



## JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON AUSTRALIA'S FAMILY LAW SYSTEM

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### Frequently asked questions – Hearings

The following information sets out the committee's response to some frequently asked questions. If you have any other questions, please feel free to write to the committee at: [familylaw.sen@aph.gov.au](mailto:familylaw.sen@aph.gov.au).

#### **When are the public hearings?**

Information about public hearings will be available on the committee's website once the committee has finalised a public hearing program.

#### **Who chooses the witnesses for the hearings?**

It is a committee decision on when and where to hold public hearings and who to invite to appear at a public hearing.

Public hearings serve to complement the primary evidence received by the committee in the form of written submissions. Unfortunately, the committee is unable to invite all submitters to appear as witnesses at a public hearing. The committee has therefore determined that it will invite a cross section of witnesses to appear at public hearings to speak further to the issues that correspond to the committee's terms of reference.

#### **How will I know if I have been invited to appear at a hearing?**

If you are invited to attend a public hearing, the secretariat for the committee will contact you by phone and/or email.

#### **Will I be safe to give evidence at a hearing?**

Please be assured that if you are invited to appear as a witness, the committee will enact safeguards to protect witnesses, particularly those who have experienced family violence or trauma to ensure no further harm is caused to vulnerable people. For further information on hearing safeguards, please see the [Inquiry protocols on submissions and hearings](#).

#### **Will all the hearings be public?**

No. If the committee decides to receive some evidence in-camera, which means that the identity of the witness and the information they provide will only be available to members of the committee. The in-camera hearings are not open to the public.

#### **Can I watch the public hearing online?**

Members of the public are welcome to view proceedings that take place in Canberra, and hear audio of the hearings that take place in other locations. Video and audio of the hearing will be broadcast live on the [Parliament House website](#), with a link to the hearing available on the day.

Inquiries from hearing and speech impaired people should be directed to the Parliament House TTY number 02 6277 7799. Information about attending public hearings is available on the [Parliament House website](#).

#### **I haven't been invited to give evidence at a hearing - will I be able to come and watch?**

Yes, but only the public hearings. You can also listen to the hearings online, via the committee's website.

#### **I haven't been invited to give evidence at a hearing - can I come to the hearing and ask to speak to the committee?**

No. Once the committee has filled all the time slots for a hearing it is not able to hear from more witnesses.

#### **Where will the committee hold its hearings?**

The committee has agreed to hold public hearings as detailed on its website. It will make decisions about other locations at a later time, and that information will be available on the committee's website.