

How to Write a Letter of Support

What is a Letter of Support?

A supporting letter is a personally written document that explains the writer's support for a person, cause or idea. You might write a letter of support for one of these reasons:

- A person or organization might have requested a letter of support from you and provided you with information you need.
- You volunteer to write one if a person or organization stands out in your mind as worthy.

Where Do I Start?

1. Identify Your Purpose

Before writing your letter of support, it is important to understand the specific purpose it will accomplish. For example, you might want your reader to support an organization or policy.

2. Know Your Audience

Once you are confident you understand the purpose of your letter, think about the audience. Consider what kinds of information they are likely to find convincing. Writing with a specific audience in mind can help you communicate more persuasively.

3. Brainstorm

Think about the details you want to include in your letter of support. Consider using anecdotes, data or other persuasive information such as how this issue has impacted you personally.

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Structuring a Letter of Support

The Header

Start the letter of support by including a heading on the top-left side of the letter. Here you can include the writer's name, institution, and the date of writing, the recipient's name and contact information.

Salutation

Put the correct salutation in your letter. Research to find out if they go by Dr., Mrs., Mr. or Ms., and address them with "Dear _____."

Introduction

First you'll want to introduce yourself. Who are you, and why should the reader care? State your case and highlight your relationship with the organization or cause.

The Body

The body of the letter should clearly answer the question, "Why?" Why should they care or support your cause? This should address any big questions the reader may have.

Conclusion

The ending of your letter should summarize your key points and restate the value of their support, while offering any final details that could sway the reader.

EXAMPLES OF LETTERS OF SUPPORT

August 2, 2022

Dear Mayor and City Council Members:

As a Apple County resident and a mother of three boys, I am pleased to learn that the Apple County Council is considering a tobacco retail licensing ordinance that would help stop tobacco sales to minors. From a parent's perspective, the statistics are startling; Each day in the U.S., about 1,600 youth smoke their first cigarette and nearly 200 youth start smoking each day. Most adults who die from smoking began smoking before they turned 18. That is why this tobacco retail licensing ordinance is so critical – the easier it is for kids to smoke their first cigarette, the more they will try it, become hooked, and ultimately pay for their addiction with their lives.

I understand that some critics of a local licensing ordinance believe it's merely additional government regulation and another fee. However, I believe that this ordinance is the best way to stop illegal sales to minors and to prevent our children from starting a deadly habit. The local license fee would be minimal, especially when compared to the fees for alcohol licenses. The state annual renewal license fee for tobacco ranged from \$25 to \$1602 in 2022; whereas the state license to sell alcohol off premise required an original fee that ranged between \$990 to \$17,335 and an annual renewal fee between \$25 to \$2,140. I believe that it is time that we take tobacco seriously like we do with alcohol.

National data also shows that cigarettes generate a lot of revenue for convenience stores. In 2021, the average per store sales of premium in convenience stores in the U.S. amounted to \$373,809.

Once again, thank you for caring about our youth and pursuing a tobacco retail licensing ordinance.

Sincerely,
Sarah

*Other example letters of support are available by request:

Contact: Carol Maytum

✉ maytumc@ash.org



ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES OF LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Dear Supervisor John:

As a board member for Apple County and a concerned resident, I write to urge your support of a ban of flavored tobacco sales to protect our youth. The tobacco industry has a long history of luring kids with flavored products. Evidence shows that flavors play a central role in youth initiation and continued use of tobacco products, especially vaping, because flavors improve the taste and mask the harshness of tobacco products. Nicotine in tobacco is highly addictive, as you know, and has been shown to harm brain development, especially attention, memory and learning in kids, according to research compiled by the U.S. Surgeon General.

Approval of this county ordinance amendment today will strengthen Apple County's tobacco retailer ordinance by reducing the likelihood for thousands of youths to begin or continue using tobacco products, resulting in a generation of healthier, more able kids.

Thanks for your leadership,
Sarah

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