



**Tithe an  
Oireachtais  
Houses of the  
Oireachtas**

# Public Petitions Questions & Answers



The Public Petitions System presents an important new avenue for members of the public to participate in the democratic process. For the first time, through the petitions process, all citizens will be able to take their policy concerns directly to their National Parliament and, in doing so, influence the parliamentary agenda.



### What is a Petition?

A petition is a way for you to raise an issue with the Parliament on a matter of general public interest or concern. The subject of the petition must relate to a matter on which the Parliament has the power to act.

### Who can make a petition?

Any member of the public can submit a petition on a matter of general public interest or concern. Just one signature is required and there is no limit to the numbers who can support a petition. Petitioners should demonstrate that they have already taken steps to resolve the issue in their petition, for example, through raising it with the Ombudsman, other public bodies, or directly with the relevant Government Department.

### Is the process complicated?

Not at all. There is a standard form which we request all petitioners to complete. This is available at [petitions.oireachtas.ie](http://petitions.oireachtas.ie) and can be completed and submitted online, emailed or sent by post. The Public Petitions System has been designed in a user friendly way to enable anyone who has limited knowledge of using the internet to work their way through the system.

Care must be taken to prepare petitions to ensure they comply with the rules, or Standing Orders of the Oireachtas. The Committee Secretariat is on hand to assist the public in completing the form and to give advice on the type of petitions which can be accepted. If you do not have access to a computer the Committee Secretariat will post this form to you. They can be contacted on (01) 618 4216 or on lo-call number – 1890 337 889.

### How do I add my name in support of a petition?

If you want to add your name in support of a petition, it must be added at the time the petition is being submitted. There is no limit to the number of people who can support a petition. When a petition is submitted, it is no longer possible to add names to it.

### What happens next?

The petitions are received by the Joint sub-Committee on Public Petitions, a new Parliamentary Committee consisting of TDs and Senators. The petition will be examined by a Petitions Case Manager to ensure that it meets with the rules (Standing Orders) of the Joint sub-Committee and will be referred to the Joint sub-Committee with a recommendation.



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**What can the Joint sub-Committee do to advance the issue?**

If the petition is in order, the Joint sub-Committee may invite the petitioner to appear before it to speak on the matter. The Joint sub-Committee may also seek oral or written evidence from relevant organisations such as Government Departments, other appropriate bodies or stakeholders. The sub-Committee has the power to invite government ministers to attend meetings and answer questions about the petition.

The Joint sub-Committee may also liaise with the Ombudsman, or other bodies established for the purpose of redress and may engage with the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament.

**Who should I contact if I need assistance or have any queries?**

Further information and advice on the petitions process can be obtained from:

Clerk to the Joint sub-Committee  
on Public Petitions  
Houses of the Oireachtas  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

Tel: 01-618 4216

E-mail: [submitapetition@oireachtas.ie](mailto:submitapetition@oireachtas.ie)

Web: [petitions.oireachtas.ie](http://petitions.oireachtas.ie)



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