

The Catholic Women's League of Canada

HANDBOOK
for
SECRETARIES



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A Brief History of the League

Catholic women of Canada were first organized in Edmonton Archdiocese in November 1912 to assist with the care and placement of the ever-increasing influx of immigrants from Europe and elsewhere. The movement gradually spread to the port cities and other major centres across Canada.

In 1920, these groups were invited to meet in Montreal to try to establish a national group of Catholic women. The name “Catholic Women’s League” originated in England in 1912 in response to a perceived need for Catholic lay action and was adopted by the Canadian group.

On June 17, 1920, The Catholic Women’s League of Canada was formally established with Miss Bellelle Guerin of Montreal elected first National President.

In 1921, the League affiliated with the International Union of Catholic Women, now known as the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO), an affiliation still enjoyed today.

The first annual national convention of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada was held in Toronto in 1921. The delegates at that convention worked hard producing a constitution, a set of bylaws and the beginnings of a publication – *The Canadian League*.

From its organizational beginnings, as now, the League perceived the need for Catholic lay women’s action in all aspects of Canadian life.

The League crest and seal – the cross surmounting the maple leaves with the words “The Catholic Women’s League of Canada – For God and Canada” in the surrounding circle was designed by Mrs. Emmett Mullally.

The League was incorporated federally in 1923.

In 1927, a national scholarship fund was established to assist Catholic women students and, for many years, this was given for graduate studies in social work. Since 1969, however, this fund has been donated to the Coady International Institute of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, N.S., to assist foreign students from developing countries.

The year 1938 saw the organization of Business & Professional Women’s CWL Councils in major cities across Canada.

The League was mandated by the Canadian Catholic Conference of the Hierarchy (now the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB)) in 1948, and was under the patronage of His Eminence James C. Cardinal McGuigan, DD, until his death in 1975. Since 1976, the League has been privileged to be under the special patronage of the CCCB and, in 1992, the League was officially recognized by the CCCB as a lay association of women.

The organization of the first provincial councils of the League occurred in 1947 – 1948, allowing for provincial action and the lobbying of provincial governments.

Fund raising was to be done at parish council level and the other levels. Diocesan, provincial and national would be financed through per capita fees from the parish level.

In 1965, the Military Vicariate Council was formed to coordinate the councils established on military bases and was given the status of a provincial council. The name was changed in 1988 to Military Ordinariate Council.

In 1969, the League's 1% commitment to the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (CCODP) was established.

Leadership courses were formulated in the 70s and, for the first time, resolutions passed at national level on the floor of the convention were presented in person by national officers to the prime minister and members of his cabinet.

In 1980, Newfoundland joined the League as a provincial council.

The main thrust of The Catholic Women's League of Canada is, and has always been, the spiritual development of its members, both individually and collectively.

The activities of the League, since its original purpose of aiding immigrants, have broadened and, in recent years, the emphasis has been on issues concerning the sanctity of life from conception to natural death, social justice, human dignity, the preservation of Christian family life and the concept of a preferential option for the poor.

In 1992, the League's Mission Statement was adopted as follows:

The Catholic Women's League of Canada
is a national organization
rooted in gospel values
calling its members to holiness
through service to the People of God.

Structure of the League

With Our Lady of Good Counsel as its patroness, the League is an organization with a strong spiritual base.

The League has a *Constitution & Bylaws* which is reviewed as required and may be amended by a two thirds majority of the voting delegates at an annual national convention, as well as a *National Manual of Policy and Procedure*, which is updated at regular intervals.

Membership consists of:

1. Active members
2. Associate members (non-Catholic)

The League is composed of four levels:

Parish
Diocesan
Provincial
National

Diocesan, provincial and national are administrative councils which provide the direction, inspiration and encouragement required to carry out the programs and projects of the League.

The work of the League is carried out through standing committees at each level.

National Council

National council shall be composed of its officers, presidents of provincial councils, honorary life members, life members and provincial and diocesan delegates accredited to the national convention. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 1d)

The national executive shall be composed of its elected officers and the provincial presidents. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 2b)

Provincial Council

Provincial council shall be composed of its officers, presidents of diocesan councils in the province, diocesan and parish delegates accredited to the provincial convention, and honorary life members and life members holding a membership in the province. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 1c)

The provincial executive shall be composed of its elected officers and presidents of diocesan councils in the province. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 2b)

Diocesan Council

Diocesan council shall be composed of its officers, presidents of parish councils in the diocese, parish delegates accredited to the diocesan convention, and honorary life members and life members holding a membership in the dioceses. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 1b)

The diocesan executive shall be composed of its elected officers and the president of parish councils in the diocese. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 2b)

NOTE: For provinces where no diocesan councils exist (Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland/Labrador, and Military Ordinariate), diocesan executive roles would be assumed by the provincial executive.

Parish Council

Parish council shall be composed of the individual members. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 1a)

The parish executive shall be composed of the elected officers of the council. (*Constitution & Bylaws*, Article VIII, Section 2a)

Job Description

As each council may assign different duties to the secretarial position, upon completion of her term of office, the secretary should describe what she has done over the past two years. A brief job description and an index of all files in her custody, together with files not given to archives, should be delivered promptly to her successor.

Some councils combine the position of recording secretary and corresponding secretary. As other councils have the two positions, the duties have been separated accordingly.

Role of the Recording Secretary

1. attend all executive and general meetings of the council
2. assist the president in preparing the agenda for executive and general meetings, bringing to her attention any items that should be brought forward from the previous meeting, correspondence, previous minutes and recommendations of the executive that may help in preparation of the agenda
3. distribute individual copies of the agenda, post a copy of the agenda on a blackboard or flip chart, or project it on a overhead (see sample agenda page 7)
4. call the roll or have members sign a list of attendance at meetings
5. take the minutes of meetings, record motions, and retain minutes as a permanent record (see sample minutes page 10)
6. bring the minute book containing past minutes to meetings for reference purposes
7. bring the motion book (if one is kept) to meetings
8. distribute copies of the minutes of the previous meeting prior to the meeting or prepare to read the minutes at the meeting
9. report on the executive meeting at the general meeting, if the president so requests
10. be a signing officer for official documents
11. be responsible for receiving reports from the executive
12. provide the president with a copy of the executive members' annual reports to assist in preparing the president's annual report
13. know where the council charter can be found
14. be responsible for all council papers and records; know where council archives are located
15. maintain an up-to-date *Elections Register* (see page 12)
16. ensure that the list of the newly-elected executive, with their names, addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses, is forwarded immediately following the annual meeting or convention:
 - parish level forwards list to diocesan level
 - diocesan level forwards list to parish, provincial and national levels
 - provincial level forwards list to diocesan and national levels
17. provide the credentials for delegates to convention
18. consult the CWL website (www.cwl.ca) for up-to-date information, print and distribute communiqués and information of interest to her council, unless this duty is assigned to another member

Guide to preparing an agenda

The president is the chairperson.

1. The meeting is called to order followed by president's remarks.
2. The spiritual advisor or spiritual development chairperson is asked to lead the opening prayers which are to be said in unison.
3. Scripture (or other appropriate) reading and reflection follows.
4. The recording secretary is asked to take roll call or request that members sign an attendance list.
5. The president asks if there are any additions to the agenda and asks for a motion to adopt the agenda.
6. The recording secretary is asked to read
 - minutes of the previous meeting
 - report of the executive meeting
7. The corresponding secretary is asked to list the correspondence sent or received since the last meeting and to read highlights of the correspondence as per the president's request.
8. The treasurer is asked to present the report of receipts and disbursements since the previous meeting starting with the previous balance and ending with the current balance. The monthly report is not adopted but filed for reference. Only the examined financial statement at the end of the year is approved by the members at the annual meeting.
9. Reports in writing are called for from the standing committee chairpersons.
10. Reports in writing are called for from chairpersons of special committees or events.
11. Unfinished business not included in the above reports is presented.
12. When new business is dealt with, it should be itemized on the agenda. Further items may be added when the president asks for additions in #5 above.
13. The spiritual advisor is asked for a message and blessing.
14. Details of program or activity to follow the meeting are announced.
15. The president asks, "Is there any further business to come before this meeting?" If not, then she asks for a motion to adjourn.
16. The meeting closes with a prayer and/or hymn.

Sample agenda

**The Catholic Women's League of Canada
St. Mary's Parish Council
February 11, 2004, Church Hall, 7 p.m.**

1. Meeting called to order
President's opening remarks
2. Opening prayer
3. Scripture reading and reflection
4. Roll call
5. Adoption of the agenda
6. Minutes of the previous meeting
Report of the executive meeting
7. Correspondence
8. Treasurer's report
9. Reports of the chairpersons of standing committees
10. Reports of the chairpersons of special committees
11. Unfinished business
 - a)
 - b)
12. New business
 - a)
 - b)
13. Spiritual advisor's message and blessing
14. Details of program or activity to follow the meeting
15. Motion to adjourn
16. Closing prayer/hymn

Recording the minutes

Minutes are a legal record of what was done at the meeting, not what was said. Content of the minutes of all meetings and conventions of the council concerned must be retained as a permanent record and must include:

- name of the council
- kind of meeting (i.e., executive, general, annual)
- date, time and place of the meeting
- roll call or list of attendance attached
[roll call should be taken of the executive and the names of those present and absent recorded]
- approval of the minutes (The president asks if there are any corrections. If not, she then says, “The minutes are approved as read” or “The minutes are approved as circulated.” If there are corrections, when no further corrections are made, she says, “The minutes are approved as corrected.”) Should changes be made at a later time to the minutes already approved, a motion is necessary to amend the minutes. Some councils make a motion, second it, and vote the approval for each set of minutes.
- brief financial report – the monthly statement is not adopted but reported for information and put on file. At the annual meeting, an examined financial statement is presented and officially adopted by the members.
- motions (including mover and seconder) with actions decided upon
- number of votes for and against if ballot or counted vote - some may request their abstention be recorded
- debate, only if meeting instructs that it should be
- title of committee reporting, highlights of report filed for reference
- appointment of committees, elected delegates, etc.
- mention that discussion was held on a topic so that the issue will be recorded and can be brought forward on another agenda
- motion to adjourn and the time of adjournment
- signed by the president and secretary and the date approved

When are minutes approved?

Minutes of one meeting are usually approved at the next meeting of the group. Minutes are always approved by the members of the group to whom they belong. This group may authorize a smaller group, such as a committee, to approve the minutes of a particular meeting. In fact, this is advisable when a group meets only once a year or only at six-month intervals.

At **parish** level, where meetings are held monthly, minutes of one meeting are always approved at the next meeting by the members in attendance. This holds true, as well, for the minutes of the annual meeting which are approved at the next regular monthly meeting of the parish council.

At **diocesan, provincial and national** levels, minutes of business sessions of conventions may be approved by a committee or the executive **IF** the members of the convention have authorized their approval in this way. This authorization is advisable since convention meetings take place only once a year. The convention standing rules, when adopted, would give this authorization. Otherwise, the minutes have to be approved at the convention the following year.

Minutes of executive meetings are approved by the executive at the next executive meeting, unless the meetings are far enough apart to warrant having a committee approve them.

Minutes can be corrected at any meeting of the group even after they have been approved, however, a specific motion to amend the minutes is required.

(For more detailed information, see *Robert's Rules of Order*.)

Sample minutes

**St. Mary's Parish Council of
The Catholic Women's League of Canada**

The regular general meeting of St. Mary's Parish Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada was held on February 11, 2004.

1. The president, Kay Fine, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.
2. Spiritual advisor, Fr. James Brown, led the members in the recitation of the League Prayer.
3. A scripture reading and reflection was given by spiritual development chairperson, Cathy Baker.
4. The following executive members were present:
The following executive members were absent:
5. **MOVED by Joan Smith, that the agenda with the addition of Recognition of Charter Members under New business be approved. Seconded by Ellen Brown. MOTION CARRIED.**
6. Secretary, Betty Green, read the minutes of the January 14, 2004, general meeting and the following correction was made, "The treasurer reported a bank balance of \$516.24." Minutes were approved as corrected. She then read a report of the executive meeting held on February 4, 2004.
7. Corresponding secretary, May Smith, reported the following correspondence:
 - received a thank you from Fr. Smith for anniversary gift and information on diocesan convention from diocesan president
 - sent a sympathy card to family of Irma White
8. Treasurer, Fern Plant, reported a balance of \$560 on hand as of February 10, 2004. Financial report was filed for audit.
MOVED by Joan Smith, that the bill for \$14.60 presented by Betty Green for supplies and stationery be paid. Seconded by Fran Jones. MOTION CARRIED.
9. Standing committee reports
Spiritual development: Chairperson, Cathy Baker, reported on the World Day of Prayer and informed members of the Easter celebrations. Copy attached.
Organization: Chairperson, Joan Smith, reported attendance at this meeting was 25 members. Attendance report attached. Joan then described the CWL training material she had received from national office and suggested ways it could be used.
Community life: Chairperson, Thelma Baxter, reported on the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace program, the Valentine's Day party held at the seniors' home, and on the request to assist with the cancer fund. Report attached.
MOVED by Thelma Baxter, that members of this council assist the cancer fund by canvassing during the drive for funds. Seconded by Ann Brown. MOTION CARRIED.

10. Special committee reports
Convention committee: Chairperson, Ann Brown, reported that plans to host the diocesan convention were progressing. A copy of the committee's report is attached.
11. Unfinished business
Reception for first communion: The following motion was postponed from the January meeting:
MOVED by Mary Smith, that this council purchase a rosary for each first communicant at a cost of \$5 each. Seconded by Thelma Baxter MOTION CARRIED.
12. New business
 - a) Recognition of charter members
MOVED by Ellen Brown, that this council present 25-year pins to charter members on the occasion of the council's 25th anniversary. Seconded by Fran Smith. MOTION CARRIED.
 - b) Announcements: The diocesan CWL meeting to be held on Saturday, March 13, 2004, at the Diocesan Centre at 2 p.m.
13. Fr. Brown spoke about the catechetical program for adult parishioners and imparted his blessing.
14. The president announced the program for the evening; an audio-visual presentation on family life education with a social hour to follow.
15. **MOVED by Fran Smith, that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Ellen Brown. MOTION CARRIED.**
 The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.
16. Meeting closed with the prayer to Our Lady of Good Counsel and the singing of the hymn to Our Lady of Good Counsel.

Betty Green, Secretary

Date Approved

Kay Fine, President

The Elections Register

On January 1st of each year, an *Elections Register* must be prepared/updated by the recording secretary and given to the chairperson of the nominations and elections committee. At the national level, the *Elections Register* is updated by the executive director. The *Elections Register* contains the names of all **current** and **past** executive members in accordance with **Article XV, Sections 1(b), (c) & (d)**.

- **current** - present officers and council presidents who will have completed their term of office at the time of election
- **past** - those not currently serving as a member of the executive who are eligible to remain on the *Elections Register*.

It is essential that the list record the year a member comes onto the executive, the year she becomes eligible (at the end of her full term) and the number of years she has been eligible. It is helpful to prepare a chart to accurately record this information. See the sample *Elections Registers* that follow. All samples shown in this section are provided as a guideline and can be adapted to suit your council's needs.

The following members are eligible for office.

Parish Level

All members who have paid their membership fee for the current year, with the exception of associate members, are eligible for office.

Diocesan Level

- present officers who, at the time of election, have served a full term
- parish council presidents who, at the time of election, have served a full term
- a member eligible for nomination to office at diocesan level in one diocese shall be eligible for nomination to office at that level in any other diocese to which she has moved
- officers and council presidents shall remain eligible for three elections following their term last served

Provincial Level

- present officers who, at the time of election, have served a full term
- diocesan council presidents who, at the time of election, have served a full term
- a member eligible for nomination to office at provincial level in one province shall be eligible for nomination to office at that level in any other province to which she has moved
- officers and council presidents shall remain eligible for three elections following their term last served

National Level

- present officers who have served a full term
- provincial council presidents who, at the time of election, have served a full term
- national officers and provincial council presidents shall remain eligible for three elections following their term last served

Sample Elections Register

SAMPLE #1

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PARISH COUNCIL</u>	<u>DIOCESE or PROVINCE</u>	<u>90-92</u>	<u>92-94</u>	<u>94-96</u>
Brown, Jane	29 Eden St. Anytown, ON A1B 2C3	St. Andrew's	X	X	X	X

SAMPLE #2

In a loose-leaf binder, designate a page for each parish council in the diocese on which is recorded the name of the president and the years of the term she has served. On January 1st of each year, update each page to reflect the name of the current president. A list of the current diocesan executive should also be included showing the current office held by each.

ST. ANDREW'S PARISH COUNCIL

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>	<u>TERM</u>
Andrews, Sophie	Box 1234, Anytown, ON	555-1234	1986-88
Sand, Bridget	456 Smith St., Anycity, ON	555-0987	1988-90
Peoples, Ann	2 June Ave., Anytown, ON	555-6543	1990-92
Rush, Ina	RR#0, Anyarea, ON	555-4567	1992-94

SAMPLE #3

This sample has been prepared using even-numbered election years. Eligibility begins on January 1st of the first year eligible. Removal from the register occurs on December 31st of the third election, if the member has not been re-elected.

ELECTIONS REGISTER – January 1, 1994

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PREVIOUS POSITION</u>	<u>PRESENT POSITION</u>	<u>1ST YR.ON EXECUTIVE</u>	<u>1ST YR. ELIGIBLE</u>	<u>YEAR OFF ELECT.REG.</u>	<u>YR.RE-ELECTED</u>	<u>YEAR OFF ELECT.REG.</u>
Brown, Jane	Chairperson	1 st v-pr	1989	1991	1997		
Smith, Ann	Secretary		1984	1986	1992	1986-88	1994
Jones, Mary	Dio/Pr.Pres	Treas.(2)	1986	1988	1994	1988-90	1996
Lee, Roberta		Dio/Pr.Pres.	1993	1995	2001		
Macken, A.		Chairperson	1985	1987	1993		
Lewis, Beth	Dio/Pr.Pres	Secretary	1992	1994	2000		
Fiction, Sue		Dio/Pr.Pres	1987	1988	1994	1988-90	1996

Role of the Corresponding Secretary

1. attend all executive and general meetings of the council
2. submit all correspondence received to the president for her information and action
3. compose and send out all correspondence as directed, in some councils this includes all occasion cards to members
4. list all correspondence to be brought to the meeting
5. read highlights of all correspondence at the meeting as directed by the president. All correspondence received or sent in the name of the council should be reported to the members. This may include thank you letters, invitations, replies to inquiries, information received, etc. It may be summarized, giving pertinent details. Reporting of each letter should start with from whom it was received or to whom it was sent, and the date. Reading of correspondence dealing with a matter appearing later on the agenda may be deferred until the matter comes to the floor of the meeting.
6. arrange meeting accommodation and notifies members of the time and place of the meeting
7. be responsible for notices of meetings and conventions

Guidelines for business correspondence

Heading

- insert return address, unless using letterhead with this information included
- include a phone or fax number or e-mail address (optional)
- insert date

Inside address (skip at least one line after the date)

- complete name including title and address of the person to whom the letter is being sent

Salutation or greeting (skip one line after the inside address)

- capitalize the first word and all nouns in the salutation or greeting
- Dear ... (title and last name)
- a colon or a comma follows the salutation or greeting, e.g., Dear Mr. Jones:

Body of the letter (skip one line after the salutation or greeting)

- text explains the reason for the letter and/or action required
- opening first paragraph should be brief and bring the reader directly to the reason for the letter
- the second and perhaps a third paragraph elaborates on the topic giving details
- the final paragraph concludes, asks for a response, or indicates an action you wish taken

Complementary closing (skip one line after last paragraph)

- capitalize the first word in the complementary closing
- keep it short, e.g., Sincerely or Yours truly or Yours sincerely
- a comma follows the complementary closing, e.g., Sincerely,

Signature (skip several lines to allow for the handwritten signature)

- if using Miss, Mrs. or Ms., place in brackets
- full name of the person.
- title of person on the next line
 - e.g., (Ms.) Joan L. Smith
Secretary

Enclosures (skip several lines after the title)

- indicate number of enclosures, e.g., Encl. (3) or list them

Copy sent to others (skip a line following enclosures)

- list names of those receiving copies
 - e.g., cc: May Brown, Edmonton Diocesan President

Style Guide for League Publications

The style guide ensures uniformity throughout all League publications. The style guide may be revised at any time by a decision of those in attendance at any meeting of the administrative committee.

Titles

Italicize the titles of books, magazines, plays, operas, motion pictures, videos and themes. For titles of musical compositions, TV programs and anything that is a published article, use uppercase/lowercase style and enclose in quotation marks; e.g., The article, “We Can Make A Difference!” was published in the Winter 2000 issue of *The Canadian League*.

If you are referring to a published article and do not have the name of the source publication, the title of the published article is not italicized and is enclosed in quotation marks; e.g., The article, “We Can Make A Difference!” is very informative.

Names

- The first time a person is named in the article, the first name or initials are included. Include any title as well; e.g., Bishop Richard Smith.
- When a new name is being introduced, place it in context by explaining who that person is or what that person represents; e.g., The President General of the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO), Maria Eugenia Diaz de Pfennich, is attending the lecture.

Bullets, Letters, Numbers, Punctuation

Use round • bullets when listing an item or thought that is not a complete sentence. If there are related thoughts on the same line, it may be separated by a semicolon. Do not use commas at the end of the word or thought. The last bulleted item on the list should not be followed by a period; e.g., When packing your tote bag for the beach, remember to take:

- sunglasses
- sun screen
- beach towel (preferably a large one)
- bathing suit

When listing items that are complete sentences, capitalize the first word following the dash/number and end with a period, as exemplified on “Names” above. In this case, use one of the following methods:

- numbers 1. 2. 3.
- letters a. b. c.
- lowercase Roman numerals i. ii. iii.
- dashes –
- bullets •

Spelling

Use the “Canadian” spelling of words; e.g., honour, colour, favour, saviour, centre.

Capitalization

- Use uppercase style with personal titles when used with a name; e.g., National President Marie Cameron; Marie Cameron, National President; Roman Catholic Church; United Church of Canada; St. Mary Parish Council; Archdiocese of Toronto. Exception: even when standing alone, “League” is capitalized.
- Lowercase subsequent references when the title stands alone; e.g., Catholic church, United church, national executive, national council, the task of a bishop, city hall, school board, priest, religious, parish council.
- Capitalize names, titles and sacred writings and their sections, the word “church” as part of the name of a building or denomination, and universities and colleges (but not their departments); e.g., Yahweh, Creator, Redeemer, Saviour, Book of Genesis, Christian, St. Peter’s Catholic Church, Simon Fraser University, McGill Medical School, faculty of education. (Uppercase when pronouns refer to God.)
- Lowercase words related to sacraments and rituals; e.g., baptism, mass, holycommunion, bible, scripture, gospel, liturgy of the word, eucharistic celebration. (Capitalize Eucharistic and mass if referring to a special one.)

Numbers, Times

- Generally, numbers under 10 are spelled out; e.g., seven.
- Generally, numbers 10 and over are written in figures, except at the beginning of a sentence; e.g., There are 21 children. Fifty-seven people were in attendance.
- Decimals are written in figures, as are percentages even if they are under 10; e.g., 5.48, 2 ½%, 0.10. Fractions less than one are spelled out; e.g., one-third, except unusual fractions under one; e.g., 43/100; fraction larger than one are written in figures; e.g., 1 ½.
- School grades are written in figures; e.g., Grade 2. (Note that the word *grade* is capitalized, except if it is pluralized; e.g., grades 2 and 3.)
- Time is written as follows: 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 3 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 1400 hrs. Generally, write *noon* or *midnight*; e.g., Dinner will be served until midnight. Use *12 noon*, and *12 midnight*, when these times are given with other times expressed in figures; e.g., Dinner is served from 6 p.m. until 12 midnight.
- Ages are hyphenated; e.g., Five-year-old John Smith...
- Numerical amounts are written as follows: \$2,134; \$75.28; 10¢ or \$0.10; \$1 million (but one million people).

Abbreviations

- Omit periods in all capital abbreviations unless the abbreviation refers to a person or geographical region/area; e.g., CWL, OMI, MP, YWCA, EST (Eastern Standard Time), E (East), J.A. Smith, B.C., P.E.I. (BC and PE are used for addressing only.)
- Plurals and possessives are as follows: CWLs, MPs, MLAs, CWL’s, MP’s, MLAs’. MPs’.
- Use periods in mixed abbreviations, except for abbreviations that begin and end with a capital; e.g., m.p.h., B.Comm., PhD, PoW (Prisoner of War), U of T (University of Toronto).
- The abbreviation for “that is” is i.e. The abbreviation for “for example” is e.g.
- Use the abbreviation or acronym for organizations if the name appears more than once within the same article; e.g., World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations (WUCWO), Canadians Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE).

- Spell out months, except where space is limited. Do not use a comma to separate the month and year when a day is not included; e.g., October 1, 1982 was a Friday. January 1996 was cold.
- Say “in November” and “in 1993” rather than “in the month of November” or “in the year 1933.”
- Terms like 31st and 60th or VII require no period.
- Do not abbreviate books of the bible when standing alone. When referring to a book for a textual quote, abbreviations may be used; e.g., Genesis is the first book in the bible. “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” (Ps 23.1)

Words As Such

- When referring to specific words, set them off with double quotation marks or italicize them; e.g., The word “task” or *task* is more formal than the word “job” or *job*.
- “Percentage” is one word, but “per cent” is two. “Teenager” is one word. “No one” is two words. “OK” is written like this.
- Italic type should be used for foreign words and phrases; e.g., *Christifideles Laici*, *fleur-de-lis*.

Quotations

- Any passage that is being quoted from a speech or from any published source should be put inside quotation marks or, if it is relatively long, indented five spaces and type without quotation marks.
- Periods and commas always go inside the quote marks. All other punctuation marks go inside the quotation marks when they are part of the quotation, otherwise outside when they apply to the entire sentence. Do not change anything in a quoted passage, with these exceptions:
 - a. You may leave out part of the quoted matter. Indicate the omission by three spaced periods. Use four spaced periods when omitting material that contains a period.
 - b. You may add an explanatory word or phrase. The addition should be placed within square brackets; e.g., “Mary decided that he [her son] should be questioned.” “The church is a communion of brothers [and sisters]” This is especially important because of the League commitment to inclusive language.

Sources: *The Canadian Press Stylebook*
 The Jerusalem Bible, Reader’s Edition
 Collins English Dictionary, Canadian Tenth Edition

Personal Letter Writing Guide

Step 1. Why write?

- your one letter counts
- it represents 50 to 500 taxpayers who didn't bother to write
- it is better than a form letter
- it is better than signing a petition
- to support League resolutions
- to influence politics and policies
- to show care and concern
- to express opinions
- to exert a Christian influence
- to express appreciation

Step 2. When to write?

- after resolutions are adopted
- when policy decisions are being made
- after introduction of a bill
- early in parliamentary and legislative sessions
- anytime you have a concern

Step 3. What to write?

- your name, address, postal code, date
- the issue/concern you are addressing
- refer to bill number and title
- your opinions and feelings on the issue
- action that you want
- a question requiring an answer

Step 4. How to write?

- in a positive, constructive, polite tone
- brief and concise, one page is enough
- be specific, choose one point only
- as an individual, no copied or form letters
- in your own words
- use Whereas clauses of resolutions to accurately state a reason
- end with a clear and realistic request

Step 5. Where and whom to write?

- to government
 - federal: prime minister, cabinet minister, member of parliament, senator
 - provincial: premier, cabinet minister, member of the legislature
 - municipal: mayor, councillor
- other persons in authority: church, business, school system, professions and other organizations

Forms of Address

Federal:

House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Prime Minister

The Rt. Hon. _____

Prime Minister of Canada

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Prime Minister

Respectfully yours

Cabinet Minister

The Hon. _____

Minister of _____

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Minister

Sincerely yours

Member of Parliament

Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____

Member of Parliament

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____

Sincerely yours

Senator

The Hon. _____

Senator

Parliament Building

Ottawa, ON K1A 0A4

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____

Sincerely yours

Provincial:

307 Legislative Buildings
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

204 Legislative Building
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Centennial Building
P.O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1

8th Floor
Confederation Building
St. John's, NL A1C 5T7

Government Leader
P.O. Box 1320
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

P.O. Box 726, Province House
Halifax, NS B3J 2T3

Government of Nunavut Communications
Iqaluit NU

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

2500 Don Reid Drive
Ottawa, ON J1H 2J2

Abbot:
Most Rev. _____
Dear Abbot _____

Archbishop:
Most Rev. _____
Your Grace _____

Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1

P.O. Box 2000
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8

Hotel du Parlement
Quebec, QC G1A 1A3

Legislative Building
Regina, SK S4S 0B3

Government Leader
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 2C6

Provincial Premier
The Hon. _____
Premier of your province
Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Premier
Respectfully yours

Cabinet Minister
The Hon. _____
Minister of _____
Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. Minister
Sincerely yours

Bishop:
Most Rev. _____
Your Excellency

Cardinal:
His Eminence Cardinal _____
Your Eminence _____

Monsignor:
Rt. Rev. Msgr. _____
Dear Msgr. _____

Remember

- No stamp is needed for letters to federal members of parliament or the senate
Note: The post office requests that you write MP after the person's name (prime minister, cabinet minister, member of parliament – e.g., The Rt. Hon. Jean Chrétien, MP).
- Send copies of your letter to others (e.g., prime minister, cabinet minister and your local member of parliament, constituency office, opposition parties)
- Postage is required for letters to members of the provincial legislature

Federal, provincial and municipal governments are listed on special pages of phone books. A citizen's inquiry or general information phone number listed under "Government of Canada" can answer a multitude of questions concerning both federal and provincial levels.

Do not send form letters as they tend to be treated as a one-person campaign.

Guidelines

1. **Be brief and polite.**
2. **Write on one issue.** Keep it short
3. **Ask what they plan to do.** If they send a vague reply, send another letter.
4. **Use proper etiquette.** See "Forms of Address" in this guide.
5. **Thank** the person whenever you can agree with something.

Be sure you:

- Clearly state that you are writing as a private or concerned citizen.
- **Do not use** your CWL council's letterhead paper, as the recipient might assume you are writing for the entire council. (Letterhead may be used only by an executive member when writing officially.)
- When writing concerning a resolution, use the words of the resolution as contained in the Whereas and Resolved clauses so that there is no possibility of writing something contradictory to, or not intended by, the resolution and state the date, place and level of the convention at which the resolution was adopted.

A question in the letter will help ensure a response. For example, "I would like to know the government's position (or of your party, or your personal opinion) on this issue and look forward to an early reply."

The letter may also state, "I ask you, as my MLA (MP), to bring my concern to the government."

When members on the government side get an unusual number of letters on a given concern, they will likely bring this concern to a caucus meeting.