**Legal Letters to courts**

You may need to write to a cou​rt (or tribunal) for a number of reasons, including to:

* ask for your case to be postponed (adjourned). Be careful as you can't ask for this by letter in​​ some types of cases or in some courts!
* ask for your case to be heard at a different court (for example, a court closer to you). Be careful as you can't ask for this by letter in some types of cases or in some courts!
* get a copy of a file or document
* file a document by post.

When you write a letter to a court, you should make sure the person reading it can understand what case you are referring to, and what you want.

 For a helpful tool to use when writing a letter to a court, see [Checklist: Writing letters](https://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/representing/lawassist_readingwritinghome_wysk/lawassist_letters_wysk/lawassist_letters_checklist.aspx).

All letters to court should include: ​

* [​Your add​​ress and the court's address](https://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/representing/lawassist_readingwritinghome_wysk/lawassist_letters_wysk/lawassist_letters_courts.aspx#%E2%80%8BYouradd%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8Bressandthecourt'saddress)
* [The names of the parties in the case, the court and the court case number](https://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/representing/lawassist_readingwritinghome_wysk/lawassist_letters_wysk/lawassist_letters_courts.aspx#Thenamesofthepartiesinthecase,thecourtandthecourtcasenumber)
* [What you are telling the court about, or asking for](https://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/representing/lawassist_readingwritinghome_wysk/lawassist_letters_wysk/lawassist_letters_courts.aspx#Whatyouaretellingthecourtabout,oraskingfor)
* [Your signature and any relevant documents](https://www.lawaccess.nsw.gov.au/Pages/representing/lawassist_readingwritinghome_wysk/lawassist_letters_wysk/lawassist_letters_courts.aspx#Yoursignatureandanyrelevantdocuments)

**​Your add​​ress and the court's address**

When you write a letter to a court, your name and address should be at the top of the page, on the right hand side. Underneath that, on the left hand side, you should write the date and the name of the court and its address. Use a PO Box address if the court has one.

 Always include the date you are signing/sending the letter. A date is important because:

* it can help you prove when you sent the letter
* a date can be used to identify the document. For example, if you call the court about your letter you can ask them if they have received your letter 'dated 10 January 2011'.

For example:

**John Smith**

**23 West Street**

**WESTOWN NSW 2999**

**12 November 20XX**

**The Registry**
**Parramatta Local Court**

**PO Box XXXXX**

**PARRAMATTA NSW 2150**

**The names of the parties in the case, the court and the court case number**

When you write a letter to a court about a case that has been started, you should include a heading. The heading should state the names of the parties, the court the case is in, and the case number. It is important to give this information to help court staff identify what your letter is referring to.

For example:

John Smith

23 West Street

WESTOWN NSW 2999

12 November 20XX

The Registry

Parramatta Local Court

PO Box XXXXX

PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

**Dear Sir/Madam**

**Police v John Smith, Downing Centre Local Court**

**General Division, CAN number 2011/000000012**​

**What you are telling the court about, or asking for**

When you write to a court, you should clearly state what the letter is about. If you are:

* asking for your case to be postponed (adjourned), state the court date you want adjourned, why you need the adjournment, and what other time period (for example, after 10 January) you would be available. Be careful as you can't ask for this by letter in some types of cases or in some courts!
* asking for your case to be moved to a different court, the letter should explain why you need this and where you think the case should be moved. Be careful as you can't ask for this by letter in some types of cases or in some courts!
* trying to get a copy of a file or document, the letter should clearly set out what file or document you want access to, and why.
* filing documents by post, the letter should list each of the documents you are filing, list the number of copies (if any) of each document, and include a cheque for payment of the filing fee (if there is one).

If you expect a reply or confirmation of receipt of documents, you should say this in the letter and tell the court your preferred contact details.

For example:

John Smith

23 West Street

WESTOWN NSW 2999

​12 November 20XX

The Registry

Parramatta Local Court

PO Box XXXXX

PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

Dear Sir/Madam

Police v John Smith, Downing Centre Local Court

General Division, CAN number 2011/000000012

**I am writing to you in relation to the above matter.**

**My case is listed for mention at the Parramatta Local Court on Thursday 1 December 2011.**

**I am unable to attend court on that day as I will be travelling to Victoria for work. I enclose a letter from my employer confirming this.**

**I ask that the court adjourn my case. I will be back in Sydney from 8 December 2011, and I will be available on any day after that date.**

**If the Court needs any further information, I can be contacted on: 0400 000 000.**​

**Your signature and any relevant documents**

When you have completed the letter, you can write "Yours faithfully", leave two or three spaces, write your name and then sign in between "Yours faithfully" and your name.

If you are sending any documents, cheques or any other items, these are called 'enclosures'. You should describe what you are enclosing in the text of your letter (as in the example above). You should also add the letters "encl" underneath your name. This reminds the person receiving the letter that you sent something with it.

For example:

John Smith

23 West Street

WESTOWN NSW 2999

​12 November 2011

The Registry

Parramatta Local Court

PO Box XXXXX

PARRAMATTA NSW 2150

Dear Sir/Madam

Police v John Smith, Downing Centre Local Court

​General Division, CAN number 2011/000000012

I am writing to you in relation to the above matter.

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I ask that the court adjourn my case. I will be back in Sydney from 8 December 2011, and I will be available on any day after that date.

If the Court needs any further information, I can be contacted on: 0400 000 000.

**Yours faithfully,**

***J. Smith***

**John Smith**

**encl**

 Make sure you include a telephone number in a​ny letter you write so that the person you send the letter to can contact you if they need to. You could also include your email address, if you have one.

 Make sure you keep a copy of the letter and a record of when you posted it. You could use registered post so that there is a record of when the person you sent the letter received it.