

Tips for writing to your MPs

Sending a letter is the easiest and quickest way to contact MPs. We've developed the following guidelines to help you connect with your MP.

- 1. Send your letter postage-free.** That's right. You can send letters, without stamps, to any MP at either their Ottawa or their constituency office.
- 2. Address your letter properly.** It actually doesn't matter which office, whether it's constituency or Ottawa, you send your letter to. The MP's staff will ensure your letter gets to where it needs to go. Letters to the Ottawa office don't need detailed address information. All you need is:

Mr./Ms. [Name], MP
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

However, if the MP to whom you are writing is a current or former cabinet member, you'll need to address your letter differently (note that "PC" stands for Privy Councillor):

Hon. [Name], PC, MP
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

- 3. Be professional.** A well-written letter is more credible and will get more attention. Proofread your letter to get rid of those annoying typos. It may sound basic, but make sure that you spell the MP's name correctly. Lastly, try and keep your letter as short and concise as possible, while making sure to include all the pertinent details.
- 4. Personalize your letter.** If you use a template, make sure to personalize it wherever possible. MPs take much more note when you relate an issue to how it affects their own constituency. If you have an upcoming event or public meeting, consider including an invitation. MPs are always looking for opportunities to connect with constituents.

- 5. Copy your letter.** Whatever the issue you're writing about, consider sending a copy of your letter to the relevant Minister at the same time. In this case, you can send a copy (postage-free) to:

Hon. Joe Oliver, PC, MP
Minister of Finance
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

- 6. Follow up.** Don't hesitate to send a copy of your letter by email. If you do so, you should indicate that an original copy has been mailed. MPs receive a fair amount of correspondence, and have many demands on their time, so it may take some time to receive a response. If you feel like it's taking too long, a friendly email or phone call to their office might help to speed things up.
- 7. Share your letter.** Make sure you let us know you've sent a letter by getting on the map at imaginecanada.ca/thestretch. You may also consider sharing the letter on your website or tweeting about it.
- 8. Dot your i's and cross your t's.** Writing to your MP about an issue that affects your organization is not political activity as defined by the CRA. If you make your letter public, it might be political activity — for example, if you share it with others and ask them to send similar letters.

Last updated: 2014-09-09