



Guide to Standing & Select Committees

House of Assembly of Newfoundland & Labrador

February 2021

This version is dated **February 2021**
For the **most current** version, visit:
www.assembly.nl.ca/Committees



Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Standing Committees	3
Select Committees.....	5
Establishing Committees & Committee Membership.....	6
Committee Authority & Powers.....	9
Rules & Procedures in Committee.....	12
Responsibilities of Committee Chair	16
Committee Operations	18
Witnesses in Committee	22
Committee Decisions.....	25
Committee Reports	26
Supports for Committees.....	28
Appendices	30



Introduction

Committees of the House of Assembly derive their authority from the House and enjoy the privileges that apply to the Parliament from which they were appointed.

Committees are made up of Members of the House of Assembly, and are able to carry out work the House as a whole would find difficult to undertake.

In addition, Committees:

- Enhance the democratic process by providing for greater accountability of the Executive Branch of government to the House of Assembly through investigation of questions of government administration and service delivery;
- Provide an important means for Members to carry out detailed investigations, inquiries or examinations before the House of Assembly must come to a decision;
- Enable consultation and collection of the views of individuals, community groups, professionals, businesses, academics and other groups;
- Broaden the role of individual Members by providing an opportunity for them to contribute their experience and expertise in a parliamentary forum outside of the House;
- Provide a mechanism to make Parliament more relevant and accessible to the people it represents by allowing more direct contact between the public and elected officials on issues (i.e., take Parliament to the people); and
- Promote public debate on a subject by undertaking an inquiry.

This guide is intended to provide a summary of the role, powers and general practices of Standing and Select Committees of the House of Assembly. It is based on the *Standing Orders*, accepted practices, conventions, precedents and parliamentary authorities as they exist in the current General Assembly.

Further questions regarding Committees can be directed to the Clerk, Clerk Assistant or Law Clerk.

Where there is a difference in interpretation between this Guide and the following:

- *House of Assembly Act*;
- *Standing Orders*; and
- accepted practices, conventions, precedents or parliamentary authorities;

the above noted are the final authority.



Standing Committees

Standing Committees are the permanent Committees of the House as established under the [*Standing Orders*](#). They may examine and report on the following:

1. Matters referred to them by the House;
2. Matters traditionally considered within their mandate;
3. Draft legislation before its introduction in the House and/or Bills which have received second reading; or
4. Estimates as referred by the House of Assembly.

These Committees are created at the beginning of a General Assembly and continue for the duration of that Assembly. The Striking Committee (also established at the beginning of a General Assembly, chaired by the Government House Leader) is responsible for determining the membership of the Standing Committees.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, there is provision for seven Standing Committees, as follows:

1. Government Services Committee:

The Government Services Committee may be asked to review any matter the House wishes to refer to it, typically of the departments and agencies that are included in the general government sector as laid out in the Estimates. This Committee also reviews the annual Estimates of these departments and agencies.

2. Social Services Committee:

The Social Services Committee may be asked to review any matter the House refers to it, typically of the departments and agencies that are included in the social sector as laid out in the Estimates. This Committee also reviews the annual Estimates of these departments and agencies.

3. Resource Committee:

The Resource Committee may be asked to review any matter the House refers to it, typically of the departments and agencies that are included in the resource sector as laid out in the Estimates. This Committee also reviews the annual Estimates of these departments and agencies.

4. Public Accounts Committee:

The Public Accounts Committee traditionally reviews the annual report of the Auditor General, selecting matters from the report on which to hold hearings. This Committee also reviews the audited accounts of the House of Assembly; reviews the Clerk's role as accounting Officer of the House; conducts inquiries into other matters it may decide on that relate to the Public Accounts of the Province; and can request the Auditor General to review any matter (in accordance with the [*Auditor General Act*](#)). The Chair of the Public Accounts Committee is traditionally an Opposition Member.



5. Privileges and Elections Committee:

The Privileges and Elections Committee deals with matters of privilege referred to it by the House. If the Speaker determines there is a *prima facie* case that a breach of privilege has occurred, a motion may be made to refer it to this Committee. The Committee also reviews the [Code of Conduct for Members of the House of Assembly](#), and has responsibilities under the [Harassment-Free Workplace Policy Applicable to Complaints Against MHAs](#) (effective April 1, 2020).

6. Standing Orders Committee:

The Standing Orders Committee reviews and makes recommendations to the House on amendments to the [Standing Orders](#).

7. Miscellaneous and Private Bills Committee:

The Miscellaneous and Private Bills Committee deals with private Bills that confer particular powers or benefits on any person or body of persons, including individuals and private corporations. Such Bills are rare in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Select Committees

Occasionally the House may decide to appoint a Select Committee for a particular purpose. This is done by resolution of the House, which is the order of reference for the Committee, specifying such things as:

- the matter(s) the Committee is to examine and report on;
- the membership of the Committee;
- expectations regarding the content and delivery of the Committee's report;
- time frame for the Committee to report to the House; and/or
- expectations regarding consultations/public engagement, extraordinary technology requirements, travel and etc.

Select Committees cease to exist once they deliver their final report, or when otherwise specified in the terms of reference.



Establishing Committees & Committee Membership

Only Members of the House of Assembly may serve on Committees of the House.

Striking Committee

The Striking Committee is responsible for assigning Members to the various Standing Committees. That Committee is appointed early in a new General Assembly by motion, selecting five Members who will serve on the Committee. Traditionally, the Striking Committee comprises three Members of the Government and two other Members.

The Striking Committee deliberates and proposes the membership of the various Standing Committees, reporting its recommendations to the House within 20 sitting days of appointment. **Standing Committees cannot meet or undertake any business until they are established by a resolution of the House.**

Standing Committees exist for the duration of the General Assembly after they are established by the Striking Committee.

Rules on Committee membership

The [*Standing Orders*](#) outline the following rules with respect to Committee membership:

- Government Services Committee to consist of not more than 17 Members and not less than 7 Members;
- Social Services Committee to consist of not more than 17 Members and not less than 7 Members;
- Resource Committee to consist of not more than 17 Members and not less than 7 Members;
- Public Accounts Committee to consist of 7 Members;
- Privileges and Elections Committee to consist of 5 Members;
- Standing Orders Committee to consist of 5 Members; and
- Miscellaneous and Private Bills Committee to consist of 5 Members.

Temporary changes to Committee membership (substitutions)

A temporary change occurs when a non-Committee member is designated as a substitute for a regular Committee member for a specified period (usually one meeting). This often occurs when the Committee member is unable to attend a scheduled meeting.

To designate a substitute, the **Chair of the Striking Committee** (Government House Leader) **must notify the Clerk** (email is sufficient) of the following information **in advance** of a Committee meeting:

- Name of the substitute member;
- Name of the member being substituted; and
- Period of the substitution.



The change will be effective immediately once the Clerk is notified. If this information is **not received in advance of the meeting**, the **substitute member cannot be counted for a quorum and cannot vote**.

Substitute members have the same rights as regular members during the period of substitution. They may vote, move motions, participate in debate and count toward a quorum in the same manner as a regular member. It is the responsibility of substitute members to prepare appropriately for any meeting(s) they are attending, and for regular members to get updates on anything missed. The Committee clerk can assist with this upon request.

When **substituting for a Committee Chair**, the substitute **does not automatically** take on the responsibilities of the Chair (it is at the Committee's discretion to decide what member will perform the role of the Chair in the Chair's absence). However, it is the practice that where there is a **substitution for the Chair** during a meeting of a **Standing Committee reviewing the Estimates**, the **substitute member automatically** takes on the **role of the Chair** for that meeting.

Committee members cannot have a substitute designated for a meeting if they are in attendance at that meeting (i.e., the member will be included in quorum and must vote if in attendance). For example, if a member of a Standing Committee reviewing the Estimates for a government department wishes to attend the meeting as the parliamentary secretary for that department, they cannot have a substitute replace them on the Standing Committee for that meeting.

Permanent changes to Committee membership

A permanent change occurs when a non-Committee member is named as a new Committee member for the remainder of the Committee's duration (i.e., until the dissolution of the current General Assembly). New Committee members may be appointed to replace another member due to the resignation of a seat, change in caucus responsibilities, or for other reasons. New members may also be added to an existing Committee if the Committee does not already have the maximum number of members, and the addition is in keeping with the practice regarding equitable representation of recognized parties in the House. Permanent changes to Committees requires a motion to be introduced by the Chair of the Striking Committee (Government House Leader) and adopted by the House.

Ministers on Committees

While it is not typical, members of Executive Council (i.e., ministers) may be appointed to Committees of the House in certain circumstances. However, they cannot serve as Chairs and are not appointed to Committees that deal with matters relating to their ministerial portfolio.

Attendance & participation by non-Committee Members

Members who are not part of a Committee **cannot attend in camera** meetings. Any Member of the House may attend a public Committee meeting unless the Committee orders otherwise [SO 67(2)]. If attending a public meeting, they may participate with the approval of and at the discretion of the



Committee. **Non-Committee members** in attendance **cannot be counted towards a quorum, move motions or vote.**



Committee Authority & Powers

Committees are created by Parliament, do their work on behalf of it and report to it. They receive their authority from the House that appointed it, which overrides that of any Committee.

Recommendations contained in Committee reports only **take effect** when they are **adopted by the House**.

Effect of adjournment, prorogation & dissolution

Committees are not affected by the adjournment or prorogation of a session. Dissolution of the whole House (i.e., when a general election has been called) extinguishes all Committees and all outstanding Committee business. The House may revive Committee business from a previous General Assembly by resolution in a new General Assembly. However, the new Committee is not bound by the work of the previous Committee.

Subject matter for Committee examinations

The role of Committees is to examine selected matters in greater depth than is possible by the House, and to report to the House any conclusions of those examinations, including recommendations.

Committees are empowered to examine anything that has been referred to them by the House, otherwise known as their order of reference. Certain Committees also have permanent orders of reference set out in the [Standing Orders](#), legislation or by parliamentary convention (e.g., Public Accounts Committee with matters concerning the Public Accounts of the province; Privileges and Elections Committee with the [Harassment-Free Workplace Policy Applicable to Complaints Against MHAs](#) and etc.).

A Select Committee must work within its mandate as dictated by the order of reference from the House, and cannot expand its mandate without further authority from the House.

Sending for persons, papers & records

A Committee has the full authority to summon and compel the attendance and testimony of any person, and to summon and compel the production of any document. These powers are virtually unlimited.

In most instances, persons invited to appear (i.e., witnesses) comply with verbal or written requests from the Committee. If a person refuses to appear or does not respond, the Committee usually directs that a more insistent invitation be issued. If that person continues to ignore the Committee's request to appear, the Committee may adopt a motion to summon the person. This will result in a warrant or summons being served on the person outlining the time and date of the hearing, the subject matter under investigation and signature of the Committee Chair. If the summons is not complied with, the Committee may report the matter to the House for decision on any remedial action to be taken. Disobedience to a summons is a very serious matter and may lead to discipline for contempt of the House.



The procedure for obtaining papers and records is similar. In most cases, the documents can be obtained from the relevant person or organization by verbal or written request from the Committee. The Committee may also adopt a motion to issue a warrant (in the same manner as outlined above) ordering the required person or organization to produce the documents, if they do not comply with a written/verbal request.

Privilege

Parliamentary privilege is the sum of rights extended to Members individually and to the House collectively that are necessary for performance of their duties. Further information on privilege can be referenced in the [*Members' Parliamentary Guide*](#).

Parliamentary privilege **applies to Committee proceedings**. Examples include:

- Members are protected by freedom of speech during Committee meetings as they are during sittings of the House; and
- Committees have some of the same collective privileges of the House, such as the authority to order the appearance of and administer oaths to witnesses.

It is a **breach of privilege** for anyone to:

- publish or make reference to the content of a Committee report prior to its tabling in the House; or
- publish or make reference to *in camera* proceedings of a Committee.

Members may raise points of privilege during Committee proceedings, but Committees do not have the power to decide questions of privilege. When a breach of privilege related to Committee proceedings is perceived to have occurred, the proper procedure is for a Member to move that the Committee report the matter to the House.

Contempt

Disobedience to the order of a Committee, if those orders are within the scope of the Committee's authority, is a contempt of the House. Further information on contempt can be referenced in the [*Members' Parliamentary Guide*](#).

Authority to discipline

Committees **do not have the authority** to discipline Members, witnesses or members of the general public for offenses committed in meetings or in relation to Committee business. This authority belongs to the House.

When an offense occurs, or is alleged to have occurred, the Committee may have one of its members move that the matter be reported to the House. Assuming such a motion is carried, details of the matter are included in the Committee's report to the House, which is tabled by the Chair in the usual manner (see "[*Committee Reports*](#)"). The House then determines what, if any, discipline to issue when dealing with the Committee's report.



Examples of matters that Committees may report to the House for possible punishment include, but are not limited to:

- Disorderly conduct;
- Contempt of the Committee's authority, such as witnesses refusing to attend or answer questions;
- Perceived breaches of privilege, such as libel of the Chair or Committee members; and/or
- Interference with a Committee's right to meet.



Rules & Procedures in Committee

Committees are an extension of the House and are guided by the Standing Orders and rules of parliamentary procedure observed in the House, as applicable. For example, all language used in Committee proceedings should be temperate and worthy of the place in which it is spoken, and Members may not use language or words offensive toward the House or any Member. It is impossible to provide a complete list of unparliamentary words or phrases as it depends on the circumstance. Examples include personal attacks, insults, obscene language or questioning a member's integrity, honesty or character.

There are **notable exceptions** where the Standing Orders and the **rules of parliamentary procedure** are **not followed in Committee proceedings**. These include:

- Motions moved in Committee do not require a seconder;
- There is no limit to the number of times a Member may speak to a question;
- The previous question may not be moved in Committee¹; and
- Members may refer to each other by their personal names, rather than district/portfolio.

Proceedings in Committee are generally more informal than in the House.

Manner of Committee meetings

The Standing Orders provide that a Committee may meet in a virtual manner or a hybrid of virtual and in-person, whether those meetings are public or *in camera*. The Chair of the Committee, in consultation with the clerk of the Committee, may determine the manner of meeting.

Procedural freedom

Consistent with the Standing Orders, Committees are enabled to establish their own procedure and to settle any procedural difficulties that arise in their proceedings. The Speaker does not exercise procedural control over Committees, and procedural difficulties should not be brought to the House.

Committees may make a variety of decisions concerning their own procedures. For example, a Committee may adopt a motion specifying its work plan or issuing instructions to the Committee clerk in regard to distribution of documents.

Quorum

A quorum is the minimum number of Committee members, including the Chair, required to be present in order for the Committee to make decisions. A simple majority of Committee members constitutes a quorum.

¹ The "previous question" is a motion "That this question be now put." A Member may move such a motion during House proceedings in an attempt to end debate on a question and bring it to an immediate vote. Such a motion may not be moved during Committee proceedings, nor during Committee of the Whole House.



Members who are **present** at a **Committee meeting** are **only counted as part of the quorum** if:

- they are a member of the Committee designated by the Striking Committee; or
- they are a properly designated substitute (see [“Temporary changes to Committee membership”](#)).

If there is **no quorum** at the **scheduled start time**, the Chair **may delay** calling the meeting to order. Typically, the Chair will wait for a brief period as a courtesy to see if a quorum can be established. If a **quorum is lost partway** through a meeting, the Chair **may recess** the meeting for a brief period to see if it can be re-established. The **meeting is adjourned** if a **quorum is not established/re-established**.

The Chair may delay the start of a meeting for a few minutes as a courtesy until at least one representative from an opposition caucus is present even if a quorum exists. However, Committees may meet and adopt motions in the absence of opposition members if a quorum is established.

Recess

A recess is a break in proceedings within a Committee meeting. When Committee business resumes after a recess, it does so as part of the same meeting. This is in contrast to an adjournment, which ends the current meeting and holds over business until the next meeting.

The Committee may occasionally find it necessary or desirable to recess for a variety of reasons, such as allowing witnesses time to depart after their testimony, considering a ruling or allowing a motion made orally to be printed. In such cases, the Chair simply states that the Committee is in recess for a given duration of time. Recording is suspended during recess for public meetings.

Adjournment of meeting

While a motion to adjourn can be made at any point during a meeting, adjournment is also the last item of business on a meeting agenda. When the Committee gets to that point, the Chair will ask for a motion to adjourn either to the call of the Chair or the next scheduled meeting date, if applicable.

Points of order

Members who believe that the rules or established Committee procedures have been contravened may object by raising a point of order. Points of order **should be raised promptly** before the matter has passed to a stage where the objection would be out of place. The member may also explain the reason(s) for the objection.

It is the **responsibility of the Chair** to decide whether a contravention has indeed occurred, and what action should result. The Chair may make a decision (i.e., issue a ruling) immediately or permit debate on the point of order. Such debate is to assist the Chair in making their decision and must be strictly relevant to the point of order. The Chair may also reserve a decision to a future date.



Hypothetical questions of order should not be raised as the Chair cannot rule on them. Members may seek the advice of the Committee clerk on rules and procedures, but it is the Chair who decides on their interpretation in actual proceedings.

Members may interrupt proceedings to raise a point of order, but they cannot use a point of order to move a motion or do anything else that requires prior recognition by the Chair (i.e., having the floor). Points of order may not be raised during votes.

Examples of things **that do not form** the basis for a **valid point of order** during Committee proceedings include, but are not limited to:

- Not liking what a Member has said;
- Correcting the record;
- Objecting to the length of time a member is speaking;
- Providing information or clarifying a previous statement;
- Asking questions; or
- Moving a motion.

Examples of things that **could form** the basis for a **valid point of order** during Committee proceedings include, but are not limited to:

- Interrupting another member, except when raising a point of order;
- Using unparliamentary, abusive, or insulting language;
- Speaking to a question other than the one under discussion;
- Persisting in needless repetition;
- Making allegations against another Member;
- Imputing false or unavowed motives to another Member;
- Charging another Member with uttering a deliberate falsehood;
- Debating a motion to adjourn;
- Lack of quorum; or
- Not complying with a decision the Committee has made in regard to its procedures.

Disorder in Committee

It is the **responsibility of the Chair** to **maintain order** during Committee proceedings. If disorderly conduct occurs, it is generally sufficient to advise all present that disruption of the Committee's business will not be tolerated.

If the **disorder is caused by a stranger** (i.e., someone who is a stranger in accordance with Standing Order 22(2)) the Chair may:

- Declare a recess to restore order;
- Ask for a Member to move a motion that the stranger be excluded from the meeting*; or
- Ask for a Member to move a motion to adjourn the meeting*.

*The above two motions may also be moved by Committee members on their own initiative.



If the **disorder is caused by a Member of the House of Assembly**, whether part of the Committee or not, the Chair may:

- Declare a recess in order for order to be restored;
- Ask for a Committee member to move a motion to adjourn the meeting (Committee members may also move this on their own initiative);
- Ask the Member causing the disorder to leave.

Committees may choose to report disorderly conduct to the House for its consideration.

Conflict of interest

Committee members who believe they have a conflict of interest in a matter before the Committee should disclose the general nature of that conflict to the Committee clerk and recuse from the meeting without voting, participating in consideration of the matter or attempting to influence the matter in any way. In these circumstances, a Committee member may arrange for a substitute. See [subsection 33\(1\) of the House of Assembly Act](#), Standing Order 20 or consult the Law Clerk for advice.

Unprovided cases

During the conduct of Committee business, there are times when a question of procedure may arise which is unforeseen and not provided for in the [Standing Orders](#), parliamentary practice or the accepted practices of the Committee. Should this occur, the Committee must follow the guidance of Standing Order 1 in these unprovided cases.

Use of props

The less-formal environment of a Committee provides for the use of what might otherwise be considered props by witnesses. It is appropriate for the Chair to permit reasonable latitude in the use of props if they are intended to convey information to the Committee in a respectful and unprovocative manner (e.g., displays, illustrations, slide presentations, audio-video and etc.).



Responsibilities of Committee Chair

Each Committee must elect one of its members to be the Chair. The following section outlines responsibilities and expectations of the Chair once elected.

Election of the Chair & Vice Chair

Each Committee must meet in order to elect a Chair once the report of the Striking Committee is adopted by the House. The election of Chair, by motion, is convened and presided over by the Committee clerk (see “[Guide for Election of Chair/Vice Chair](#)” in Appendix A).

Any Committee member may be elected as the Chair, although ministers on Committees cannot serve in that role. It is a parliamentary convention for the Standing Committee on Public Accounts that the Chair be a Member of the Official Opposition and the Vice Chair a private Member of the Government caucus.

Following the election of the Chair, the election of Vice Chair occurs by motion. It is tradition for the Chair to be from the Government and Vice Chair to be from the Opposition, except for the Public Accounts Committee, as noted above.

If the Committee has other business to conduct at its first meeting, it may decide to continue after the election of Chair. Otherwise, it adjourns to the call of the Chair or the next scheduled meeting date, if applicable.

Responsibilities of the Chair

The following outlines the responsibilities of the Chair **prior to a meeting**:

- Setting a meeting date in consultation with the Committee clerk;
- Drafting the meeting agenda in consultation with the Committee clerk.

The following outlines the responsibilities of the Chair **during a meeting**:

- Calling the meeting to order;
- Advancing the business of the Committee meeting;
- Recognizing the next member or witness to speak (i.e., identifying the person who has the floor);
- Ensuring that proceedings adhere to established practices and rules;
- Maintaining order (see “[Rules & Procedures in Committee](#)”);
- Addressing disorderly conduct in proceedings (see “[Disorder in Committee](#)”);
- Deciding questions of order or procedure on their initiative, or as raised through points of order (See “[Points of Order](#)”);
- Putting the question on all motions before the Committee and announcing the results of all votes;
- Providing instructions to witnesses such as their rights and obligations (see “[Witnesses in Committee](#)”);



- Determining the order in which Members may pose questions to witnesses, traditionally alternating between Government and Opposition Members;
- Declaring recesses when necessary; and
- Announcing the meeting's end when a motion to adjourn is carried.

Other responsibilities of the Chair include:

- Signing official correspondence necessary to carry out the direction or decisions of the Committee;
- Signing Committee reports before they are tabled in the House;
- Tabling Committee reports in the House and giving notice of motion to concur in report, where applicable; and
- Dealing with media requests, including interviews on Committee proceedings, in coordination with the Office of the Clerk.

The Chair **does not**:

- move motions; or
- make decisions on behalf of the Committee.

Casting vote of the Chair

The practice in this jurisdiction is for Committees to make decisions through consensus. However, should a vote occur, the Chair does not vote unless there is a tie between the yeas and nays, in which case the Chair will cast the deciding vote.

In general, when a **Committee cannot by majority** decide a question, the Chair has no obligation to decide on the Committee's behalf and should avoid doing so. In exercising a casting vote, the Chair is guided by the same principles as the Speaker in the House, as follows:

- Vote in such a way as to allow for further discussion; or
- Vote to maintain the status quo.

When exercising a casting vote, the Chair may give reasons for the vote, but is not required to do so.



Committee Operations

Committees conduct their business during meetings. A meeting in which one or more witnesses appear before the Committee may also be called a hearing, but there is no procedural difference between a meeting and a hearing.

Public vs. *in camera* meetings

Public Committee meetings are open to the media and the public, but they may not participate unless invited to appear before the Committee. A Committee may also decide to meet *in camera*, a Latin term meaning “in chamber” that is used to refer to proceedings that occur in private without the presence of the public or the media. Whether a **meeting is public or *in camera*** is a **decision of the Committee**, and the Committee does not need to provide reasons or justification for such a decision.

All matters discussed *in camera* are confidential and are protected by privilege. Any publication, reference to or release of such proceedings is an offense and may be raised as a question of privilege in the House.

Members who are **not members of the Committee** cannot attend *in camera* meetings.

Standing Committees reviewing Estimates

When Standing Committees meet to review Estimates, the established practice for speaking times is as follows:

- Introductory remarks of the Minister of the appearing department/agency: 15 minutes
- Introductory remarks and questions of the first speaker of the Committee: 15 minutes
- All other speakers: 10 minutes

(See “[Guide for a Meeting of Standing Committee Reviewing Estimates](#)” in Appendix B.)

Audio & Hansard

Audio of public Committee proceedings is streamed live and archived on the House of Assembly website, and Hansard is prepared and posted to the website once complete (under “[Webcast](#)” and “[Hansard](#)”).

In camera meetings are not recorded or transcribed unless the Committee directs otherwise. Any recording or transcription of *in camera* proceedings directed/approved by the Committee is privileged and is not released beyond the Committee membership.

Notice of meetings to Committee members

When a meeting date is determined in consultation with the Chair, the Committee clerk coordinates distribution of a meeting notice via email (or calendar invite via email). The notice is sent to Committee members and applicable House of Assembly employees supporting the Committee



outlining the date, time, location and other relevant information. While there are no formal rules respecting notice, Committee members are notified as soon as possible.

For public Committee meetings, a press release may be issued and the meeting notification will be posted on the House of Assembly website.

Meeting times

Committees have authority to decide when they will meet, typically coordinated by the Chair in consultation with the Committee clerk. Except for Standing Committees reviewing the Estimates, Committees may meet during the sitting hours of the House, if necessary; consult with the Office of the Clerk as there may be logistical and resource implications. Typically, most meetings conclude when all items on the agenda are completed, but may end at any point if a motion to adjourn is moved and carried.

Meetings of Standing Committees reviewing the Estimates are allocated three hours for each head of expenditure. However, should the Committee require additional time to examine a head of expenditure, the Committee has the right to summon the witnesses (i.e., Minister and departmental officials) for a subsequent meeting, subject to the provisions of Standing Orders 71 to 77.

Location of meetings

Committee meetings are typically held in either the House of Assembly Committee Room or the House of Assembly Chamber, both located in Confederation Building – East Block. However, meetings of Committees may also be conducted by virtual means.

If an order of reference authorizes travel, Committees may meet outside of the House of Assembly Precinct in other suitable locations across the province if they are examining an issue of broad interest. These meetings are still considered Committee proceedings and the standard rules, procedures, powers and privileges apply.

Meeting agenda

Each Committee meeting follows an agenda that lists the items of business for the Committee's consideration during the meeting (see "[Agenda Template](#)" in Appendix C). The agenda includes the name of the Committee and the date, time and location of the meeting. Each agenda includes a call to order by the Chair, an adoption of minutes of previous meetings and an adjournment. Various other items of business may be listed between the adoption of the minutes and adjournment, such as presentations by witnesses, discussions of work plan and scheduling, and new business.

The Committee clerk drafts the agenda in consultation with the Chair prior to the meeting and circulates by email to Committee members and applicable House of Assembly employees. Committee members may request that the agenda be amended to add and/or remove items, or change the order in which items are considered prior to the meeting.

The agenda for an *in camera* meeting is privileged, and as such is not distributed beyond Committee members and applicable House of Assembly employees supporting the Committee.



Planning the Committee's work

Committees have the ability to plan their work as they see fit, within the mandate or order of reference provided by the House. Committees typically schedule a meeting soon after they are established, and periodically thereafter, for the purpose of planning its work (e.g., deciding on subjects to examine, witnesses to invite and etc.).

It is recommended that Committees consider how much they can reasonably expect to complete in the time frame set to carry out the matter under review when planning its work. If the Committee agrees to examine multiple subjects, it may wish to establish an order of priority and estimate how many meetings it wishes to set aside for each subject and the witnesses associated with it (see "[Witnesses in Committee](#)"). The Committee may also find it useful to review the work plan periodically to determine what it has accomplished, what remains outstanding and whether there is new work to be added. Doing so can help the Committee stay organized and keep its examinations focused such that it can complete a thorough, well-considered report to the House. Acting on the work plan in a timely manner is also respectful of persons and organizations invited to appear before the Committee as witnesses.

Media relations

Media may attend public Committee meetings, but are not permitted to interact with Committee members during proceedings. Any media attending Committee meetings are subject to the *House of Assembly Media and Press Gallery Guidelines*. Media interviews may be held outside the meeting room after the conclusion of the meeting.

Media inquiries to Committees are directed to the Office of the Clerk, which coordinates a response on behalf of the Committee in consultation with the Chair. Other media relations activities (issuing of press releases; planning media availability, press conferences and etc.) will also be coordinated by the Office of the Clerk.

Meeting cancellations

The decision to cancel a meeting depends on whether the previous meeting was adjourned to the call of the Chair or to a specified date. If a meeting was adjourned to the call of the Chair, the decision to cancel is at the Chair's discretion. If adjourned to a specified date, the Chair must consult with Committee members before cancelling a meeting.

Once it is determined that the meeting should be cancelled, the Chair must notify the Committee clerk so that Committee members and applicable House of Assembly Service employees can be advised. A date to reschedule the meeting may be included in the notice or determined at a later time. The Committee clerk will also coordinate distribution of a press release and ensure that notice is posted to the House of Assembly website for cancellation of public meetings.

A closure or delayed opening of provincial government offices does not automatically mean that Committee meetings scheduled for that day will be cancelled or delayed. The Legislature is independent of the Executive Branch and makes its own decisions in these matters. When inclement



weather or other issues may interfere with a scheduled meeting, the Committee clerk will consult the Chair for direction.

Travel expenses of members to attend Committee meetings

The Chair and members of a standing or Select Committee of the House of Assembly may claim for reasonable expenses for attendance at meetings when the House is not in session. Reasonable expenses include transportation, accommodations and meals reimbursed at the rates provided for under the [*Members' Resources and Allowances Rules*](#).



Witnesses in Committee

A witness is a person or a group appearing before a Committee to present views, opinions or information on an issue under study. Witnesses provide the Committee with valuable insight, observations and opinions through their participation in the process.

Selection of witnesses

Private individuals, experts, representatives of groups and organizations, public servants and Ministers of the Crown (see below) may be invited to appear before Committees in order to obtain information relevant to the subject under consideration.

The Committee decides by majority decision which, if any, witnesses it wants to hear from. This can occur in several ways:

- The Committee specifies one or more witnesses by motion;
- The Committee directs the Committee clerk to suggest a list of potential witnesses on a given subject, then decides on which one(s) to invite; or
- The Committee advertises publicly to seek input from interested parties on a given subject.

Persons or organizations may also contact the Committee on their own initiative to seek the opportunity to appear and give their views on an issue related to the Committee mandate. It is at the Committee's discretion to accept or decline such requests.

Committees inviting organizations or groups to appear will often let the organization or group decide on the proper personnel to represent them. However, Committees are within their power to specify the person(s) they wish to appear.

Ministers of the Crown

When Standing Committees review the Estimates in the budget process, ministers responsible for those Estimates appear as witnesses before the Committee. Ministers may also be required to appear before Committees in other circumstances. This can sometimes give rise to a tension between the privileges of the Crown and parliamentary privileges, which can often be resolved through compromise. If that is not possible, the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy may be invoked.

Scheduling witnesses

The Committee clerk schedules the appearance of witnesses at meetings, subject to direction from the Chair and/or the Committee.

The Committee clerk provides general information to witnesses about the Committee process and the reason for their appearance (see "[Template for Instructions to Witnesses](#)" in Appendix D), along with the time limit specified by the Committee for their statement, also known as their presentation. Additional time may be permitted at the discretion of the Committee depending on the agenda for



the meeting, other witnesses scheduled to appear and etc. The amount of time allowed for questions following witness presentations is at the discretion of the Chair.

In most cases the appearance of witnesses is confirmed in advance of a Committee meeting, and the individual names of the persons appearing and/or the organization they represent are listed on the agenda. On occasion, a Committee may decide to open the floor to any person in attendance at a meeting to come forward to give witness testimony. This is only done with Committee approval, and persons in attendance have no right to demand to be heard.

Witness presentations

When witnesses are called during a Committee meeting, the Chair may welcome them and briefly advise on the process the Committee has established for the presentation. The Chair should ask witnesses to introduce themselves for the purpose of Committee members, the audio recording and Hansard.

Once this is complete, witnesses can proceed with their verbal statement or presentation summarizing their views. They may submit copies of their remarks or other relevant documents, but are not required to do so. If arranged in advance, they may also use a PowerPoint presentation or other display to accompany their remarks. Witness presentations and any other documents provided will be part of the official public record of the Committee.

If it is apparent that witnesses will run out of time prior to completing their presentation, the Chair may interrupt to advise that time is running out and ask for a summary of the presentation. It is important that the Chair follow the agreed-upon time frame for witness presentations and subsequent questions from Committee members.

Should witnesses not be able to appear in person, the Committee may permit them to appear via other means (e.g., teleconference, video conference and etc.).

Legal counsel for witnesses

Most witnesses appear without legal counsel, but may ask the permission of the Committee to do so. Generally, when Committees permit legal counsel to appear with witnesses in Committee proceedings, they are allowed to act in an advisory capacity only. They do not have the right to examine or cross-examine witnesses, or to make submissions on behalf of their clients.

Questions to witnesses

Committees are not restricted in the scope of questions they can pose to witnesses, provided they are acting within an order of reference from the House or a subject of examination as determined by majority decision. Questions should also be expressed in respectful language, not attempt to intimidate or offend a witness, not be hypothetical or based on conjecture and not be repetitive.

A witness must answer all questions of the Committee, subject only to points of order by a member of the Committee that a question should not be permitted or the witness's own appeal to the Chair.



The Chair and Committee members can consult the Committee clerk for further advice and guidance on questioning witnesses.

Summoning of witnesses

Most witnesses appear before a Committee upon invitation, which is issued on behalf of the Committee through the Committee clerk. Committees rarely use their power to summon people, but may decide by motion to do so should a witness refuse an invitation. While the Committee can do this without first issuing a simple invitation, in practice such an approach is not normally used (see [“Sending for persons, papers & records”](#)).

Rights of witnesses

Witnesses appearing before Committees are protected by parliamentary privilege, and perhaps the most important is that of freedom of speech. The source of this protection is the Bill of Rights of 1689, which states that the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of parliament. This means that the evidence provided to the Committee may not be used against the witness in a legal proceeding.

Swearing-in of witnesses

Witnesses appearing before Committees may be sworn-in at the discretion of the Chair.

Witnesses are required to tell the truth in their testimony to Committees, whether they are sworn-in or not. Witnesses giving false testimony may be charged with perjury by the House even if they did not swear an oath or affirmation prior to giving testimony.

Oaths and affirmations are administered by the Committee clerk (see [“Forms for Oath or Affirmation of Witnesses”](#) in Appendix F).

Expenses for witnesses

Witnesses who request to be heard by a Committee are responsible for their own travel and related costs. Witnesses who appear at the invitation or summons of a Committee may be reimbursed for travel and incidental expenses. Should witnesses choose to obtain legal counsel, it is at their own expense.

The Clerk of the House of Assembly is authorized to pay a reasonable sum (per diem) during their travel and attendance, and a reasonable allowance for travelling expenses, to be determined by the Speaker.



Committee Decisions

Committee decisions are made according to the majority of votes on a question. The Committee may attempt to come to a consensus on a decision through discussion, but majority vote always determines the final outcome. Should a vote occur, the Chair does not vote unless there is a tie between the yeas and nays, in which case the Chair will cast the deciding vote (see “[Casting vote of the Chair](#)”).

Motions

A motion is a proposal that a Committee do something or call for something to be done. Motions put forward in Committee proceedings follow the same rules as the House, except they do not require notice and a seconder.

The Chair may rule a motion out of order if it does not comply with the above.

Withdrawing a motion

A Member who has made a motion may withdraw it only with unanimous consent of the Committee. Once a motion is made, it forms a question which belongs to the Committee, not the mover.

Decisions made during meetings

Committee decisions must be made during formal meetings, allowing members the full opportunity to debate and express their preference. Committee decisions may not be made during other informal gatherings, regardless of whether most or all of the Committee’s members are present.

Following a meeting, the Committee clerk will distribute the draft minutes, which will indicate any action items to Committee members, who may advise if there are any errors or omissions. Otherwise, the Committee clerk will proceed with actioning the items listed.

Committee correspondence

Decisions made by Committees may necessitate correspondence from the Committee to individuals or organizations. The usual procedure in these cases is for the Committee clerk to draft such correspondence and provide it to the Chair for approval. The approved correspondence is in the Chair’s name, including signature, on behalf of the Committee.

Any correspondence received by the Committee is distributed to Committee members by the Committee clerk. All correspondence sent or received is kept in the Committee’s permanent file, held by the Office of the Clerk.



Committee Reports

The Committee report is the official record of a Committee's proceedings, and the power to report its findings to the House is essential to a Committee's role. The rules of the House of Assembly provide Committees with the power to report as often as they see fit, unless otherwise ordered by the House. A Standing Committee ordered to examine a particular matter by the House may be instructed to do so according to a specific deadline. This may also be the case for a Select Committee established by an order of the House.

Committee reports can only be tabled during House sittings.

Majority opinion

Unanimity among Committee members is not required for a report. However, the conclusions and recommendations agreed to by the majority are those of the Committee. Should minority opinion need to be reflected in a Committee report, the Committee clerk will provide advice at that time.

Drafting of reports

Committee reports are drafted by the Committee clerk, subject to suggestions and recommendations by Committee members. The draft report is provided to Committee members for consideration during an *in camera* meeting. By majority decision, the Committee may instruct the Committee clerk to amend, add to, omit, redraft or otherwise alter the draft report until it is in a final form acceptable to the Committee.

Contents of reports

Reports to the House can be in a variety of formats depending on the subject matter under consideration and the conclusions and/or recommendations of the Committee. Reports typically summarize the activities of the Committee since it last reported to the House, and may include the following information:

- Order of reference from the House, if applicable, under which a study was made;
- Regular and substitute members of the Committee, and any Committee membership changes during the reporting period;
- Subjects the Committee examined and the Committee's views on them;
- Witnesses who appeared before the Committee;
- Number and purpose of meetings held;
- Decisions made by the Committee;
- Committee's recommendations, if any, for action on the part of the House, government or other entities;
- Appendices, including witnesses heard and briefs submitted on a particular subject; and
- Other information the Committee deems pertinent.

Reports **cannot contain recommendations** calling for the **expenditure of public funds**.



Once reports are tabled in the House, they are posted on the “Committee” section of the House of Assembly website.

It is a **breach of privilege** for anyone to **publish or make reference to the content of a Committee report before** it has been **presented to the House**. Members should avoid expressing predictions or promises of what a report will say when a matter is under consideration by a Committee and it has not yet reported to the House.

Presentation of a Committee report to the House

Committee reports are **presented to the House** under the daily routine proceeding **Reports by Standing and Select Committees**. It is typically the Committee Chair who presents the report, but it can be done by other members of the Committee. Regardless of who presents the report, it must always have the Chair’s signature. Once a report is tabled and distributed to all Members, it will be available publically on the House of Assembly website (under “[Tabled Documents](#)” and “Committees”).

If a report **requires a motion** of the House to **concur in the report and/or its recommendations**, that motion must be moved by the Committee Chair during **Notices of motion**. When the motion is called, the Chair opens debate by giving the House information on the Committee’s activities, as well as its opinions, recommendations and conclusions. The motion for adoption of the report is debatable and any Member, whether part of the Committee or not, may speak to it.

The House can also reject the adoption of the report by defeating the motion for adoption. Until the **House makes a decision on the adoption of a Committee report**, the report **cannot be considered final** because it may be rejected, amended, referred back to the Committee or referred to a Committee of the Whole House for further debate.

If a Committee report has been tabled, but not concurred in prior to dissolution of the General Assembly, the report and its recommendations die. It can be revived in a subsequent General Assembly by resolution adopted by the House.



Supports for Committees

The Office of the Clerk of the House of Assembly provides supports to assist Committees in their work such as procedural advice and expertise, research, report writing and media relations.

Committee clerk

The Committee clerk is the procedural and administrative advisor to both the Chair and the Committee, carrying out these duties and responsibilities in consultation with the Chair and at the direction of the Committee. The Committee clerk is a permanent employee of the House of Assembly Service who is strictly non-partisan, and is subject to the [Code of Conduct for Employees](#). They also serve as the liaison between the public and the Committee.

The Committee clerk does not issue rulings on matters of order as that is the responsibility of the Chair, but may be consulted for advice on the operation, procedural rules or mandate of the Committee. They will also be able to advise witnesses of any particular requirements the Committee may have.

Research

Committees may request that non-partisan research be undertaken and provided by the House of Assembly, provided the subject is within the Committee's order of reference. Research is carried out by the Committee clerk, or at the Committee clerk's direction by other House of Assembly Service employees.

Examples of research Committees may request include:

- Gathering of information on issues brought forward by witnesses;
- Jurisdictional summaries related to a subject before the Committee; and
- Gathering of information or statistics from provincial offices and external agencies.

Caucus support staff

It is the practice that Committee members may be accompanied by caucus staff to provide assistance and support during meetings of Standing Committees reviewing the Estimates, but they may not participate. Caucus support staff are **not permitted** to attend *in camera meetings* of Committees.

Expert assistance

A Committee may retain the services of an expert to help it complete its work if it is deemed necessary and if permission to incur the associated cost is included in the order of reference. Procedural and research support provided by the House of Assembly Service are typically sufficient for Committee operations.



Travel & other costs

Should it be determined that a Committee requires additional resources, it must be addressed in the order of reference and/or a subsequent resolution of the House. These might include:

- Travel and other related costs to conduct meetings in locations other than the Parliamentary Precinct;
- Costs to retain the services of expert witnesses; or
- Extraordinary technological requirements.



Appendices

- A.** Guide for Election of Chair/Vice Chair
- B.** Guide for a Meeting of Standing Committee Reviewing Estimates
- C.** Agenda Template
- D.** Instructions to Witnesses Template
- E.** Form for Oath/Affirmation of Witnesses



Appendix A - Guide for Election of Chair/Vice Chair



Occurs at the first meeting of the Committee in each new session.

Clerk: This is the [INSERT NAME] Committee. The first order of business is the election of the Chair.

Are there any nominations from the floor?

Some hon. member: I nominate the Member for [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] *[no seconder is required but often will occur]*

Clerk: Are there any further nominations from the floor?

Are there any further nominations from the floor? *[Call for nominations is **repeated three times in total**]*

Hearing no further nominations, the Member for [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] is acclaimed Chair.*
[INSERT NAME OF CHAIR] would you please take the chair. *[Chair takes over presiding meeting.]*

Chair: The next order of business is to call for nominations for a vice-chair. Are there any nominations from the floor?

Some hon. member: I nominate the Member for [INSERT DISTRICT NAME].

Chair: Are there any further nominations from the floor?

Are there any further nominations from the floor? *[Call for nominations is **repeated three times in total**]*

Hearing no further nominations, the Member for [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] is acclaimed vice-chair of the Committee.*

It is not necessary for the Committee to elect the vice-chair in the first meeting; it may be deferred to a subsequent meeting if no nominations are made from the floor at the first meeting.

**In the case of one nominee, no vote is required. If the Committee wishes to vote, follow below.*

Clerk/Chair: All those in favour, 'aye'.

Some Hon. Members: Aye.

Clerk/Chair: Contra minded (or all those against), 'nay'.

The Member for [INSERT DISTRICT NAME] is elected Chair/vice-chair.

**If there are multiple nominees, they are voted on individually in order of their nomination.*



Appendix B – Guide for a Meeting of Standing Committee Reviewing Estimates



GUIDE FOR A MEETING OF STANDING COMMITTEE REVIEWING ESTIMATES

**This guide is provided as a recommended practice for a Standing Committee reviewing the Estimates, although the Committee may vary this at its discretion. The Chair should consult the Committee clerk for advice.*

BEGINNING THE MEETING:

1. The **Chair** calls the meeting to order. [If it is the first meeting of a Committee in a new General Assembly, the clerk calls the Committee to order and proceeds immediately to the election of a chair – see [Appendix A.](#)]
2. **Chair** brings the previous meeting's minutes to the attention of Committee members and asks if there are any revisions or amendments. If revisions are raised, they are noted by the clerk. The **Chair** then asks for a mover of the minutes (seconder not required).

Chair: *The minutes of [date] (as amended) are moved by the Member for [district], all those in favour?" (Verbal vote.) "Carried."*

3. The **Chair** makes their opening comments and provides any necessary procedural or logistical instructions, such as:
 - a. If known, a general sense of the structure of the meeting and when a break may occur.
 - b. Announce the official substitutions attending on behalf of members of the Committee.
 - c. If there are Members attending who are not members (or official substitutes) of the Committee, the Chair must solicit the Committee's agreement on whether, and if so, how these Members may participate, including how much time they will be allocated and when the allocation will occur.
 - d. A reminder to witnesses to always identify themselves for Hansard and wait for the tally light before speaking. Wave to identify oneself if the light does not come on.
 - e. Any other reminders that are deemed necessary at the time.
4. The **Chair** then asks Committee members and officials/witnesses attending the meeting to introduce themselves.

QUESTIONS AND VOTING:

5. The **Chair** asks the Clerk to call first sub-head grouping of the heads of expenditure –

Clerk: *"1.1.01-1.1.04 inclusive"*

Chair: *"Shall 1.1.01-1.1.04 inclusive carry?" (This starts the Committee's review of this head of expenditure – no actual vote at this moment)*



6. The **Chair** calls for Minister's opening remarks – (15 minutes)

7. The **Chair** calls for first questioner from the Committee - (15 minutes)

Questions of a **general nature** and/or questions **specific to line items** related to or within the sub-head grouping may be asked.

8. The **Chair** then alternates amongst Committee members. Each member, including any subsequent turns of the first questioner, is given 10 minutes each, each turn. This continues until all Committee members have exhausted their questions on the section.

9. If Members of the House of Assembly who are not members of the Committee wish to ask questions on a sub-head grouping, they are often permitted to do so at this point in the proceeding, however, the Committee may vary this procedure. Refer to item 3(c) above.

10. Once questions related to the grouping are exhausted, the **Chair** asks the Clerk to recall the grouping and the Committee votes:

Clerk: *"1.1.01-1.1.04 inclusive"*

Chair: *"Shall 1.1.01-1.1.04 inclusive carry?" (Verbal vote.) "Carried."*

11. The **Chair** then asks the Clerk to call the next sub-head or group of sub-heads to be discussed and the Clerk calls them accordingly, e.g.,

Clerk: *"2.1.01-2.1.05 inclusive"*

The **Chair** calls on the Committee member whose turn it is next to ask their questions. The time allowed for questioning is 10 minutes.

Questions of a **general nature** and/or questions **specific to line items** related to or within the sub-head grouping may be asked.

When the Committee has asked all its questions for that section, and non-Committee members have been permitted to engage as previously determined, the **Chair** will ask the Clerk to recall the section so a vote may occur:

Clerk: *"2.1.01-2.1.05 inclusive"*

Chair: *"Shall 2.1.01-2.1.05 inclusive carry?" (Verbal vote.) "Carried."*

This procedure continues until all sub-heads or groups of sub-heads are voted in the same manner. **Once a sub-head is voted on it is generally not revisited** (although it may be at the discretion of the Committee – consult Committee clerk for advice)



12. Once all of the sub-heads have been reviewed and voted on, the final vote takes place immediately thereafter:

Clerk: *"Total"*

Chair: *Shall the Total carry?" (Verbal vote.) "Carried." (Carried without amendments.)*

Chair: *Shall I report the Estimates of the [Department/agency]?" (Verbal vote.) "Carried."*

ENDING THE MEETING:

13. The Chair may wish to make final remarks and offer thanks to the Committee members and officials for their participation. Committee members and the Minister may also wish to make final comments or express their thanks.
14. The **Chair** announces the date, time and subject of next meeting.
15. The **Chair** asks for a mover for the Motion to adjourn (a seconder is not required). The Chair cannot move the motion to adjourn themselves.

Chair: *Motion to adjourn is moved by the Member for [district], all those in favour?" (Verbal vote) "Carried."*



Appendix C - Agenda Template



[INSERT NAME] Committee
Meeting of: [INSERT MEETING DATE]
[INSERT LOCATION]

1. Call to Order
2. Adoption of Minutes (from previous meeting)
3. Recurring Business (if applicable)
4. New Business (if applicable)
5. Motion to Adjourn



Appendix D – Template for Instructions to Witnesses



External:

Thank you for your interest in appearing before the House of Assembly [INSERT COMMITTEE NAME] on [INSERT SUBJECT MATTER]. Please note the following information with respect to your appearance before the Committee:

Location/Time:

You are scheduled to appear before the Committee at [INSERT DATE/TIME]. The hearing will take place in the [INSERT LOCATION, ADDRESS]

Visitor parking is available in the parking lot adjacent to the main/front entrance of the East Block (directly off Prince Phillip Drive). **Access to Confederation Building Complex** is also available via the main/front entrance (directly off Prince Phillip Drive).

Please allow **sufficient time to register with Security** prior to your scheduled appearance time (approximately 15 minutes).

Presentation/Documents:

If your submission includes a PowerPoint presentation or other documents, please provide:

- **twelve (12) paper copies of each document;** and
- an electronic version of the **PowerPoint** (if you are using one) **by email** no later than [INSERT DEADLINE].

Please note your presentation will be part of the official public record of the Committee, and will be published in the Hansard transcripts of the Committee. The audio of Committee proceedings will be available through a livestream, and a recording of it will also be publically available via the House of Assembly website. Other documents you provide may also become part of the official public record of the Committee.

Your Rights & Responsibilities (Parliamentary Privilege):

As a witness making a presentation to a Committee of the House of Assembly you are entitled to the same rights granted to Members of the House of Assembly. You may speak freely, and nothing you say may be used against you in civil proceedings.

Media

Members of the media may attend the Committee meeting, and may ask to interview you following your appearance before the Committee. This is at your discretion. The interview must take place in the designated scrum area (just outside the main doors to the Chamber). You should note that what you say in a media interview is not protected by parliamentary privilege in the same way as what you say in your testimony before the Committee, even if it is the same information.



Internal:

Thank you for your interest in appearing before the [INSERT COMMITTEE NAME] on [INSERT SUBJECT MATTER]. Please note the following information with respect to your appearance before the Committee:

Location/Time:

You are scheduled to appear before the Committee at [INSERT DATE/TIME]. The hearing will take place [INSERT LOCATION, ADDRESS].

Presentation/Documents:

If your submission includes a PowerPoint presentation or other documents, please provide:

- **twelve (12) paper copies of each document;** and
- an electronic version of the **PowerPoint** (if you are using one) **by email** no later than [INSERT DEADLINE].

Please note your presentation will be part of the official public record of the Committee, and will be published in the Hansard transcripts of the Committee. The audio of Committee proceedings will be available through a livestream, and a recording of it will also be publically available via the House of Assembly website. Other documents you provide may also become part of the official public record of the Committee.

Your Rights & Responsibilities (Parliamentary Privilege):

As a witness making a presentation to a Committee of the House of Assembly you are entitled to the same rights granted to Members of the House of Assembly. You may speak freely, and nothing you say may be used against you in civil proceedings.

Media

Members of the media may attend the Committee meeting, and may ask to interview you following your appearance before the Committee. This is at your discretion. The interview must take place in the designated scrum area (just outside the main doors to the Chamber). You should note that what you say in a media interview is not protected by parliamentary privilege in the same way as what you say in your testimony before the Committee, even if it is the same information.



Appendix E – Form for Oath or Affirmation of Witnesses



Affirmation:

I, [INSERT NAME], do solemnly, sincerely and truly affirm and declare that the evidence that I shall give on this examination shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Oath:

I, [INSERT NAME], do solemnly swear that the evidence that I shall give on this examination shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.