



## WRITING POWERFUL LETTERS or EMAILS

A letter or email remains a forceful form of advocacy. Individual letters written in your own words are the most powerful. Remember, **a good letter or email is succinct, states your position and sticks to the issue.**

- If you are writing on behalf of a CFUW Club, follow the *CFUW Guidelines for Advocacy*:
  - Local CFUW Clubs write to your local federal, provincial and municipal politicians. Copies of these letters can be sent to relevant ministers.
  - Any letter sent on behalf of CFUW must be based on CFUW policy. The letter must be sent out under the signature of the club president, or designated member of the executive, sent on club letterhead.
  - An individual club member is always encouraged to write to any politician on any issues about which she has a concern. She may use information from CFUW sources but we ask that she not write "on behalf of CFUW", nor use CFUW letterhead.

### Know your subject

Provincial issues and national from CFUW usually come with backgrounders and template letters which you can adapt for your own use. It's best to rewrite and personalize the template letter.

Locally if there is no policy to cover your ask, you may develop and adopt a local resolution as long as it does not contravene CFUW Mission.

### Know who to write to

Know who is making the decisions? Knowing which of your local representatives (whether federal, provincial, municipal, regional or county level) to contact about an issue is important.

Which office – the local constituency or Queen's Park? Policy is handled at the legislature.

Use proper titles for the person that you are sending the letter to. Those in Cabinet should be addressed using The Honourable, a title that federal cabinet ministers keep, but not provincial cabinet ministers. Clubs are free to write to cabinet ministers who are their own representatives, and send copies of letters to local MPPs to Ministers.

---

### CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL

At the municipal level, a mayor should be addressed as His/Her Worship (full name), Mayor of..., and the salutation should be Dear Sir/Madam.

## **Content**

The information in your letter should be **current, well researched and accurate**.

Identify yourself as a constituent in your letter or email, include your contact information, including email address, in the letter.

Make the letter one page if possible. State your concern and what action you want your representative to take. If you are writing on behalf of CFUW, please follow **CFUW Advocacy Guidelines**.

Identify how the issue is linked to, or will impact, your community.

Where possible, know the policies/position of the person to whom you are writing, and if they represent you provincially, investigate the position of the party they belong to. Has your elected representative or his/her party taken a position on this issue before? You may want to commend them for their position, or you may want to urge them to change their position. You may need to edit template letters to reflect the position of your representative and his/her party.

Ask a question and ask for a response, particularly if it is not clear what position your representative has taken, or will take, on the issue(s) you have raised.

Always proofread especially emails with predicative text. You could be writing gibberish!

**Your letter should be current, accurate, clear, personal, succinct.**

**It should state your position, sticking to the issue.**

**Have a concrete realistic request.**

**You have a story to tell. Tell it. Storytelling is a very effective tool for conveying your concerns.**