



PARLIAMENTARY SERVICE

MEMBERS' OFFICE SUPPORT HANDBOOK

ELECTORATE OFFICE SUPPORT

and

PARLIAMENT HOUSE OFFICE SUPPORT

provided to Members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About the Handbook

The purpose of this document is to identify the Electorate and Parliament House Office support provided to Members of the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

Members of Parliament may, by virtue of their position in Executive Government or membership of political parties, be provided with certain services and support. This document particularises only the services and support which result in expenditure against the annual Appropriation (Parliament) Act.

1.2 The use of services and support provided under the Handbook

Services and support provided under this Handbook are only provided to a Member when the Member is officially recognised as the Member for an Electoral District. This official recognition is effected when The Clerk of the Parliament receives the Notice of Result of Election from the Electoral Commissioner, Queensland.

1.3 Administration of the Handbook

The Handbook (and all variations to the Handbook) is approved by the Governor in Council, and published in the Queensland Government Gazette.

Responsibility for the administration of the Handbook rests, unless otherwise stated, with the Committee of the Legislative Assembly and The Clerk of the Parliament.

The Committee of the Legislative Assembly has a role to play by virtue of its responsibilities under the Parliamentary Service Act 1988, particularly in terms of setting policies to guide the operation of the Parliamentary Service and determining budgets.

The Clerk of the Parliament (as accountable officer) has certain statutory obligations to ensure that financial and administrative activity under his/her control is in accordance with the law.

Most of the services and support set out in the Handbook have prescribed limits. However, some of the services and support set out do not have express limits. Where no express limit is set out, The Clerk of the Parliament may (from time to time), after consultation with the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, set out and maintain reasonable limits on services and support provided.

Members requesting amendments to the Handbook may do so in writing to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. In considering variations to the Handbook, the Committee may take advice from The Clerk of the Parliament, the Auditor-General, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Treasury before making a recommendation to the Premier.

1.4 Using the Handbook

The Handbook has been designed as an informational and operational document, that is, the handbook provides detail of:

- what support and services are provided and for what purpose; and
- an overview of how the services and support are administered by the Parliamentary Service.

Where possible/applicable, details of services and support are presented in the following format:

- Purpose and Description;
- Applicable amount or rate; and
- Various administrative arrangements including, where applicable, the method of payment, variations to the service/support and service contacts for Members.

1.5 Key Contacts

Specific contacts for Members are provided throughout the Handbook. General Inquiries may be directed to the Director of Corporate and House Services 07 3406 7125.

1.6 Definitions

Accountable officer is as defined in Section 66 of the Financial Accountability Act 2009.

Spouse of a Member

For the purposes of this Handbook, Spouse may include either:

- the married partner of a Member, designated by the Member; or
- a defacto partner of a Member, designated by the Member; or
- for a Member that has no partner, a designated relative of the Member.

The designated relative is not to be continually changed and is always subject to the Clerk's approval.

2. ELECTORATE OFFICE SUPPORT

2.1 Accommodation

Purpose and Description

Each Member is provided with a single Electorate Office to support activities in servicing the Electorate. Those Members representing an electoral district of 100,000 square kilometres or more in area may elect to be provided with an additional Electorate Office, if required.

Location of the Office

A Member's Electorate Office will, under normal circumstances, be located within the boundaries of the Member's Electorate. In special circumstances, approval may be given by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly for the establishment of the Member's Office outside the Member's Electorate.

The Electorate Office may be located in either the Member's private residence or a commercial premises, however no compensation or rental will be provided to a Member who elects to establish an Office in a private residence.

Offices should offer adequate accessibility for all constituents including the elderly and persons with disabilities. Premises should, therefore, preferably be ground floor or have lift access.

Maintenance of the Electorate Office

The Clerk of the Parliament is responsible for:

- Office Leasing/Rental
All Office leases are coordinated/negotiated by The Clerk of the Parliament. The Clerk engages a leasing agent to negotiate all Office leases. All Office rental charges are met by The Clerk of the Parliament.
- Furnishings (provided from a standard furniture list)
- Electricity
- Security
- Insurance (In the event of loss or damage, all equipment, furniture, stationery etc. provided by the Legislative Assembly for use by Members and staff in Electorate Offices will be replaced)
- Signage

Each Member is responsible for:

- Internal Office cleaning
- Insurance
Members are advised to make private insurance arrangements for privately owned furniture, equipment and personal effects held within Electorate Offices.
- Postal Boxes
For specific details in respect of maintenance of the Electorate Office, Members may contact the Electorate Accommodation Officer.

Relocation of Electorate Offices

Where a Member deems the existing Electorate Office to be unsuitable, the Member may seek a relocation. Applications for relocation of an Office should outline the areas of concern with the existing Office.

Approval for the relocation of an Office will be at the discretion of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly. The Committee will take a number of issues into consideration in assessing requests for relocation including:

- the status of the existing lease
- any changes in boundaries of the Electoral district;
- availability of suitable alternative accommodation;
- existing office security, size, access and Workplace Health and Safety issues; and
- expected costs (capital and recurrent) associated with the relocation.

Where existing premises are considered by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly to be suitable for Electorate Office purposes, relocation may not be approved. Specific Guidelines covering the relocation of Electorate Offices are available to Members upon request (contact the Electorate Accommodation Officer).

Service contact for Members

During working hours for **all** Electorate Office issues:

Parliament House

Electorate Accommodation Officer

07 3406 7627

0419 027852 (mobile)

For emergency work eg storm damage, floods, fire, illegal entry and/or vandalism
after hours:

Department of Public Works

Queensland Property Management

State Government Protective Services

07 3224 6666

2.2 Staff

2.2.1 Standard Staffing Arrangements

Purpose and Description

Each Member may engage, subject to the approval of the Clerk, one (1) full-time Electorate Officer and one (1) full-time Assistant Electorate Officer to assist the Member in maintaining the operation of an Electorate Office.

Where a Member representing an electoral district of 100,000 square kilometres has been provided with an additional Electorate Office, that Member may engage, subject to the approval of the Clerk, an additional Electorate Officer but not an additional Assistant Electorate Officer.

Each position of Electorate Officer and Assistant Electorate Officer may be job-shared between 2 individuals.

Where full-time Electorate Officers are absent upon approved leave, relieving arrangements are to be made internally within set staffing allocations, except where a Member is entitled to a second Electorate Office.

Administrative arrangements

Electorate Officers and Assistant Electorate Officers are Parliamentary Service employees, employed by the Clerk on behalf of the Legislative Assembly. The terms and conditions of employment of Electorate Office Staff are outlined in the Parliamentary Service Act 1988, the Parliamentary Service Award – State 2003 and relevant Parliamentary Service Certified Agreements and the Electorate Office Staff Administrative Arrangements.

As employer, the Clerk assumes a range of responsibilities in relation to the management of all Parliamentary Service staff, including Electorate Officers and Assistant Electorate Officers.

The Clerk will work with individual Members to ensure that the Clerk's employer responsibilities and obligations are met within each electorate office workplace. The Clerk retains the right to take whatever action is required to ensure and preserve workplace conditions consistent with those responsibilities and obligations, including requiring the attendance of Members, as the workplace supervisor, at appropriate workplace training or information sessions (for example, the new Members' induction program) or the implementation of appropriate administrative procedures, as a condition to the appointment of Electorate Office staff.

Further information concerning Electorate Office Staff Administrative Arrangements is available from Human Resource Services.

Members may not engage their spouse.

Members **must** notify the Clerk of their intention to engage an Electorate Officer or Assistant Electorate Officer and the Clerk **must** approve such employment.

Should a Member wish to terminate the services of an Electorate Officer or Assistant Electorate Officer, the Member **must** contact the Clerk providing justification for the termination and the Clerk **may** approve such termination.

In considering the termination request, the Clerk will take into account all relevant circumstances, including the justification provided by the Member and relevant award provisions. (Members may contact the Manager Human Resource Services for advice about the award provisions.)

Should the Clerk refuse to terminate the Electorate Officer or Assistant Electorate Officer or the Member otherwise feels aggrieved by the Clerk's decision in a matter involving the employment of Electorate Office Staff, the Member may appeal the matter to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly.

Service Contact for Members

For assistance regarding Electorate Office staff:

Human Resource Services

Parliamentary Service

Parliament House

07 3406 7544

2.2.2 *Optional Part-Time Staffing allocation*

Purpose and Description

Members may, subject to the approval of the Clerk and in lieu of being provided with an Assistant Electorate Officer under the standard staffing arrangements, elect to be provided with an annual allocation to fund the engagement of additional staff on a part-time or casual basis.

Amount of Allocation

The value of the allocation is equal to the current salary rate payable to an Assistant Electorate Officer under 2.2.1 (plus on-costs).

Administrative Arrangements

Members may implement a variety of staffing options that best meet their individual requirements. The minimum amount payable to staff employed under this section is equivalent to AO3 (level 1).

Members may not engage consultants, nor may they engage their spouse.

Electorate Office staff are Parliamentary Service employees, employed by the Clerk on behalf of the Legislative Assembly.

The terms and conditions of employment of Electorate Office Staff are outlined in –

- the Parliamentary Service Act 1988;
- the Parliamentary Service Award – State 2003;
- relevant Parliamentary Service Certified Agreements, and
- the Optional Part-Time Staffing Allocation Administrative Arrangements.

As employer, the Clerk assumes a range of responsibilities in relation to the management of all Parliamentary Service staff, including Electorate Officers and Assistant Electorate Officers.

The Clerk will work with individual Members to ensure that the Clerk's employer responsibilities and obligations are met within each Electorate Office workplace. The Clerk retains the right to take whatever action is required to ensure and preserve workplace conditions consistent with those responsibilities and obligations, including requiring the attendance of Members, as the workplace supervisor, at appropriate workplace training or information sessions (for example, the new Members' induction program) or the implementation of appropriate administrative procedures, as a condition to the appointment of Electorate Office staff.

Where full-time Electorate Officers are absent upon approved leave, relieving arrangements are to be made internally within set staffing allocations, except where a Member is entitled to a second Electorate Office.

Service Contact for Members

For assistance regarding Electorate Office staff:

Human Resource Services

Parliamentary Service

Parliament House

07 3406 7544

2.3 Equipment

Purpose and Description

Each Member is provided with a range of Electorate Office equipment. The equipment is provided to support activities in servicing the Electorate.

Standard Equipment Items

The following equipment items are available to each Member upon request. Note that where a Member has been provided with a second Electorate Office within their electorate, items accompanied by an asterisk (*) will only be provided to one Electorate Office.

- Computer
- One (1) laptop computer (to those Members not entitled to be provided with a laptop by Ministerial Services of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet)
- Second computer*
- Visual Display Monitor
- Second Visual Display Monitor*
- Printer
- Facsimile
- Photocopier
- Approved data communication equipment
- Typewriter
- Dictating Machine
- Document Shredder
- Office Refrigerator
- Telephone Answering Machine
- Folding machine
- Stationery Trolley
- Spiral Binder
- Office Guillotine
- Document Holder
- Automatic Stapling Machine
- Heavy Duty Stapling Machine
- Whiteboard
- Water-cooler
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Micro-cassette recorder*

Administrative Arrangements

All Electorate Office equipment remains the property of the Legislative Assembly of Queensland and is subject to regular stock-takes.

Service Contact for Members

For assistance regarding Electorate Office computing equipment:
Information Technology Services Section
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7400

For assistance regarding other equipment:
Financial and Administrative Services
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7339

2.4 Telephones

Purpose and Description

Each Member is provided with Electorate Office telephone equipment. The equipment is as determined by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly from time to time. The use of office telephones is at the total discretion of the Member.

The telephone lines provided to Electorate Offices are as follows:

- a main service line;
- a silent line;
- a facsimile line;
- a security line (duress alarm); and
- a modem line.

For Electorates where the cost of a telephone call from any point in the Electorate exceeds the cost of a local call, a "Freecall 1800" telephone number will be provided.

Members are also provided with a Telecard for conducting electorate business when outside the Electorate Office.

Amount

The cost of rental and all calls made on above mentioned telephone facilities shall be met by the Legislative Assembly.

Administrative Arrangements

All telephone accounts are in the name of The Clerk of the Parliament. All accounts are forwarded directly to Parliament House. The cost of additional equipment and lines required by a Minister will be met by Ministerial Services Branch, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Service Contact for Members

For assistance regarding Electorate Office telephones:
Financial and Administrative Services
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7387

2.5 Stationery/consumables

Purpose and Description

The Clerk of the Parliament maintains a Stationery/Consumables store at Parliament House.

Members may order certain items from this Store for use within their Electorate Office.

Administrative arrangements

Members may request stationery/consumable items by completing a **Stationery Requisition Form** and forwarding same to Financial and Administrative Services by facsimile on the number mentioned below.

Copies of the **Form** may be obtained by contacting Financial and Administrative Services on the phone number mentioned below.

Service Contact for Members

For assistance regarding Office stationery/consumables:
Financial and Administrative Services
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
Phone 07 3406 7945
Fax 07 3210 0117

2.6 Publications and Printing

2.6.1 *Hansard publications*

Purpose and Description

Each Member may access a range of Hansard publications. The Parliamentary Reporting Service provides Members with transcripts of proceeding of the Parliament in various forms.

Details of publications

Each Member may:

- a) receive one (1) copy of Daily Hansard;
- b) nominate one recipient of Weekly Hansard;
- c) receive one (1) clean copy of speeches made by the Member in the House, but excluding Committee of the Whole;
- d) receive a transcript of all their speeches made in the House, but excluding Committee of the Whole (known as Hansard "Greens") and may, on request, be provided with copies of other Members' speeches;
- e) receive one (1) printed speech each year, the minimum number of copies of which is 500 and the maximum number not to exceed 50% of the number enrolled in the Member's Electorate;
- f) receive one (1) copy of the annual bound volumes with their name inscribed thereon; and
- g) receive one (1) copy of each issue of Hansard on CD-ROM.

Administrative arrangements

With respect to b) above, the list of nominated recipients must be forwarded to the Chief Hansard Reporter. With respect to e) above, requests for printed speeches must be made in writing to the Chief Hansard Reporter. Annual bound volumes provided under f) above may be retained by Members following retirement or defeat at an Election.

Service contact for Members

Chief Hansard Reporter
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7314

2.6.2 *Electoral Roll information*

Purpose and Description

The Electoral Act 1992 provides that Members receive certain quantities of Electoral Rolls, in both hard-copy and electronic format.

Details of publications

Each Member is, after serving one year as a Member, provided with:

- a) each financial year, 12 complimentary copies of the most recent printed version of the entire electoral roll for the electoral district that the Member represents;
- b) in an election year, 1 roll for each polling place in the electoral district that the Member represents; and
- c) each month, a computer disk or tape outlining changes to the electoral roll for the electoral district that the Member represents.

Administrative arrangements

The Queensland Electoral Commission produces the Electoral Rolls in both formats and makes them available to the Parliament. Members wishing to obtain hard-copy rolls must contact the Bills and Papers Office, Parliament House. The Office will coordinate the provision of the rolls to the Member.

Members wishing to obtain the electronic copy must contact Information Technology Services within the Parliamentary Service.

Service contact for Members

For hard-copy of Electoral Rolls, contact:

Bills and Papers Office
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7639

For electronic copies of the Electoral Rolls, contact:

Information Technology Services Section
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7400

2.6.3 Acts of Parliament

Purpose and Description

Each Member is provided with copies of Legislation passed by the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

Administrative Arrangements

Members wishing to obtain copies of Acts must contact the Bills and Papers Office, Parliament House.

Service contact for Members

For copies of Acts of Parliament, contact:
Bills and Papers Office
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
07 3406 7639

2.6.4 Printing of personalised stationery

Purpose and Description

In addition to the certain stationery/consumable items available to Members under Section 2.5, the Parliament meets the cost of printing "With Compliments" slips.

Administrative arrangements

Members may arrange for the printing of the slips by contacting Financial and Administrative Services on the phone number mentioned below.

Service Contact for Members

For assistance regarding printing of "With Compliments" slips:
Financial and Administrative Services
Parliamentary Service
Parliament House
Phone 07 3406 7945
Fax 07 3210 0117

3. **PARLIAMENT HOUSE SUPPORT**

The Parliamentary Service provides a range of services to Members within the Parliamentary precinct.

In addition, Members are provided with a range of other benefits to assist Members in performing business associated with the activities of the Parliament. These include:

- office, and in some cases overnight, accommodation;
- access to equipment, including telephones, photocopiers, facsimile machines; and
- personal pagers.

All office accommodation, and overnight accommodation is provided according to policy determined by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly.