

SESSIONAL ORDERS

Adopted by the House on 7 February 2023 and amended on 29 November 2023 and 20 March 2025.

1 Days and times of meeting

Unless otherwise ordered, the House will meet each Tuesday at 12.00 pm, and each Wednesday and Thursday at 9.30 am.

2 Interruption of business for adjournment

Standing Order 32 be suspended and the following to apply:

- (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the Speaker will interrupt the business before the House at:
 - (a) 7.00 pm each sitting Tuesday and Wednesday;
 - (b) 5.00 pm on any other sitting day.
- (2) If a division is taking place when the time for the interruption arises, the division will be completed and the result announced. If the division is on a closure motion, and the motion is agreed to, the question or questions then required to be put to close the issue before the House will also be dealt with. The Speaker will then interrupt business.
- (3) If the time for the interruption arises:
 - (a) at the same time as the completion time set by the government business program; or
 - (b) after the interruption for the completion time of the government business program, but before all business on the program has been dealt with —

all business on the government business program will be completed first. The Speaker will then interrupt business for the adjournment.
- (4) After the interruption:
 - (a) before a motion for the adjournment is proposed by the Speaker, a minister may move that the sitting be continued. That motion must be put immediately without amendment or debate. If it is agreed to, the House will resume debate at the point at which it had been interrupted; or
 - (b) if a motion is not moved, the Speaker will immediately propose the question 'That the House now adjourns'. Any business under discussion and any other business not concluded at the time of the adjournment will be listed on the notice paper for the next sitting day. Any member speaking at the time of the interruption may, when debate resumes, continue his or her speech.

3 Order of business

- (1) So much of SOs 36, 38, 39, 41 and 55 be suspended so as to enable the following order of business on:

Tuesdays

Formal business
Statements by members
Government business
Question time and constituency questions (2.00 pm)
Government business *continued*
General business

Wednesdays

Formal business
Disallowance motions
Statements by members
Statements on parliamentary committee reports
Government business
Question time and constituency questions (2.00 pm)
Government business *continued*
Matter of public importance or grievance debate (4.00 pm)
Government business *continued*
General business

- (2) So much of SOs 38 and 39 be suspended so as to enable:
- (a) at 4.00 pm on Wednesday, unless a division is taking place, the Chair interrupts the business before the House and the bells are then rung for one minute;
 - (b) if a division is taking place at 4.00 pm:
 - (i) it will be completed without interruption and result announced;
 - (ii) if the division is on a closure motion, and the motion is agreed to, the question or questions then required to be put to close the issue before the House will also be dealt with;
 - (iii) business is then interrupted following the procedure in sub-paragraph (a);
 - (c) the Chair announces the grievance debate or matter of public importance, whichever the case may be;
 - (d) any business under discussion and not completed at the interruption will be resumed immediately at the end of the grievance debate or matter of public importance, whichever the case may be, and any member speaking at the time of the interruption may then continue his or her speech.
- (3) In SO 39(9) for 'statements on parliamentary committee reports under SO 41' read 'government business'.

Sessional order 4 deleted 29/11/2023

5 Who may ask oral questions without notice

Only non-government members may ask questions without notice under SO 55.

Sessional order 6 deleted 29/11/2023

7 Ministers' statements

After each oral question without notice and any related supplementary questions, any minister may seek the call to make a statement of up to two minutes.

Sessional order 8 deleted 29/11/2023

9 Duration of question time

Standing Order 55(2) is suspended and the following to apply:

Question time will last until five oral questions and related supplementary questions have been answered and up to five ministers' statements have been made and where a question is ruled out of order it is, for the purposes of this sessional order, deemed to have been answered.

Sessional order 10 deleted 29/11/2023

11 Content of answers

Standing Order 58(1)(a) is suspended and all answers to questions must be direct, factual, succinct and relevant.

12 Chair ordering member to withdraw — application during oral questions without notice and ministers' statements

Where:

- (1) a member is ordered to withdraw from the House under SO 124 during question time; and
- (2) question time ends before the end of the suspension period —

the member may return to the Chamber after question time but must serve the remainder of their suspension during the next question time, subject to SO 124(2).

Sessional order 13 deleted 29/11/2023

14 Notices of motion

Standing Orders 140(1) and 141 are suspended and the following to apply:

- (1) A member may only move a motion to discuss a subject if he or she has given notice of that motion on a previous sitting day.
- (2) Copies of all verbal notices must be provided to the Clerks at the table before notices are called on by the Speaker.
- (3) Copies of all written notices must be provided to the Clerks at the table before the conclusion of formal business.
- (4) All notices given by ministers must be verbal.
- (5) Verbal notices must be read to the House. They can only be given before the House proceeds to the business of the day as set out in the notice paper.
- (6) All notices, except notices given under paragraph (7) given by members who are not ministers, must be given in writing. Members may give notice by lodging a copy with the Clerks in accordance with paragraph (3).
- (7) A motion by a member expressing no confidence in the Premier and ministers, in the terms set out in s 8A of the *Constitution Act 1975*, may only be given verbally.
- (8) The Clerk must notify the Speaker of a notice of a motion by a member to disallow a statutory rule to which SO 151 applies, and the Speaker will report details to the House at the first convenient opportunity.

Sessional order 15 deleted 29/11/2023

Sessional order 16 deleted 29/11/2023

17 Electronic petitions

- (1) A person (the sponsoring petitioner) may lodge a request to start an electronic petition (e-petition) with the Clerk for publication on the Parliament's website.
- (2) Standing Orders 45 to 52 apply except in relation to the requirement for a petitioner's signature.
- (3) The sponsoring petitioner must provide the following information to the Clerk:
 - (a) the issue (maximum 200 words) and action requested (maximum 120 words);
 - (b) their full name and address; and
 - (c) the name of the member sponsoring the e-petition.

- (4) Before the e-petition is published, the Clerk will review the wording of the e-petition to ensure it conforms with standing orders and confirm that the sponsoring member has agreed to sponsor the e-petition.
- (5) The sponsoring member must nominate a period (the posted period) that the e-petition will be available to sign on the Parliament's website and:
 - (a) the posted period must be a minimum of one week and a maximum of six months from the date of publication;
 - (b) if the Assembly is due to expire under s 28(2) of the *Constitution Act 1975* within six months from the date of publication of an e-petition, the Clerk will determine the maximum posted period;
 - (c) the sponsoring member may request the Clerk to change the posted period before it ends, provided the maximum period is not exceeded.
- (6) A member must not sign an e-petition they have sponsored.
- (7) Once published, an e-petition cannot be altered but the sponsoring member may request the Clerk withdraw it.
- (8) Residents of Victoria may become signatories to an e-petition by electronically providing their name, address and signifying their intention to join the e-petition.
- (9) The Clerk will table the e-petition on the next sitting day after the posted period has ended.
- (10) E-petitions about the same issue and requesting the same action are not allowed simultaneously. However, once an e-petition has been tabled, a new e-petition can be started.

18 Order of government business

So much of SOs 146, 148(1) and 150 are suspended to allow, on days on which government business has precedence, ministers to list government notices of motion and orders of the day at the head of the list on the notice paper in whatever order they wish. Government notices and orders are then dealt with in the order they are listed on the notice paper. After a government notice or order has been disposed of, the Speaker will either call the minister to move the next notice of motion or direct the clerk to read the next order of the day, as appropriate.