



# QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT COMMITTEES

**Health, Environment and Innovation Committee**  
**58<sup>th</sup> Parliament, March 2025**

## **Inquiry into Improving Queensland's container refund scheme wage Confidentiality of information - FAQs**

### **Parliamentary privilege**

Proceedings of the Queensland Parliament and its committees, including the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee (the committee), are subject to parliamentary privilege. This means a submitter cannot be subject to legal action for providing, or on the basis of the contents of, information provided to the committee as evidence for its inquiry, including through written submissions or hearings.

If you continue to have concerns about your confidentiality after reading this document, it is recommended you seek legal advice for your particular matter.

### **Requesting confidential written submissions**

Committees aim to gather their evidence in an open and transparent manner. If a committee accepts a submission, it becomes a committee record and is usually published on the committee's website as soon as possible. Contact details of individuals (e.g. residential or e-mail addresses or phone numbers) are removed before submissions are published.

A committee can decide to keep a submission confidential, but cannot promise to do so in advance. If you want all or part of your submission to be kept confidential, you should state this clearly and explain the reasons in a covering email or letter.

The committee can also decide to publish submissions while withholding the name of the individual or organisation who made the submission. Again, if you would like your name withheld from publication, please state this clearly and explain the reasons in a covering email or letter.

### **Private hearings**

The committee can, usually on request, decide to hold hearings in private. If this occurs, the committee will provide you with an opportunity to argue whether or not your evidence should be published, or whether your name should be withheld.

### **Frequently asked questions**

#### ***How does parliamentary privilege apply to this Inquiry?***

Parliamentary privilege applies to any information received, prepared or issued by the committee during the inquiry.

This includes material provided in written submissions and verbal evidence given at hearings, and any information published by the committee, including in its final report.

#### ***I've signed a confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement with an organisation as part of a settlement deal. Am I covered by parliamentary privilege?***

As parliamentary privilege applies to any information received, prepared or issued by the committee, you cannot be subject to legal action in relation to any evidence you provide to the committee, regardless of any confidentiality or other agreements to which you may be a party.

However, parliamentary privilege does not extend to your reproduction of evidence accepted or reported on by a committee. This means that if you publish your information in any other forum you will not be protected by parliamentary privilege. Should you wish to make reference to your evidence, it is recommended that you refer directly to the official committee record, to which privilege applies (i.e. the published submission, report or other document).

***What if I'm uncomfortable with my submission being made public and want it to be kept confidential?***

You may request the committee treat your submission as confidential. If the committee agrees to your request, this would mean the committee could use your evidence to inform itself during the inquiry, but will not use the content of your submission in a way that might identify you.

The committee might resolve to hold a private hearing, which is closed to the public and not broadcast, where a written submission indicates there is further evidence that might be helpful to the committee's inquiry. While a transcript of the private hearing is produced, the transcript is confidential to the committee and not published.

***What if I want my identity protected but I want the contents of my submission to be made public?***

The committee can publish submissions while withholding the name of the individual or organisation who made the submission. This will usually be considered on request and may be agreed where the committee believes revealing the identity of the submitter would increase their vulnerability or cause distress.

***What if I am worried that the content of my submission might enable someone to identify me?***

Apart from your name, address and other contact details which can be withheld upon your request, if you are concerned that any aspect of your written submission or oral evidence given to the committee could allow you to be identified, please request confidentiality when making your submission and explain your concerns to the committee.

***What if I want to publish my submission separately to the inquiry?***

You are able to release your own submission, though note that if you publish it elsewhere it will not be protected by parliamentary privilege. If the committee has authorised publication of your submission, you are welcome to include a link to your submission on the committee's website.

***Who is covered by parliamentary privilege?***

People appearing before the committee when giving evidence and making submissions, as well as the committee members and staff are covered by parliamentary privilege.

***What is not covered by parliamentary privilege?***

Parliamentary privilege applies to any information received, prepared or issued by the committee during the inquiry. This includes material provided in written submissions and verbal evidence given at hearings, and any information published by the committee, including in its final report.

Parliamentary privilege does not extend to your reproduction of evidence accepted or reported on by a committee.

This means that if you publish your information in any other forum you will not be protected by parliamentary privilege. Should you wish to make reference to your evidence, it is recommended that you refer directly to the official committee record, to which privilege applies (i.e. the published submission, report or other document).