



JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S FAMILY LAW SYSTEM

Protocols for submissions and hearings

The Joint Select Committee on Australia's Family Law System has agreed on the following protocols in relation to submissions and hearings.

Submissions

- Submitters may request that their submission be accepted by the committee as confidential.
- Any submission that identifies parties, makes allegations of domestic violence or contains adverse reflections will be accepted by the committee as confidential.
- Submitters may request that their submission be accepted as name withheld. The committee may publish these submissions provided that there are no adverse reflections against identified persons.

Hearings

- A range of individuals whose submissions reflect the spectrum of issues and views will be invited to discuss their submissions with the committee. It should be noted that the committee can only hear from a limited number of witnesses, and that written submissions are the primary source of evidence to be considered by the committee.
- Witnesses invited to a committee hearing may request that they are heard by teleconference.
- Witnesses may also request that their evidence be heard in-camera or confidentially.

Safety

- While Parliamentary proceedings—including committee inquiries—are generally public, the committee is mindful of the need to ensure the safety of witnesses. Accordingly, appropriate arrangements will be instituted for hearings, including hearing from witnesses by telephone and/or in-camera.

Support

- Given that some witnesses and members of the public may find it difficult and traumatic to relate their experiences, or to hear other witnesses recounting experiences which are similar to theirs, the committee has arranged for a counsellor present at hearings.