



## Presenting Petitions in the Legislative Assembly

This information sheet acts as guide for petitioners. Further inquiries concerning petitions should be directed to the Assistant Clerk Committees, Legislative Assembly, Parliament House, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002, telephone (03) 9651 8555.

### Form

- Petitions need to be addressed to the Legislative Assembly of Victoria.
- A petition to be presented in the Legislative Assembly must only be addressed to the Assembly and not to the Legislative Council as well.
- A brief paragraph(s) must be included giving the reasons for the petition. If a petition is more than one sheet long, each page must be headed with these details and should end with the action asked for.
- The details should be photocopied or printed on each sheet before it is signed. Wording pasted to a page of signatories is not allowed.
- The signatures must be numbered on each page, starting with number 1 for the first signature on every sheet.
- No letters, affidavits or other documents (other than translations) can be attached or incorporated on the front of the petition sheet.
- The back of each petition sheet should be left blank (other than a continuation of signatures from the front), however material that is inconsequential or irrelevant to the terms of the petition is permissible.

### Content

- The petition must be legible.
- The wording must be respectful and not offensive.
- Petitions need to be in English, or attached to a certified translation if in another language.
- Only issues which the Assembly has authority to deal with can be raised (some matters, for example, are the responsibility of the federal parliament in Canberra).
- No information that seeks support for the petition should be added, although a note giving a name and/or address for the return of the petition is allowed.

### Signatories

- Every petition must be signed by at least one person.
- All signatures must be hand written.
- Signatures must be original — photocopies and scanned signatures are not allowed.
- No-one can sign on behalf of another person, (except a petitioner who is incapable of signing may get someone to sign on his/her behalf).
- Each person must include his or her name, signature and address (only Victorian addresses are acceptable). Note that tabled petitions can be read by anyone upon request at the Legislative Assembly Procedure Office.
- A person must live in Victoria to be able to sign the petition.
- Names, addresses and signatures can only be written on headed petition sheets.

## Arranging Presentation

- Petitions can only be lodged for presentation by a member. This does not need to be the petitioners local member. Petitioners should contact a member to make arrangements. ***Petitions should not be sent direct to Parliament House.***
- The member presenting the petition must sign it in the top right-hand corner on the first page.
- Members are not signing as a petitioner and do not need to agree with its contents.
- The member will arrange presentation with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. The Clerk will check that the petition meets all requirements for presentation.
- A member cannot lodge his or her own petition.

## Presentation to the House

- Petitions are presented during formal business (explained in *Fact Sheet A1: A Typical Sitting Day in Assembly*).
- The Clerk announces the name of the member who lodged the petition, who the petitioners are, the subject matter of the petition and the number of signatures. These details are printed in Hansard.
- The Clerk sends the relevant minister a copy of the front sheet of each petition for his or her information.
- As an alternative procedure a member can read the terms of a petition and the number of signatories instead of making a 90-second statement (explained in *Fact Sheet B1: Types of Debate*).

## Privacy

- Petitions presented to the Legislative Assembly are public documents. All information in a petition, including names and addresses, will be available to the public once it has been presented.
- If you are the organiser of a petition we recommend that you inform people who sign it that the petition will be a public document.

## **Petition Template**

*(these details must appear at the top of each sheet)*

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria

The Petition of

*(insert here the names or descriptions of the petitioner or petitioners, such as residents of Victoria or residents of [name of town, region or electorate in Victoria])*

draws to the attention of the House

*or*

points out to the House

*(insert here the circumstances of the issue)*

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria

*(insert here the request of the petitioners, showing clearly the nature of the remedy or action requested)*

NAME

ADDRESS

SIGNATURE

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PLEASE NOTE: The names and addresses of people who sign this petition will be available to the public if the petition is presented to Parliament.