

How to contact your local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP)



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Who is my MPP?

To find your local Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP), visit the Elections Ontario websites listed below. Type in your postal code or address as prompted to find your electoral district. Once you have identified your electoral district, click the link, "Information on your Member of Provincial Parliament" and find your MPP based on the electoral district. Clicking on your MPP's name will give you information about them, including their contact information. As a medical student, it is perfectly reasonable for you to contact your home MPP, your school MPP, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care and the opposition party Health Critic.

Finding your electoral district:

http://fyed.elections.on.ca/fyed/en/map_page_en.jsp?dcode=003

A list of all current MPPs with their electoral district and contact information:

http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/members/members_current.do?locale=en

Which address should I use to contact my MPP?

You might have noticed that two sets of contact information are provided for each MPP, one with their contact information in Queen's Park and one with their constituency office contact information. This is a reflection of every MPP's dual role as a legislator and as an elected representative. In contacting your local MPP as a member of their constituency, your best bet will be to contact their constituency office. An MPP's constituency office will be located in their electoral district and will usually have staff dedicated to assisting the MPP with responding to inquiries and requests from their constituency.

Via what channel should I contact my MPP?

Regular mail and email are both acceptable ways to contact your MPP. An email is easier and will likely have a quicker response time, but regular mail is more likely to be seen by the MPP. Rough turnaround time varies based on the individual politician, but keep in mind they likely receive hundreds of emails and dozens of paper mail every day. Therefore, it may take a week or more in order to receive a response, or several weeks to receive a response from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. Keep in mind that if your letter doesn't explicitly require a response, it is likely that you won't receive one, even if your MPP does read your letter.

Should I send my letter to the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care?

Generally, you should contact your local MPP first rather than the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to have a better chance of getting a response. However, it doesn't hurt to send the Minister a letter as well. From your local MPP, your letter will eventually reach the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care if it's deemed important enough. You should explicitly request that your letter be forwarded to the Ministry if you believe it needs to be involved. You may choose to also contact the Opposition Party's Health Critic.

Will my MPP even read my letter?

Many students are unsure about contacting their local politicians. You may have heard that they don't even read the letters and emails sent to them. You may think that one letter won't make a difference. You may not know what to say. However, one letter can make a difference, provided it's written properly. Politicians lead busy lives, and because of this, the format and wording of a letter can decide whether it reaches your MPP, or whether it's discarded by their administrative staff.

What should I say in my letter?

For information on properly addressing politicians and members of government, see this very helpful resource: <http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1359143306677>. In general, MPPs may be addressed as: Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss (name). However, if your MPP is also a Cabinet Minister, they should be addressed as Minister in writing.

Begin your letter by introducing yourself. Make it clear who you are, including the fact that you are a medical student at such-and-such school. If you have met the politician before, it won't hurt to bring it up.

After this brief introduction, you should cut right to the point. Don't write a flowery paragraph about your reasons for writing. That can come later if you really feel the need to include it. At the beginning, just simply state your suggestion, idea, inquiry, or complaint, including what action you would like the MPP to take. For example, "I am writing to urge your support of/opposition to..."

Afterwards, you can take the space to explain your idea, avoiding medical jargon. Try to be as clear and straightforward as possible, since if the purpose of your letter isn't understood by the MPP's office staff, then it is unlikely your letter will ever be seen by the MPP themselves. Use clear writing and proper grammar (have someone proofread it if possible!). Bullet points are perfectly acceptable, but if you go this route, try to keep the bullet points informative and professional, and make sure your introduction, topic statement, and conclusion are in full sentences rather than bullets.

Finally, close the letter by restating its purpose, including what action you would like to be taken by your MPP. Be sure to provide your full contact details even if you don't expect a response. This includes your address, phone number and email.

What should I avoid in my letter?

If your email is worded poorly or contains spelling and grammatical errors, if it makes sweeping demands, is worded aggressively, or if it is unclear in purpose, the letter will likely never reach your MPP. So be sure to proofread carefully and keep your tone polite and neutral, even if you have strong feelings about the letter you're sending. You should also avoid sounding partisan in your letter. While it is part of a politician's job description to be partisan, overtly praising or criticizing a Party's platform will more likely than not distract from the point you are trying to get across. Remember, you are contacting your MPP in their capacity as your elected representative, less so than as a member of any particular political party.

What happens to my letter once I send it?

Letters will end up in a general staff inbox for your MPP's office, where their staff will read the letter and evaluate what needs to be done. If it's something the staff can answer themselves, your MPP will never

see the letter. If it's something that needs to be passed on, it is sent to your MPP's administrative assistant, and, after being evaluated a second time, will reach and be read by the politician.