Media resources

**Writing a letter to the editor**

A letter to the editor is a letter sent to a publication about issues of concern from its readers. The letters usually respond or comment on an article that has been published recently, or speak to an issue that is current.

As you prepare for the meeting with your MP, think about how you’re going to talk about the issues that matter to you. What would you want the public to know about this meeting and the issues you're raising? Follow the below tips, and use our template to send a letter to the editor:

**● Keep it short.** 100-150 words is ideal.

**● Make the opening punchy**

**● Keep it simple.** Try to make one or two clear points. You can't solve all the world's problems in one letter.

**● One letter per publication.** Don't copy your letter to other newspapers.

**● Keep it relevant** Your letter will have a better chance if it refers to a story in the paper or on the website, or a previous letter.

**● Send it early.** Aim to send your letter to the editor before 12pm on the day before you’d like it published.

**● Follow the rules.** Read the submissions criteria carefully.

**Letter structure**

● Headline - summarise your letter in one line (5-10 words)

● Explain why your issue is important (40-50 words)

● Provide evidence if you’re using data or making a claim about an issue

● State your opinion about what should be done/possible remedies to the issue (50-100 words)

● Sign off with your name and contact details



**Examples**

**We need to examine what we are doing wrong**

On the surface Victoria appeared to be leading the way in our COVID-19 response, with one of the highest number of tests and the most draconian lockdowns in the country. But with a combination of overly gregarious, rule-breaking families and a dash of bad luck, it seems our ability to get rid of the disease is the worst in the country.

Perhaps we should look under the covers. What if we were slow to ramp up testing in the first place, or our test results take longer to arrive, or our contact tracing resources are strained and ineffectual because of the sheer number of separate clusters, or we do not adequately monitor those who are

supposed to be isolating? And, to top it off, we still beg for more international flights full of new cases to come our way.

Locking down again will not change the outcomes if the subtleties of what we are doing wrong are never dealt with. We can continue the lockdown and employ an army of council pole sanitisers, but we still might end up looking more like Italy and not Taiwan.

*Jennifer Sjostrom, McKinnon*

**Avoid state squabbles and act as one country**

As a person who has recently moved from Sydney to Melbourne, I am greatly saddened by the advice of Gladys Berejiklian for people in her state not to interact with people from Melbourne. I cannot recall Dan Andrews tackling the NSW premier after the Ruby Princess debacle in such a manner. This is a time when we need to come together as a country. Schadenfreude is both an ignoble and a dangerous sentiment.

*Harry Popp, Carlton North*

**Contact details**

To find the best email address to send your letter to the editor to, do a Google search with the name of your local paper and letter to the editor.

Here are the contact details of some major national and state-based papers:

**The Australian:** letters@theaustralian.com.au

**Sydney Morning Herald:** letters@smh.com.au

**Daily Telegraph:** dailytelegraph.com.au/news/opinion/letter-to-the-editor

**The Age:** letters@theage.com.au

**Herald Sun:** http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/opinion/letter-to-the-editor

**Canberra Times:** letters.editor@canberratimes.com.au

**Courier Mail:** cmletters@qnp.newsltd.com.au

**Adelaide Advertiser:** advedit@adv.newsltd.com.au

**West Australian:** letters@wanews.com.au

**Hobart Mercury:** mercuryedletter@dbl.newsltd.com.au

**NT News:** ntmail@ntnews.com.au

**The Saturday Paper:** letters@thesaturdaypaper.com.au