

Public Comment and Regulations

A **regulation** is a rule, order, or law put in place to help create order in a community, enforced by a government agency or department.

What is a public comment?

- Any regulation a government agency makes must be documented in writing. Before the new document can become a regulation, there is a chance for people to comment on it. These public comments are a chance for people to say if they agree or disagree with the proposed regulation and why.

Who can make a public comment?

- Anyone! Public comments are open to all people (individuals, organizations, other agencies, business owners, stakeholders, etc.) interested in the proposed regulation.

Why make a public comment?

- Federal agencies allow for the public to comment on the regulations that will govern them. This lets people not formerly involved in making the regulation contribute their knowledge, personal experience, research, and points of view. Making a public comment is a way to make sure your voice is heard. It also helps to improve the quality of the laws that directly impact you.
- Other reasons for public comment include:
 - Many different voices heard in the same space
 - Reduces the chance of future lawsuits
 - Better informs decision making
 - Allows for better understanding
 - Protects public interest and priorities

How does someone make a public comment?

Below are a few things to think about when making a public comment.

1. Be sure to fully understand the document you are commenting on. If you have any questions, you can reach out to other advocates and the appropriate agency before commenting.
2. Be specific about which part of the document you are commenting on.
3. Short, clear language and a well thought out position is likely to have the greatest impact.
4. Base your comment on common sense, scientific evidence, and/or personal experience.
5. Suggest other options and how they will meet the same ideals as the proposed regulation.

Once you are ready to make your comment, log onto <https://www.regulations.gov/>.

- Find the entry you would like to comment on by searching key words, rulings, or agency actions.
- After your initial search, the left-hand column will allow you to further refine your search if needed. You can read the regulation's full description on the Federal Register by clicking on the title link in the left column. You will also see the last date for submitting comments.
- To submit your comment, click on the icon at the top or far right of the screen. You will be required to provide your first and last name, city, state and country, but all other requested information is optional.
- Type your comment in the box provided and add any attachments you feel necessary. Regulations.gov will support all common file types.
- After successfully submitting your comment, you will receive a comment tracking number that will allow you to track your comment once it has been seen and posted.

Note: Your comment and demographic information will be seen by the public.

