
The Catholic Women's League of Canada



Personal Letter Writing Guide

Easy steps to

WRITING LETTERS

THAT COUNT!

The Catholic Women's League of Canada

National Office

C-702 Scotland Avenue
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Step 1. Why write?

- your one letter counts
- it represents 50 to 500 taxpayers who didn't bother to write
- it is better than a form letter
- it is better than signing a petition
- it supports League resolutions
- it influences politics and policies
- it shows care and concern
- it expresses opinions
- it exerts a Christian influence
- it expresses appreciation

Step 2. When to write?

- after resolutions are adopted
- when policy decisions are being made
- after introduction of a bill
- early in parliamentary and legislative sessions
- anytime you have a concern

Step 3. What to write?

- your name, address, postal code, date
- refer to bill number and title
- the issue/concern you are addressing
- your opinions and feelings on the issue
- action that you want
- a question requiring an answer

Step 4. How to write?

- in a positive, constructive, polite tone
- brief and concise, one page is enough
- be specific, choose one point only
- as an individual, no copied or form letters
- in your own words
- use Whereas clauses of resolutions to accurately state a reason
- end with a clear and realistic request

Step 5. Where and whom to write?

- to government
federal: prime minister, cabinet minister, member of parliament, senator
provincial: premier, cabinet minister, member of the legislature
municipal: mayor, councillor
- other persons in authority: church, business, school system, professions and other organizations

Forms of Address

Federal:

Prime Minister

The Rt. Hon. _____
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Dear Mr./Ms. Prime Minister
Respectfully yours

Cabinet Minister

The Hon. _____
Minister of _____
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Dear Mr./Ms. Minister
Sincerely yours

Member of Parliament

Mr./Ms. _____
Member of Parliament
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
Dear Mr./Ms. _____
Sincerely yours

Senator

The Hon. _____
Senator
Parliament Building
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4
Dear Mr./Ms. _____
Sincerely yours

Forms of Address (Cont.)

Provincial

Alberta:

307 Legislature Building
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

British Columbia:

Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Manitoba:

450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

New Brunswick:

Centennial Building
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

Newfoundland and Labrador:

Confederation Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Northwest Territories:

Government Leader
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

Nova Scotia:

P.O. Box 726
Halifax, NS B3J 2T3

Nunavut:

Box 1200

Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Ontario:

Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

Prince Edward Island:

P.O. Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8

Québec:

Hôtel du Parlement
Québec, QC G1A 1A4

Saskatchewan:

Legislative Building
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

Yukon:

Government Leader
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6

Provincial Premier

The Hon. _____
Premier of your province
Dear Mr./Ms. Premier
Respectfully yours

Cabinet Minister

The Hon. _____
Minister of _____
Dear Mr./Ms. Minister
Sincerely yours



Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

2500 Don Reid Drive
Ottawa, ON K1H 2J2

Abbot:

Most Rev. _____
Dear Abbot _____

Archbishop:

Most Rev. _____
Your Grace

Bishop:

Most Rev. _____
Your Excellency

Cardinal:

His Eminence Cardinal _____
Your Eminence

Monsignor:

Rt. Rev. Msgr. _____
Dear Msgr. _____

☞ Remember

- No stamp is needed for letters to members of parliament or senators.
Note: The post office requests that you write MP after the person's name (prime minister, cabinet minister, member of parliament – e.g., The Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper, MP).
- Send copies of your letter to others (e.g., prime minister, cabinet minister and your local member of parliament, constituency office, opposition parties).
- Postage is required for letters to members of the provincial legislature.

Federal, provincial and municipal governments are listed on special pages of telephone books. A citizen's inquiry or general information telephone number listed under "Government of Canada" can answer a multitude of questions concerning both federal and provincial levels.

Do not send form letters as they tend to be treated as a one-person campaign.

Guidelines

1. **Be brief and polite.**
 2. **Write on one issue.** Keep it short.
 3. **Ask what they plan to do.** If they send a vague reply, send another letter.
 4. **Use proper etiquette.** See "Forms of Address" in this guide.
 5. **Thank** the person whenever you can agree with something.
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Be sure you

- Clearly state that you are writing as a private or concerned citizen.
- **Do not use** your CWL council's letterhead, as the recipient might assume you are writing for the entire council. Letterhead may be used only by an executive member when writing officially.
- When writing concerning a resolution, use the words of the resolution as contained in the Whereas and Resolved clauses so that there is no possibility of writing something contradictory to, or not intended by, the resolution and state the date, place and level of the convention at which the resolution was adopted.

A question in the letter will help ensure a response. For example, "I would like to know the government's position (or of your party, or your personal opinion) on this issue and look forward to an early reply."

The letter may also state, "I ask you, as my MLA (MP), to bring my concern to the government."

When elected or appointed government officials get an unusual number of letters on a given concern, they will likely bring this concern to a caucus meeting.
