

Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality invites submissions on the topic of Community Courts

The Joint Committee on Justice, Defence and Equality has decided to invite written submissions from interested groups or individuals in relation to its proposed study on the feasibility of introducing a Community Courts system in Ireland (similar to those operating in other jurisdictions such as the United States and the United Kingdom).

The Committee would welcome submissions from anyone who has direct and/or indirect experience of dealing with the judicial system and their views on whether a Community Courts system would be beneficial.

The Committee will consider any written submissions received and may decide to invite a number of contributors to public hearings should it feel that this is necessary. [Contributors should note that it is not always possible to invite everyone who has made a submission].

You should also note that the Committee may decide to publish your submission in whole or in part and therefore any sensitive/personal information included may become public.

However, the Committee is anxious to receive submissions covering all viewpoints and if you have any questions or require any clarification in relation to making a submission, please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk or Secretariat to discuss the matter.

You should also indicate in your submission if you would be prepared to appear in public session at any Committee meeting. Anonymous submissions cannot be accepted.

Please note that recording of all submissions/communications will be undertaken by the Clerk to the Committee and the Secretariat and therefore submissions should **not** be sent to individual members of the Committee.

If you wish to make a written submission, please do so, preferably by electronic means to the Clerk to the Committee at the following e-mail address **only**:communitycourts@oireachtas.ie

[Submissions sent to any other e-mail address may not be accepted]

As a general guideline, submissions should consist of a separate document accompanied by a covering letter. Submissions should be presented as concisely as possible [where reference is made to other publications, copies of these should not be sent – hyperlinks or footnote reference is sufficient]. The covering letter should contain your name and contact details (phone number and postal address and, if available, an email address). If the submission is on behalf of an organisation, you should indicate your position in the organisation.

The main document should contain the following information:

- (i) A brief introduction, for example, explaining your area of expertise;
- (ii) Any factual information that you have to offer from which the Committee might be able to draw conclusions, or which could be put to other parties for their reactions;

(iii) Any recommendations to the Committee which should be as specific as possible and should be summarised at the end of the document; and

(iv) An executive summary of the main points made in the submission, if your document is more than 10 pages long.

As already indicated, submissions should, where possible, be made by electronic means and it is not necessary to also forward a hard copy of your submission.

Reminder - Making a submission is a public process

The Committee is not obliged to accept your document once it has been submitted, nor is it obliged to publish any or all of the submission if it has been accepted. However, the operations of a parliament are a public process, and you should be aware that any submissions made to a Committee may be published either as part of a Committee report, or separately, if the Committee decides to do so.

A more detailed document outlining the guidelines for making a written submission is available from the Clerk to the Committee or by clicking [here](#) and accessing document number 5.

The Members of the Joint Committee are:

- Deputies:
Niall Collins, Marcella Corcoran Kennedy, Alan Farrell, Anne Ferris [Vice-Chairman], Seán Kenny, Pádraig MacLochlainn, Finian McGrath, John Paul Phelan and David Stanton [Chairman].
- Senators:
Ivana Bacik, Martin Conway, Tony Mulcahy, Rónán Mullen, Denis O'Donovan and Katherine Zappone.

The closing date for receipt of submissions is ***Friday 10 January 2014 at 3p.m.***

Should you have any queries in relation to this matter, please contact

Alan Guidon
Clerk to the Committee
01 618 3899