
How to Get a Proclamation or a Resolution Passed by Your Local Government

A proclamation, also sometimes known as a resolution, is a document that your local government can give to recognize a special event, person, or other notable figure. This is a great way to get additional attention for your event from the media.

The process to get a proclamation will vary somewhat depending on your local government structure but in general, if you follow the steps below you should be successful in obtaining one.

First, you will need to find the correct person in your government office who is in charge of proclamations. You want to do this as soon as possible! Most government offices have a web site where this information can be easily obtained, but if not, you can find the phone number for your local office in the White Pages or by calling information. If you cannot find someone specifically listed for this function, ask for the office manager or the public relations office.

Once you've found the correct person, find out from them how they would like the proclamation to be delivered to them. Some will ask you to write it and send them the draft, whereas others might ask you for the basic information so they can draft it themselves. You can use the sample we provide as a guide for what to write. You will need to find out if they want you to fax, email, mail, or in some cases, hand deliver, the document. You may also need to write a simple cover letter to go with the resolution draft explaining who you are and why you would like to have this proclamation made. You should also include supporting materials, such as handouts on trainings, statistics on animal shelter populations and dog bites, etc. - in other words, anything to bolster your case. A copy of an APDT Chronicle of the Dog is also a good item to include, as well as copies of your own marketing materials.

Be prepared to explain why this proclamation is important to the community. Emphasize how promoting training can lead to better behaved dogs, public safety and decreased numbers of animals in shelters, which are all worthy goals.

Ask the staff person how and when the proclamation will be voted on. Most meetings are open to the public and it's a good idea for you to appear when it's voted on. You can also ask if it's possible to arrange for the media to come to broadcast the signing of the proclamation. Some government offices will be willing to arrange for a signing ceremony which makes a great media impact for your message.

If you are successful, follow-up steps should include writing a letter to your local paper(s) editor for the opinion section highlighting the proclamation, and sending out a press release to local media, as well as other dog-related businesses. You should also discuss with the staff person how to get a signed copy of the proclamation.

Not everyone who tries to get a proclamation will be successful on the first attempt - just remember to be persistent! If you don't get it the first year, trying again will eventually lead to success!

