



QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

Appearing as a witness at a committee hearing

Committees often hold public hearings to build on the information provided to them in written submissions. People who are invited to attend a public hearing are referred to as witnesses.

These hearings provide the opportunity for people to add to the information included in their submissions. Hearings also give submitters an opportunity to respond to issues or arguments put forward in other submissions.

Who can participate in a committee hearing?

Any person can ask to appear as a witness. The committee will also invite people to appear as witnesses.

If you are invited to appear as a witness at a committee hearing, you will be asked for your contact details and other relevant information.

You are welcome to bring a support person with you but this person will not be able to speak. Please advise committee staff if you will have someone appearing with you before the committee.

Committees have videoconference and teleconference capabilities. Please advise the committee secretariat if you wish to appear before the committee virtually.

The Parliament has a set of rules for committees regarding witnesses. [See Schedule 3 of the Standing Orders here.](#)

What happens at a public hearing?

Witnesses are asked to arrive 10 - 15 minutes before their scheduled time.

When it is your time to speak, the Chair of the committee will call you to the witness table. A name plate will indicate where to sit.

The Chair will ask you to tell the committee your full name and if you are appearing on behalf of an organisation. The committee secretariat will advise you about how the hearing will run. Often, witnesses are invited to provide a statement to the committee, and then Members will ask them questions.

If you are not able to answer a question on the spot, the committee may ask you to provide an answer at a later date. The committee Chair will tell you when the answer is due.

Hearings are usually open to the public and the media may also attend.

Regional hearings

A committee may hold regional hearings as part of their inquiry. The committee may seek expressions of interest to appear at a regional hearing. Further information will be available on the inquiry webpage.

What happens after the hearing?

If held at Parliament House, hearings are usually broadcast on [Parliament.TV](#) and recorded by parliamentary reporting (Hansard) staff.

Regional hearings are not usually broadcast but are recorded. After the hearing, a proof transcript will be published online and you will be sent a copy and asked to provide any corrections.* Once all corrections have been made, the final transcript will be uploaded.

**Changes can only be made for minor errors, such as incorrect spelling, and cannot add or change the meaning of anything said at the hearing.*

Presenting documents to a committee during a hearing

If you have a document you think would be helpful for the committee's inquiry, you may present it to the committee.

The committee will decide whether to accept the document and authorise it for tabling, and with your permission, for publication.

INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR EVIDENCE

Confidentiality

You may ask to give your evidence or part of it in private. Generally, the recording of this private evidence will not be published, however the committee may wish to publish this evidence. In this case, the committee must seek your views first.

Please contact the committee secretariat for any requests for private hearings.

Parliamentary privilege

Submissions made to the committee in a formal hearing are protected by parliamentary privilege. This means that legal action cannot be taken against you in relation to something you have said while appearing before the committee.

However, you will not be protected by parliamentary privilege if you repeat the same statements outside the hearing. Take care not to provide false or misleading information to the committee: deliberately misleading the committee is an offence. If you make a mistake, let the committee know as soon as you can.

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have further questions, please contact the committee secretariat. The contact details are on the [committees' webpage](#)