



# People of Queensland Parliament

## The Speaker

The Speaker is the Presiding Officer of Queensland Parliament. The Speaker makes sure parliamentary sittings run smoothly and that members follow the Standing Orders (rules of parliament). If a member doesn't follow the rules, the Speaker may ask them to leave the chamber.

The Speaker calls each member when it's their turn to speak and lets them know when their time has expired. As an elected MP, the Speaker may belong to a political party, but must remain impartial and apply the rules equally to all members.



## The Clerk

The Clerk ensures the Parliament runs smoothly and effectively. The Clerk is head of the Parliamentary Service and provides advice to the Speaker and other MPs. The Clerk needs excellent knowledge of parliamentary laws, procedures and Standing Orders, which are the rules of parliament.

The Clerk is also responsible for the recording of all proceedings, and the distribution and secure storage of all parliamentary documents.

**Did you know?** 'Clerk' is pronounced *clahk*, rhyming with *bark*.



## The Premier

After an election, the leader of the political party with a majority of seats in parliament is asked to form government. The party leader then becomes Premier and is sworn in by the Governor.

The Premier is the political leader of the state but also represents the people of their electorate, like any other member of parliament.

The Premier sits to the left of the Speaker, in the third seat from the Speaker's chair.



## Opposition Leader

After an election, the party (or parties) with the second most elected members forms the official Opposition. The head of that party becomes the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition responds to the government's policies and offers alternative policies.

The Opposition Leader is the Chair of the Shadow Cabinet. In a democracy, it is important that the government's actions are scrutinised and that its policies are debated, to make sure they will be beneficial to citizens.





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## Cabinet Ministers

When a new premier takes office, they select up to 18 other MPs to be ministers, forming a Cabinet. Each cabinet minister is allocated one or more areas of responsibility (portfolio), such as education, health, or environment. The cabinet ministers, together with the premier, comprise the Executive Government.

The Cabinet is responsible for putting laws and policies into effect. Each morning in parliament, ministers will make a **Ministerial Statement** on an issue within their portfolio, as a way of reporting to the people of Queensland what their government is doing.



## Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament (MPs) are elected by Queenslanders who vote for a candidate to represent their interests in parliament. Each MP represents a different region of Queensland, called an electorate. State elections are held every four years, in October. MPs can be elected as a member of a political party or as an independent.

Every MP has an office in their electorate that people can visit to raise issues that are important to them.

## The Governor

Queensland's system of government is a constitutional monarchy, which means a monarch—a king or queen—with limited political power, rules alongside a parliament, which represents the people. The governor is appointed by the monarch, on the advice of the premier, usually for a term of five years.

The governor, as a representative of the monarchy, must remain apolitical. The governor grants royal assent to bills passed by the parliament, officially making them laws.

## Sergeant-at-Arms

The Sergeant-at-Arms is in charge of security at Queensland Parliament. In the chamber, the Sergeant-at-Arms assists the Speaker in maintaining order. The Sergeant-at-Arms also manages security procedures and personnel, throughout the parliamentary precinct.

The office of the Sergeant-at-Arms dates back to the 15th century in England. In 1415, King Henry V of England appointed a sergeant-at-arms from his royal bodyguard, to attend the House of Commons and enforce the parliament's privileges.



## Record of Proceedings

Every speech delivered in parliament is recorded. The official transcript of all speeches, debates, and proceedings of Queensland's Legislative Assembly is known as Hansard. Hansard reporters currently use special stenography machines and digital audio recordings to accurately report all speeches and proceedings in parliament. The official Record of Proceedings is published on the Queensland Parliament website.

