3677351>

Ministry of Health—Manatū Hauora. (2017). *Consultations and submissions*.

<https://ngo.health.govt.nz/what-we-do/priorities-and-issues/consultation-and-%20submissions#choose-a-format>

New Zealand Parliament—Pāremata Aotearoa. (n.d.). *How to make a*

submission. <https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/how-to-make-a-submission/>

Updated January 2022

Template for making a written submission

This template is a suggestion only and can be converted into business letter or email format. You do not have to include all or any of the sentence suggestions and you may prefer to write your own. You may include subheadings.

A submission to *(insert organisation name)*

in response to *(insert title of proposal)*

(insert date)

From *(insert your name)*

(Insert address)

(insert other contact details: email and/or phone numbers)

I/we do/do not request the opportunity to make an oral submission.

Position statement

Insert a statement to give the reader an understanding of your perspective. Include relevant information that points to why you are interested in the proposal. For example:

I am a *(insert job title)*

I work in the area of *(insert information regarding your type of work)*

I have experience with *(insert relevant information)*.

Submission

Thank you for the opportunity to . . .

Although I/we agree/support ... I/we do not agree/support ... because ...

Although the proposal to ... has merit, ... the proposal is problematic because . . .

I/we agree/support (or) do not agree/support ... for the following reasons: Firstly, ... secondly, ... finally, . . .

I oppose the proposal to ... because . . .

I/we agree/support (or) do not agree/support ... The reason for this view is ...

I/we acknowledge that others hold the view that ... However, . . .

Recommendation/Conclusion

I/we suggest/recommend . . .

(insert signature)