

Program: Executive Office
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Scope

This policy applies to all Petitions submitted to Council, whether in hard copy or electronic form, that seek Council consideration of a request, suggestion or concern about a matter within Council's responsibilities. This policy is designed to establish clear parameters for the submission of Petitions to Council, while also providing the community with clarity as to how Petitions are considered, responded to and reported by Mackay Regional Council ("Council").

This policy does not replace:

- statutory rights to make complaints, applications, submissions or requests under relevant legislation; or
- Council's customer service, complaints management, information access and privacy processes.

Objective

This policy sets out Council's principles and expectations for receiving, managing and responding to Petitions. It supports transparent decision-making, community participation, and respectful engagement with Council.

Policy Statement

MRC welcomes the submission of Petitions from members of its community and recognises them as being part of the community engagement process allowing community members to express their views to Council.

MRC considers that to the extent this policy engages and limits, or potentially limits, any human rights, that limitation is reasonable in that it is proportionate and justified.

This process to remain in force until otherwise determined
by Mackay Regional Council

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1.0 Principles

Council will manage Petitions in a way that is:

- **Accessible and inclusive** – Petition pathways are clear and practical for the community.
- **Fair and consistent** – Petitions are handled consistently, with clear criteria for acceptance and consideration.
- **Transparent** – Council will acknowledge receipt and outline the next steps and likely timeframes.
- **Respectful and safe** – Council expects polite language and will not accept Petitions containing threatening, abusive or discriminatory material.
- **Accountable** – Council will ensure Petitions are appropriately recorded, presented, and actioned in accordance with governance requirements.
- **Privacy-aware** – Personal information will be collected and handled responsibly, with clear advice about what may be published.
- **Efficient** – Petitions are triaged and managed proportionately.

2.0 Petition Information

2.1 Principal Petitioner

The Principal Petitioner is responsible for coordinating the production and lodging of the Petition and whom MRC can contact to discuss the Petition's submission and processing.

2.2 Types of Petitions

2.2.1 Paper Petitions

To commence a paper petition, you may utilise the petition template on the MRC Petitions Portal or the attached below as a guide.

2.2.2 e-Petition

An e-Petition can be started and signed online via MRC's e-Petition portal. [Mackay Regional Council - Request an e-petition](#)).

E-Petitions enable Principal Petitioners to:

- Access a broader local audience.
- Constantly monitor the number of signatures for an issue
- Easily collate signatures.
- Set a start and finish date for signatures

When the e-Petition closes, the completed e-Petition will be reviewed and email back to the Principal Petitioner.

MRC will accept electronic petitions from petition platforms other than the e-Petition platform. Officers will support petitioners that present petitions from other platforms to ensure that the appropriate supporting documentation is included to validate the petition.

2.3 Petition Requirements

A Petition MUST:

- a) Include the full details of the Principal Petitioner, with the Principal Petitioner's name appearing on each page;
- b) Clearly state the request, suggestion or concern on each page;
- c) Be clearly written and contain no alterations;
- d) Be written in English, or if in another language, be accompanied by a certified English translation prepared by a qualified translator, including the translator's contact details;
- e) Be brief, to the point, and expressed in polite and modest language;
- f) Not request a grant of public money or a remission of any duties or debts;
- g) Not have letters, affidavits or other documents attached;
- h) Include a minimum of 25 signatures; and
- i) Relate to a matter within Council's jurisdiction.

NOTE: Only one Petition per topic will be accepted (i.e., you cannot have an e-Petition and a paper Petition on the same topic), unless otherwise advised by Council. MRC reserves the right to review all/any submitted Petition to ensure compliance and jurisdiction. Any Petition not meeting the above rules will not be accepted.

3.0 Matters Council may Decline to Accept or Progress

Council may decline to accept or may discontinue processing a Petition where it:

- contains defamatory, offensive, abusive, threatening, discriminatory or unlawful content;
- requests a decision outside Council's powers or is unrelated to Council responsibilities;
- relates to an issue that is the subject of a current legal proceeding or statutory process where Petitioning is not an appropriate mechanism;
- duplicates a Petition recently considered by Council (unless there is substantive new information or changed circumstances);
- seeks personal outcomes relating to an individual's employment or conduct matters that must be handled through confidential HR/complaints processes; or
- appears to be fraudulent or materially misleading (including suspected duplication of signatures).

Where a Petition is not accepted, Council will, , advise the Principal Petitioner of the reason and provide information about alternative pathways, no later than 7 days after the Council Meeting at which the Petition was not accepted.

4.0 Petition Participation

By participating in a Petition, you accept the following statements to be true:

- You have a legitimate interest in the matter raised.
- You have not previously submitted your support for this Petition.
- You are representing your own interests.
- You will not be able to sign a Petition twice. It is fraudulent to represent yourself as someone else, whether that be as any other real or imaginary person.

The Petition, including your support, will be provided to Council. By participating, you acknowledge that:

- The Petition is likely to become a public record and may form part of Council meeting agendas and minutes.
- Your support may be identifiable within the Petition.
- Your personal information is provided to Council, and Council may contact you regarding the Petition matter at its discretion.
- Anonymous participation in an e-Petition is not permitted.
- For e-Petitions, your initials and suburb will be published (for example, GB – Alderley).

5.0 Receipt, Recording and Acknowledgement

Council will:

- record accepted Petitions in a central register, which will be made available to Councillors at all times;
- acknowledge receipt of the Petition to the Principal Petitioner; and
- outline next steps, including whether the matter will be referred to officers for assessment, scheduled for Council consideration, or redirected to a more appropriate process.

5.1 Acknowledgement of Petitions

Council officers will acknowledge receipt of a valid Petition in writing within seven (7) days of physical or electronic receipt

Council will provide acknowledgement within seven (7) days following the Ordinary Meeting of Council at which the Petition is formally received.

5.2 Advice to Principal Petitioner

The Principal Petitioner will be advised in writing at least seven (7) days prior to the Ordinary Meeting of Council at which the Petition response is to be presented.

6.0 Assessment and Consideration

Council will consider Petitions in a manner proportionate to the nature and impact of the request. This may include:

- referral to the relevant business unit for assessment and advice;
- preparation of a report for Council or a delegated decision-maker;
- referral to a Strategic Advisory Committee or a workshop for information or discussion; and/or
- engagement with the Principal Petitioner where clarification is required.

Submission of a Petition does not guarantee a particular outcome. Council will make decisions based on lawful, evidence-based and budget-aware considerations.

Council will be briefed prior to the Petition response being presented at an Ordinary Council Meeting. Any requests by Council for community consultation in relation to the petition response, will where appropriate, be pursued in accordance with the agreed timeframe for responding to the petition.

Council will have the opportunity to provide guidance to the CEO during a briefing session regarding the timing of responses to Petitions being presented to Council.

Petition resolutions will be recorded on the Open Resolutions Register to ensure appropriate record keeping and ongoing monitoring.

7.0 Communication and Outcomes

Council will communicate outcomes directly to the Principal Petitioner at least 14 days from the Ordinary Meeting in an appropriate form, which may include one of the following:

- a written response;
- advice that the matter has been referred to a relevant process; and/or
- provide publication of a Council decision where considered at a meeting open to the public. (See section 5.2 for notice to be provided to the Principal Petitioner for the response of a petition.)

8.0 Lodging a Petition

Your completed Petition can be submitted to MRC in the following ways:

Paper Petitions:

- In person at the following Council Client Services Centres:
 - MRC Mackay Office – 73 Gordon Street, Mackay
 - MRC Sarina Office – 65 Broad Street, Sarina
 - MRC Mirani Council Office – 20 Victoria Street, Mirani
- Email to council@mackay.qld.gov.au
- Posted to:
Chief Executive Officer

Mackay Regional Council
PO Box 41
MACKAY QLD 4740

Electronic Petitions:

- Electronic petitions may be made through Council's e-Petition platform. Following the expiration of the petition period a review will be completed for compliance with Council requirements in accordance with this policy. Upon completion of this assessment notification will be sent to the head petitioner advising them that the petition can be lodged. Lodgement subsequently takes place via email but may also be manually downloaded and submitted in person or via post at the discretion of the head petitioner.
- Electronic petitions initiated through third-party platforms may still be lodged with Council, provided the petition and supporting signatory information is submitted in a format consistent with Council's petition requirements. This information can be downloaded and may be submitted in person, through email or via the post consistent with the details above for Paper Petitions.

9.0 Information Privacy

Council will handle personal information in accordance with its privacy obligations under the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Petitioners should be advised that:

- Petitions may become Council records;
- Petition content (and in some circumstances names, addresses and signatures) will be published as part of Council's public reporting and meeting papers; and
- where practicable, Council will minimise publication of personal information not necessary for transparency or decision-making.

10.0 Complaints

Any complaints in relation to a decision or a service relating from this policy will be assessed and managed in accordance with MRC's Administrative Action Complaints Policy, a copy of which can be found on MRC's website.

When an individual feels that they are the subject of MRC's failure to act compatibly with human rights, they can make a complaint directly to MRC. These complaints will be assessed against the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

Complaints may be made as following:

In writing to:
Chief Executive Officer
Mackay Regional Council
PO Box 41
MACKAY QLD 4740

Via Email - complaints@mackay.qld.gov.au

In person at the following Council Client Services Centres:

- MRC Mackay Office – 73 Gordon Street, Mackay
- MRC Sarina Office – 65 Broad Street, Sarina
- MRC Mirani Office – 20 Victoria Street, Mirani

11.0 Definitions

To assist in interpretation the following definitions shall apply:

CEO shall mean the Chief Executive Officer. A person who holds an appointment under section 194 of the Local Government Act 2009. This includes a person acting in this position.

Council shall mean the collective body of all elected representatives of Mackay Regional Council, as constituted under the *Local Government Act 2009*, responsible for governing the local government area and making decisions in the public interest.

e-Petition shall mean the form of Petition which is signed online via MRC's e-Petition portal. Visitors to the online Petition sign by adding their details such as name and email address. MRC's e-Petition portal can be found via the portal link.

Human Rights Complaint shall mean a complaint about an alleged contravention of section 58-1 by a public entity in relation to an act or decision of the public entity.

MRC shall mean Mackay Regional Council.

Petition shall mean a formal, written request, (either electronic or paper) signed by a minimum of twenty-five (25) persons seeking action or special consideration of a particular matter pertaining to the legislative responsibilities of Mackay Regional Council who are owners/residents/members of the public who either live or work in the MRC local government area. MRC's Petition Template is attached hereto.

Petitioner shall mean a person who signs the petition to indicate support for the stated request.

Principal Petitioner shall mean the person nominated as the primary contact for the Petition and responsible for submitting it to Council.

12.0 Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- The related documents are amended or replaced.
- Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council.

Notwithstanding the above, this policy is to be reviewed at intervals of no more than four (4) years.

13.0 Reference

- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Local Government Regulation 2012*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009*
- MRC Policy 102 - Standing Orders (Meeting) 2024
- MRC Policy 046 – Information Privacy
- COU120.01 – Petitions Corporate Standard
- Petitions Procedure

14.0 Attachments

1. Petition Template
2. E-Petitions Fact Sheet

Version Control:

Version	Reason / Trigger	Change	Adopted	Date
1	New		ORD-2023-102	26.04.23
2	Update of Policy			

Mackay
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Petition Request

Signature _____

[illegible]

PAGES ____/____

Privacy Disclaimer: Mackay Regional Council collects and manages personal information in the course of performing its activities, functions and duties. We respect the privacy of the personal information held by us. The way in which Mackay Regional Council manages personal information is governed by the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld). We are collecting your personal information so that we can register your petition and to correspond with you regarding the process. This petition may be made public as part of Council's agenda and minute process. Generally, we will not disclose your personal information outside of Council unless we are required to do so by law, or unless you have given us your consent to such disclosure. For further information about how we manage your personal information please see our [Information Privacy Policy](#)

e-petitions

A new online platform for the community to petition



What is an e-petition?

Besides the traditional paper petition, a petition can be started and signed online. These are called e-petitions. e-petitions enable petitioners:

- access a broader target audience
- constantly monitor the number of signatures for an issue
- provide the ability to easily collate signatures.

How to register an e-petition

The process to request an e-petition:

1. Visit mackay.qld.gov.au/petitions
2. Select the menu 'request an e-petition'.
3. Enter your personal details and the exact e-petition wording in the respective fields. Include the e-petition title, opening and closing dates, suburb, issue or grievance and action required.
4. Be clear and concise with your message and read over it carefully before submitting. Ensure the discussion point is something that council has jurisdiction over (that is, something council has the power to change).

Before any e-petition is published on Mackay Regional Council's

website, the e-petition's legitimacy is checked through an approval process (for example, checking the e-petition submitter details are correct and that the language is appropriate).

As a principal petitioner (owner of petition), your name and suburb will be published on council's e-petition portal.

How to sign an e-petition

Council's e-petition portal allows community members (petitioners) to respond to a petition online by registering personal details in support.

1. Visit mackay.qld.gov.au/petitions



2. Select the e-petition which you wish to support from the 'current e-petitions' page.
3. Select the 'sign e-petition' link and complete the contact details.
4. Thoroughly read and accept the website's 'terms and conditions' via the check box.
5. You will receive an email via the email address supplied to verify your contact details and support for this e-petition. (Please note some e-petition emails may automatically be treated as spam or junk mail by some email providers).
6. Your initials and suburb will be published as a signatory next to the e-petition signed

(for example, GB Sarina). This will be published on council's e-petition webpage.

7. Council's e-petition webpage will not allow you to sign a petition twice. It is fraudulent to represent yourself as someone else, whether that be as any other real or imaginary person.
8. Please contact customer service on 1300 MACKAY (622 529) if you are experiencing any difficulties.

e-petition closure

When the e-petition closes, the completed e-petition will be reviewed for compliance prior to council sending an email to the principal petitioner advising the outcome.

Outcome results are either the petition has met council's requirements and the principal petitioner may lodge the e-petition with council at their convenience or the petition has not met council's requirements and cannot be presented to council.

The e-petition will then be removed from the e-petitions portal.

For more details

Contact council's Corporate Governance team on 1300 MACKAY (622 529) or email council@mackay.qld.gov.au