

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSE SERVICES



**FIFTEENTH REPORT
OF THE
TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE**

June 15, 2020

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN



June 15, 2020

To the Honourable Members of the Legislative Assembly:

I have the pleasure to present the fifteenth report of the Standing Committee on House Services. The committee is authorized by the Assembly to examine such matters as it deems advisable with respect to the rules, procedures, practices, and powers of the Legislative Assembly, its operations, organization, and the facilities and service provided to the Assembly, its committees, and members.

This report reflects the work of the committee, in consultation with the House leaders and the Clerks-at-the-Table, to identify and develop temporary modifications to the processes, practices, and *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* in order to facilitate the safe resumption of the fourth session of the twenty-eighth legislature in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically for the period June 15 to July 3, 2020.

The catalyst for the recommended modifications is the desire to limit the number of members present during Assembly proceedings in the Chamber to 15 plus the Speaker. This goal, in tandem with other measures designed to facilitate compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing, protects the safety of members and all others participating in and supporting the proceedings.

While there are many recommended changes, I would like to highlight one substantial modified procedure that relates to recorded divisions. The usual practice of calling members' names in the Assembly during a recorded division will be temporarily suspended. In its place, whips may register the votes of members not present in the Chamber on a tally sheet and report their names to the Speaker. Also, for the first time, members will be permitted to vote by proxy during recorded divisions in both Assembly and committee proceedings if they are unable to be present in person.

Additional proposed changes range from the dates and times of Assembly sittings, including specific dates for the consideration of Executive Council estimates and private members' day debates; temporary thresholds for the time spent debating estimates and budget-related bills; and new practices to ensure the safety of members and all those who participate in or support the proceedings in the context of COVID-19.

The proposed modifications detailed in this report will enable the Legislative Assembly to continue its work safely during the pandemic. Government and opposition House leadership have both worked diligently and co-operatively with the Clerks-at-the-Table to produce the recommendations contained in this report.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the staff of the Legislative Assembly Service and, in particular, the Table officers for their diligence and attention to detail in allowing the spring session to resume in these unprecedented times.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the committee,

Hon. Mark Docherty, Chair
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
MLA Regina Coronation Park

Composition of Committee

(as of June 15, 2020)

Hon. Mark Docherty, Chair
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Regina Coronation Park

Ms. Cathy Sproule, Deputy Chair
Saskatoon Nutana

Ms. Carla Beck
Regina Lakeview

Mr. David Forbes
Saskatoon Centre

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Meadow Lake

Mr. Everett Hindley
Swift Current

Ms. Lisa Lambert
Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood

Hon. Paul Merriman
Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland

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Introduction

When the fourth session of the twenty-eighth legislature resumed on March 2, 2020, the Legislative Assembly anticipated its business to focus on concluding the government's legislative agenda, debating the budget, and scrutinizing and finalizing the budgetary estimates before concluding on May 14. Based on the parliamentary calendar as outlined in the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, the budget presentation was planned for March 18.

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted the Assembly's anticipated transaction of business during the spring sitting period. On Thursday, March 12, the premier announced that Saskatchewan had its first presumptive COVID-19 case. The following day, March 13, Saskatchewan's chief medical health officer issued a public health order that restricted the number of people per gathering and encouraged physical distancing. The Speaker subsequently suspended all public access to the Legislative Building and restricted attendance at the upcoming budget day events to Members of the Legislative Assembly, authorized employees, and accredited media.

However, by the following week, it was clear that business could not proceed as planned. The Assembly sat for only three days, and the regular business under routine proceedings and orders of the day was either shortened or dispensed with on each of those days. On the morning of Wednesday, March 18, 2020, the premier cancelled the budget address planned for that afternoon. Instead, the Assembly sat briefly to move the following sessional order:

That when this Assembly adjourns at the end of this sitting day, it shall stand adjourned until recalled by Mr. Speaker upon the request of the government, and when recalled, Mr. Speaker shall give each member, if practicable, clear notice of such date and time; and further,

That when the Assembly reconvenes, the rules of the parliamentary calendar shall apply and the completion day of the session will be set in accordance with the rules.

Following proceedings, the government declared Saskatchewan in a state of emergency.

Framework for the Resumption of Session

Over the course of the next several weeks, the number of new cases of the virus decreased and restrictions imposed by the Saskatchewan Health Authority to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 were gradually relaxed. On May 26, House leadership agreed to a June 15, 2020 resumption of the legislative session on a modified schedule with a July 3 completion date.

The proposed 14-day sitting period provides for a budget address; a subsequent 60 hours' consideration of budgetary estimates in standing committees, with each ministry to receive a minimum of one hour and a maximum of nine hours' scrutiny; three hours' scrutiny of Executive Council estimates in Committee of Finance; and a maximum time of two and a half hours inclusive of Assembly debate and committee consideration on any specified bill subsidiary to the passage of the budgetary estimates. Routine proceedings will be provided for each day. All other Assembly business will occur under government orders each day except for June 19, which is designated for private members' debates. The appropriation bill and any remaining specified bills will be disposed of on July 2, the day prior to completion day, pursuant to the rules.

On June 15, 2020, the Standing Committee on House Services met to consider how the Assembly might best implement this agreement in accordance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders. Through consultation with the Speaker, House leadership, and the Clerks-at-the-Table, the Standing Committee on House Services developed the

appendices of this report to facilitate the proposed Legislative Assembly sittings during the COVID-19 pandemic. These appendices provide measures to protect the safety of members and Legislative Assembly Service personnel during sittings. They also outline the necessary modifications to the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan* regarding the parliamentary calendar which are reflective of the terms of the joint agreement between the government and opposition House leaders.

Considerations for Resumption of Sittings

The following chart outlines the procedures and processes that will be impacted by the Legislative Assembly's safe return to the business of the current session. It notes the corresponding rules, practices, or services that will be affected, and the modifications required to implement the Legislative Assembly's safe resumption of sittings in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The rationale behind each proposed strategy is also described.

Resumption of Sittings During COVID-19 Chart

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
SECTION 1 Days and times of sittings			
Sittings of the Assembly	3(3) Completion day of session	Notwithstanding the rules for the normal completion of the spring period of the parliamentary calendar, July 3, 2020 shall be designated the completion day, being the 14th sitting day after the reconvening of the Assembly on June 15, 2020.	To reflect the agreement between the government and opposition House leaders, the rules for consideration of budget, estimates, and budget bills are superseded by order of the Assembly.
	3(4) Parliamentary calendar to be published	The parliamentary calendar will be updated and published upon the adoption of the modified rules and procedures recommended by the Standing Committee on House Services.	Once adopted by the Assembly, the provisions within the Standing Committee on House Services report shall become an order of the Assembly to modify the normal Assembly sitting pattern, budget debate, procedures for consideration of estimates and budget bills, and to designate an end date for the fourth session.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
	6(1) Sittings: ordinary time of	<p>The ordinary times for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly shall be modified as follows:</p> <p>Monday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Tuesday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.</p>	Weekly sitting hours are extended by adding Friday sittings and changing the ordinary sitting times on Thursdays.
Holidays	<p>6(3) Designated days</p> <p>6(5) Hours of sitting preceding designated holiday</p>	<p>The Assembly shall not meet on Canada Day.</p> <p>Consequently, sitting hours on Tuesday, June 30, 2020 shall be 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. pursuant to rule 6(5).</p>	No change is required to the rules to reflect the agreement of the House leaders.
SECTION 2 Business of the Assembly a) Daily order of business			
Precedence of business	14(3) Daily order of business	<p>The daily order of business set out by rule 14(3)(a) shall apply to each sitting day except for June 19, 2020 when private members' day debates shall have priority in accordance with rule 14(3)(b). The business for private members' day debates shall be designated and ranked in order of priority on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, in accordance with rule 24(1). Notwithstanding the order of rotation on March 18, 2020, the government will have the choice of topic of debate for the 75-minute debate, and the opposition shall have the first choice of business under private members' public bills and orders.</p>	To reflect the agreement between the House leaders in regard to the business of the Assembly, government orders shall take priority except on June 19, 2020.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
b) Budget and disposal of estimates			
Budget documents	Modified practice	<p>The symbolic gesture of sending a copy of the budget to the Finance critic will be suspended.</p> <p>Tabling of estimates will be accomplished by placing the message, estimate books, and budget motion at the central location for distributing papers at the conclusion of the budget speech. Estimates will be considered tabled when the Speaker reads the message of the Lieutenant Governor.</p>	<p>To minimize contact with papers and person-to-person contact.</p> <p>See delivering papers to the Table during a sitting.</p> <p>Members are asked to access the electronic version of documents from the ministry website.</p>
Budget day guests	Modified practice	No guests will be permitted to attend the budget address.	In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker has suspended all visitor access to the Legislative Building.
Budget motion and debate	<p>31(5) Budget debate limited</p> <p>31(7) Closing debate</p> <p>31(8) Question put</p>	<p>The presentation of the budget shall be on Monday June 15, 2020, being sitting day 37.</p> <p>Rule 31 shall apply except that the requirements of rule 31(5), rule 31(7), and rule 31(8) shall be suspended.</p> <p>Furthermore, the debate on the budget motion shall be restricted to the mover and one member of the opposition, and the question on the budget motion and any amendment shall be disposed of before the daily adjournment on day 37.</p>	Details the date of the budget motion and vote, specifies that one opposition member shall participate in the budget debate, and reflects the agreement between House leaders.
Referral of estimates	31(9) Referral of estimates to committees	Upon the adoption of the budget motion, each of the estimates shall be deemed referred to a committee of the Assembly.	No change necessary.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Examination and disposal of Executive Council estimates	31(9) Referral of estimates to committees 118(2) Examination of Executive Council estimates	The estimates of Executive Council shall be referred to the Committee of Finance in accordance with rules 31(9) and 118(2), and shall be taken into consideration on July 2, 2020. The time allocated for consideration of the said estimates shall be a maximum of three hours, at the conclusion of which time every question necessary to conclude examination of the vote shall be put and the same reported to the Assembly.	Details the date and time allocated to consideration of estimates for Executive Council and reflects the agreement between House leaders.
Disposal of remaining estimates	33(1) Passage of remaining business a matter of priority	The rules for disposal of remaining estimates on Thursday July 2, 2020 shall be applied provided the following conditions have been met: (a) The estimates of each government ministry are subject to no less than one hour and to a maximum of nine hours of debate; and (b) The cumulative total time for debate on the Estimates is no less than 60 hours; and further, (c) The estimates for Executive Council shall be considered on this day for a total of three hours.	The rules require that all estimates and bills that have not been reported to the Assembly be reported back, provided they have met the required thresholds. There is no further debate allowed on the day before completion day. The Executive Council estimates are to be considered on this day; therefore changes are necessary.
Consideration and disposal of appropriation bill	32	The procedure for the appropriation bill pursuant to rule 32 shall apply except that the resolutions and bill shall be taken into consideration and disposed of on Thursday, July 2, 2020. If debate is not concluded by 30 minutes before the time of adjournment, the provisions for disposal of specified bills on completion day shall apply to all remaining stages of consideration of the appropriation bill.	Details the procedure for disposal of the appropriation bill and reflects the agreement between House leaders.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
c) Specified bills			
Disposal of specified bills	36 Conditions for the disposal of specified bills	<p>The rules for disposal of specified bills remaining on the day prior to the completion day shall be applied provided the following conditions have been met:</p> <p>(a) Each specified bill introduced during the fall period of sittings or before December 21st during the first session of a new legislature is subject to no less than 20 hours of debate.</p> <p>(b) Each specified bill subsidiary to the passage of the budgetary estimates is subject to no less than two hours and 30 minutes of debate</p>	<p>This provision changes the threshold for budget-related bills from five hours to two and a half hours, which is reflective of the agreement between House leaders.</p>
Royal Assent	Modified practice	<p>The Royal Assent ceremony shall be modified as follows:</p> <p>The premier and provincial secretary will remain at their places.</p> <p>The Lieutenant Governor and Aide de Camp shall properly physically distance themselves when entering the Chamber. Members situated in front rows will step back while the Lieutenant Governor enters and departs the Chamber.</p> <p>The Clerk and Speaker will present themselves at either end of the Table, and they will maintain appropriate physical distances when presenting the titles of the bills to the Lieutenant Governor.</p> <p>The Sergeant-at-Arms will attend to the mace at the end of the Table and remain in place until the departure of the Lieutenant Governor, at which point the mace will be laid on the Table.</p>	<p>The process of physical distancing can be maintained and risk minimized through these provisions.</p> <p>To maintain physical distancing requirements and minimize person-to-person contact, the Lieutenant Governor has advised the Clerk that he will assist by complying with whatever modifications are necessary for the assent of bills.</p>

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
SECTION 3 Chamber proceedings a) General			
Access to Chamber galleries	Modified practice	The attendance of guests in the Chamber shall remain suspended until public access to the Legislative Building is restored.	In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker has suspended all visitor access to the Legislative Building.
	14(2) Routine business	“Introduction of guests” shall not be called by the Speaker during the daily routine.	
Relocation of press gallery to Speaker’s gallery	Rule 48(1) <i>[jurisdiction of gallery as part of Chamber precinct]</i>	The press gallery shall be closed to members of the media. Members of the press gallery association and accredited media registered with the Sergeant-at-Arms may observe proceedings from the Speaker’s gallery provided the appropriate physical distancing is observed.	To protect the health and safety of Legislative Assembly Service personnel working in the press gallery and to facilitate physical distancing, the Speaker may limit access to the press gallery pursuant to rule 48, which specifies that the precinct of the Chamber includes the press gallery and that the Speaker may order the withdrawal of strangers. A stranger is anyone who is not a member or officer of the Assembly.
Speaker’s parade	Modified practice	The practice of the daily parade shall be suspended. Clerks will be seated at the Table when the Speaker comes in through the back door, and the Sergeant-at-Arms will be standing before the Table with the mace on his shoulder. The Sergeant-at-Arms will lay the mace on the Table, and the daily proceedings will commence with the Speaker calling the Assembly to order and reciting the prayer.	To mitigate person-to-person contact and facilitate physical distancing.
Pages	Disrupted service	There will be no Page service available.	To facilitate physical distancing, minimize person-to-person contact, and reduce the number of people handling paper, no Pages will be employed. Consequently there will be no messenger, document delivery, or refreshment service available.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Refreshments	47(2)(c) Rules for decorum in the Assembly	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.	Due to the pandemic, the Legislative Assembly Service is not able to supply refreshments of any kind. Rule 47(2)(c) provides that beverages must be in a discreet container approved by the Speaker.
Publication of proceedings	<i>Hansard</i> workflow disruption	The number of editors producing the <i>Hansard</i> document will be limited, so typical <i>Hansard</i> publication time will be delayed.	Legislative Assembly Service personnel are required to follow the physical distancing standards outlined in the Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders.
b) Distribution and delivery of documents			
Delivering papers to the Table during a sitting	Rules regarding the delivery of papers to the Table: 14.1(1); 16(1); 21(2); 21(6); 22(2); 22(4); 24(5); 25(4); 26(2); 52; 60(1); 60(2); 63(5); 136(5) Altered practice and service	During proceedings, papers which are required to be deposited at the Table shall be signed by the member before deposit at a central location. A Table officer will retrieve the paper, convey it to the Speaker for endorsement when necessary, and ensure its inclusion in the sessional record. Such papers include notice papers, motions, amendments, petitions, written questions, notices of motions for return, committee reports, tally sheets for recorded divisions, and other documents normally provided to the Table. Two central locations will be provided: one on the opposition side of the committee table and one on the government side.	To facilitate physical distancing, minimize person to person contact, and reduce the number of people handling paper, no Pages will be employed. Members will deposit their own papers to a central location for retrieval by a Table officer. Signed paper forms are still required as a record of business conducted in the Assembly.
Distribution of documents to members	79(2); 81	There shall be no physical distribution of documents to members with the exception of a newly introduced bill, which will be available upon request from the Office of the Clerk.	To minimize person to person contact and reduce the number of people handling paper.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
c) Members' participation in Chamber proceedings			
Attendance	2 Attendance required	Rule 2 shall not be applicable to any member unable to attend a sitting for reasons of the Legislative Assembly's compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders or the temporary modification to the rules for members' participation in proceedings.	Provides permission for members to be absent from a sitting of the Assembly due to the Legislative Assembly's compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders. Adoption of this order supersedes the need for a Board of Internal Economy directive to substantiate the rule change.
Quorum	11(1) Quorum	Notwithstanding rule 11(1), quorum shall be the number of members present as specified by <i>The Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan Act, 2007</i> .	The number of members required to constitute quorum is removed from the rule and replaced with a general statement that quorum shall be the number required by legislation.
Number of members to participate in Chamber proceedings	Modified practice and procedure	The maximum number of members in the Chamber at any given time shall be 16, inclusive of the Speaker. Members present will include no more than 10 government members and no more than 5 opposition members at any given time. Members shall be allowed to rotate in and out of the Chamber in accordance with the maximum number of members allowed. Members are required to maintain physical distancing and avoid person-to-person contact when entering and leaving the Chamber.	This maximum facilitates compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing and minimizes person-to-person contact. Allows critics and ministers to alternate to address the business at hand and allows all members to participate in an order of business under consideration.
Seating arrangements	Modified practice	Members will sit in every second desk as designated by the Speaker.	Members seated in every second desk facilitates the physical distancing requirements outlined in the Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Seating arrangements (continued)	49 Members speaking	The enforcement of rule 49 shall be suspended so that a member may speak and vote from any member's desk in the Chamber.	Designated seating positions (i.e., the desks that may be occupied) will assist Hansard when switching microphones for audio and cameras for video broadcast and will allow the Speaker and Legislative Assembly Service personnel to quickly identify members in various seats. This provision facilitates compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing to ensure a safe environment for members.
Desk disinfection procedure	New procedure	To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 through surface contact, members entering the Chamber will be required to sanitize their seat and desk prior to taking their place.	This provision minimizes person-to-person contact and the need for a cleaning protocol to ensure desks are disinfected before a new person is seated in that place. Disinfectants will be provided for members entering the Chamber so they may sanitize their seat and desk prior to taking their place.
Speaker's authority		The Speaker shall have the authority to enforce compliance with the restriction on the number of members present in the Chamber and their seating arrangements.	This provision ensures compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders to ensure a safe workplace for members and Legislative Assembly Service personnel.
d) Recorded divisions			
Voting	69 Divisions	When a recorded division is demanded on a question, the regular rules for a recorded division shall apply except the yeas and nays shall be tallied by the respective caucus whips (or designate) and reported to the Speaker, and those names shall be entered in the <i>Votes and Proceedings</i> accordingly.	There might be more members present in the building than able to enter the Chamber, given the limitations on the maximum number of participants permitted at one time. This provision allows every member present to vote while dispensing with the need for a procedure allowing members to rotate in and out of the Chamber. Additionally, members present in the Chamber likely will not be voting from their own desks, which has the potential for confusion during a row call.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Voting (continued)	<p>71(1) Length of division bells in the Assembly</p> <p>71(2) Length of division bells in a committee of the whole</p>	<p>Each member voting is required to authenticate his or her vote on the tally sheet by signature. The tally sheet shall be retained as part of the sessional record as bona fide evidence of the member's vote.</p> <p>The following voting process will be observed:</p> <p>When a division is called, the Clerk will issue tally sheets to the whips for the vote. Tally sheets will be placed at a central location on the floor of the Assembly. The respective whips shall retrieve their tally sheet from the central location.</p> <p>The bells will ring for the time limit prescribed by rule 71. During this time, the whips will collect the signatures of members present in the building and wishing to record their vote.</p> <p>After the bells have been extinguished, the Speaker will call on the government whip and then the opposition whip (or their designates) for the tallies of yeas and nays. After reporting their tallies to the Speaker, the whips shall deposit the tally sheet at the designated document deposit location.</p> <p>The tally sheets shall be considered a sessional paper and the names of members voting yea and nay shall be entered into the <i>Votes and Proceedings</i> for that sitting day, and subsequently into the <i>Journals</i> of the Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>A separate tally sheet shall be provided for each vote.</p>	<p>Requiring a member's signature on the tally sheet establishes the presence of the member, which ordinarily is determined by the call of the member to the Chamber during the 30- or 10-minute bell.</p> <p>For additional context in regard to the retrieval of tally sheets, see delivering papers to the Table during a sitting.</p>

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Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly	Temporary rule	<p>Proxy voting shall be available to any member physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Assembly due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place.</p> <p>This temporary order shall apply to recorded divisions required in the Legislative Assembly or any committee of the whole Assembly.</p> <p>A member shall be free to choose any other member who is eligible to vote in divisions to act as a designated proxy.</p> <p>A member must register a signed declaration of proxy with the Speaker at least 30 minutes before the daily commencement of proceedings. The declaration of proxy shall include the name of the designated proxy and the date or dates the designated proxy shall be authorized to vote on the member's behalf. The signed declaration may be submitted to the Speaker by email.</p> <p>Any declaration received by the Speaker before June 15, 2020 shall be considered valid immediately upon the adoption of this report by the Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>A designated proxy shall act in strict accordance with the instruction given by the member.</p> <p>A member may change their designated proxy or withdraw their declaration of proxy by submission to the Speaker.</p>	

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly <i>(continued)</i>		<p>A member's registered declaration of proxy shall be suspended when the member is present and able to vote in person.</p> <p>The designated proxy shall sign the tally sheet under the name of the absent member with notation of their designation as proxy.</p> <p>The record of a proxy vote shall be treated as part of the sessional record.</p> <p>Declarations submitted to the Speaker shall be provided to the Clerk and retained as part of the sessional record.</p>	
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in standing committees	Temporary rule	<p>Notwithstanding rule 130(1), any member not present due to the COVID-19 public health emergency or any related measures shall be allowed to cast a recorded vote by proxy.</p> <p>The procedures for vote by proxy in the Legislative Assembly shall apply except:</p> <p>(a) A member of a standing committee must register a signed declaration of proxy with the Speaker at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the daily proceedings of the Legislative Assembly;</p> <p>(b) The committee clerk shall advise the committee Chair of any members designated by proxy to vote;</p> <p>(c) The respective vote of each member present and any vote by designated proxy shall be recorded in the committee minutes.</p>	

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
SECTION 5 Committee of Finance and Committee of the Whole on Bills			
Seating of Chair in Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills	Modified practice	The Chair of Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills shall sit at the Table in the chair normally occupied by the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel. The Clerk shall sit in the Clerk Assistant's seat.	Spacing at the Table conforms to physical distancing requirements and eliminates the need for sanitization of a desk and seat during the transition between Assembly and proceedings of committees of the whole.
Participation of officials in Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills	Modified practice	Executive Council officials shall sit in desks one desk removed from the premier during the consideration of premier's estimates or the appropriation bill in Committee of Finance. Similarly, ministerial officials shall be one desk removed from the minister during consideration of bills in Committee of the Whole on Bills.	Disinfecting desks, minimization of person-to-person contact, and physical distancing all need to be taken into account with additional people entering and exiting the Chamber.
SECTION 6 Standing committees a) Location			
Chamber meetings	Modified practice	<p>All committee members may participate.</p> <p>The number of witnesses will be limited in order to comply with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing.</p> <p>A stand-up mike shall be in place for witness testimony.</p>	<p>There is adequate space in the Chamber to allow all members to participate safely while practising physical distancing.</p> <p>A stand-up mike allows witnesses to testify without touching work surfaces, chairs, or spaces that others will soon occupy, so disinfection between speakers is not required.</p>
Room 8 meetings	131(1) Quorum	Physical distancing can be maintained at the committee table in Room 8 with quorum only. Quorum for standing committees is 4 except for Public Accounts and House Services which is 5 (a majority).	Room 8 is a narrow space and ensuring the physical distancing of all committee members at the committee table is not attainable.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Room 8 meetings	Witness participation in Room 8	<p>Seating arrangements of witnesses will be limited to comply with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing.</p> <p>The minister and deputy minister shall sit at opposite ends of the witness table. One or more additional people (e.g., witnesses, media, caucus, or ministerial staff) could physically distance in seats behind them.</p> <p>A stand-up mike can be used for witness testimony.</p>	<p>A quorum of members plus the designated spaces for witnesses allows space for safe physical distancing in Room 8.</p> <p>A stand-up mike allows witnesses to testify without touching work surfaces, chairs, or spaces that others will soon occupy so disinfection between speakers is not required.</p>
b) General			
Public access	128(1) Admission to meetings	<p>Notwithstanding rule 128(1), all committee proceedings shall be closed to the public.</p> <p>The media shall not be allowed unrestricted access to committee meetings due to tight confines in committee room 8 and disinfecting requirements in the Speaker's gallery.</p>	In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Speaker has suspended all visitor access to the Legislative Building.
Substitutions	122(5) Temporary substitutions	Notwithstanding the requirement of rule 122(5) for the written notice of a temporary substitution of membership, a signed substitution notice may be filed by email with the Chair of the committee.	Electronic filing will minimize person-to-person contact and reduce the number of people handling paper.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice	Rationale
Witnesses	Modified practice	<p>Procedure for ministers to confer with officials:</p> <p>Witnesses may be allowed to rotate in and out of the committee room. They may wait in the hallway while maintaining their required physical distances from one another until they are required to provide testimony at the stand-up mike.</p> <p>Minister may need to exit the committee room to consult privately with officials.</p>	<p>Due to physical distancing requirements, ministers must be able to confer safely with officials.</p> <p>This provision ensures physical distancing while allowing more witnesses to participate than can be accommodated in the committee room. The committee room door will remain open to minimize contact with the doorknob. This may create noise and disruption to committee proceedings; however, sessional ushers will be monitoring the hallways to remind individuals to minimize the noise levels outside the committee room.</p> <p>A display monitor will be available in the hallway for officials to observe the committee proceedings while seating in the hallway outside the committee room.</p> <p>During committee proceedings in Room 8, Room 4 will be available as a private area in which the minister and officials may confer. During committee proceedings in the Chamber, the minister and officials may confer in the vestibule at the front of the Chamber.</p>
Recesses during and between items of business		<p>Adequate recesses must be scheduled during the transition between items of committee business when separate ministries and their officials are to attend.</p> <p>Similarly, brief recesses may be necessary when Legislative Assembly Service personnel change shifts.</p>	<p>This will allow for the adequate disinfection of tables and seats prior to new participants or staff members taking their place.</p>
Refreshments	47(2)(c)	<p>All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.</p>	<p>Due to the pandemic, the Legislative Assembly Service is not able to supply refreshments of any kind.</p>

Recommendation

The committee recommends:

That the Legislative Assembly implement the modifications to its rules, procedures, and practices as presented in appendix 1 of this report, together with the associated forms as presented in appendices 2 through 8; and

That these implementations come into effect on Monday June 15, 2020 and expire at the Assembly's daily adjournment time on Friday, July 3, 2020.

Appendix 1 — Modifications to Rules, Procedures, and Practices

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
SECTION 1 Days and times of sittings		
Sittings of the Assembly	3(3) Completion day of session	Notwithstanding the rules for the normal completion of the spring period of the parliamentary calendar, July 3, 2020 shall be designated the completion day, being the 14th sitting day after the reconvening of the Assembly on June 15, 2020.
	3(4) Parliamentary calendar to be published	The parliamentary calendar will be updated and published upon the adoption of the modified rules and procedures recommended by the Standing Committee on House Services.
	6(1) Sittings: ordinary time of	<p>The ordinary times for the daily meeting and adjournment of the sittings of the Assembly shall be modified as follows:</p> <p>Monday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Tuesday: 1:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. with a recess between 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.</p> <p>Wednesday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday: 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.</p> <p>Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.</p>
Holidays	<p>6(3) Designated days</p> <p>6(5) Hours of sitting preceding designated holiday</p>	<p>The Assembly shall not meet on Canada Day.</p> <p>Consequently, sitting hours on Tuesday, June 30, 2020 shall be 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. pursuant to rule 6(5).</p>

Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
SECTION 2 Business of the Assembly		
a) Daily order of business		
Precedence of business	14(3) Daily order of business	The daily order of business set out by rule 14(3)(a) shall apply to each sitting day except for June 19, 2020 when private members' day debates shall have priority in accordance with rule 14(3)(b). The business for private members' day debates shall be designated and ranked in order of priority on Tuesday, June 19, 2020, in accordance with rule 24(1). Notwithstanding the order of rotation on March 18, 2020, the government will have the choice of topic of debate for the 75-minute debate, and the opposition shall have the first choice of business under private members' public bills and orders.
b) Budget and disposal of estimates		
Budget documents	Modified practice	The symbolic gesture of sending a copy of the budget to the Finance critic will be suspended. Tabling of estimates will be accomplished by placing the message, estimate books, and budget motion at the central location for distributing papers at the conclusion of the budget speech. Estimates will be considered tabled when the Speaker reads the message of the Lieutenant Governor.
Budget day guests	Modified practice	No guests will be permitted to attend the budget address.
Budget motion and debate	31(5) Budget debate limited 31(7) Closing debate 31(8) Question put	The presentation of the budget shall be on Monday June 15, 2020, being sitting day 37. Rule 31 shall apply except that the requirements of rule 31(5), rule 31(7), and rule 31(8) shall be suspended. Furthermore, the debate on the budget motion shall be restricted to the mover and one member of the opposition, and the question on the budget motion and any amendment shall be disposed of before the daily adjournment on day 37.
Referral of estimates	31(9) Referral of estimates to committees	Upon the adoption of the budget motion, each of the estimates shall be deemed referred to a committee of the Assembly.
Examination and disposal of Executive Council estimates	31(9) Referral of estimates to committees	The estimates of Executive Council shall be referred to the Committee of Finance in accordance with rules 31(9) and 118(2), and shall be taken into consideration on July 2, 2020.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Examination and disposal of Executive Council estimates (continued)	118(2) Examination of Executive Council estimates	The time allocated for consideration of the said estimates shall be a maximum of three hours, at the conclusion of which time every question necessary to conclude examination of the vote shall be put and the same reported to the Assembly.
Disposal of remaining estimates	33(1) Passage of remaining business a matter of priority	<p>The rules for disposal of remaining estimates on Thursday July 2, 2020 shall be applied provided the following conditions have been met:</p> <p>(a) The estimates of each government ministry are subject to no less than one hour and to a maximum of nine hours of debate; and</p> <p>(b) The cumulative total time for debate on the Estimates is no less than 60 hours; and further,</p> <p>(c) The estimates for Executive Council shall be considered on this day for a total of three hours.</p>
Consideration and disposal of appropriation bill	32	The procedure for the appropriation bill pursuant to rule 32 shall apply except that the resolutions and bill shall be taken into consideration and disposed of on Thursday, July 2, 2020. If debate is not concluded by 30 minutes before the time of adjournment, the provisions for disposal of specified bills on completion day shall apply to all remaining stages of consideration of the appropriation bill.
c) Specified bills		
Disposal of specified bills	36 Conditions for the disposal of specified bills	<p>The rules for disposal of specified bills remaining on the day prior to the completion day shall be applied provided the following conditions have been met:</p> <p>(a) Each specified bill introduced during the fall period of sittings or before December 21st during the first session of a new legislature is subject to no less than 20 hours of debate.</p> <p>(b) Each specified bill subsidiary to the passage of the budgetary estimates is subject to no less than two hours and 30 minutes of debate</p>
Royal Assent	Modified practice	<p>The Royal Assent ceremony shall be modified as follows:</p> <p>The premier and provincial secretary will remain at their places.</p> <p>The Lieutenant Governor and Aide de Camp shall properly physically distance themselves when entering the Chamber. Members situated in front rows will step back while the Lieutenant Governor enters and departs the Chamber.</p>

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Royal Assent (continued)		<p>The Clerk and Speaker will present themselves at either end of the Table, and they will maintain appropriate physical distances when presenting the titles of the bills to the Lieutenant Governor.</p> <p>The Sergeant-at-Arms will attend to the mace at the end of the Table and remain in place until the departure of the Lieutenant Governor, at which point the mace will be laid on the Table.</p>
SECTION 3 Chamber proceedings a) General		
Access to Chamber galleries	Modified practice 14(2) Routine business	<p>The attendance of guests in the Chamber shall remain suspended until public access to the Legislative Building is restored.</p> <p>“Introduction of guests” shall not be called by the Speaker during the daily routine.</p>
Relocation of press gallery to Speaker’s gallery	Rule 48(1) [jurisdiction of gallery as part of Chamber precinct]	The press gallery shall be closed to members of the media. Members of the press gallery association and accredited media registered with the Sergeant-at-Arms may observe proceedings from the Speaker’s gallery provided the appropriate physical distancing is observed.
Speaker’s parade	Modified practice	The practice of the daily parade shall be suspended. Clerks will be seated at the Table when the Speaker comes in through the back door, and the Sergeant-at-Arms will be standing before the Table with the mace on his shoulder. The Sergeant-at-Arms will lay the mace on the Table, and the daily proceedings will commence with the Speaker calling the Assembly to order and reciting the prayer.
Pages	Disrupted service	There will be no Page service available.
Refreshments	47(2)(c) Rules for decorum in the Assembly	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.
Publication of proceedings	Hansard workflow disruption	The number of editors producing the <i>Hansard</i> document will be limited, so typical <i>Hansard</i> publication time will be delayed.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
b) Distribution and delivery of documents		
Delivering papers to the Table during a sitting	14.1(1); 16(1); 21(2); 21(6); 22(2); 22(4); 24(5); 25(4); 26(2); 52; 60(1); 60(2); 63(5); 136(5) Altered practice and service	During proceedings, papers which are required to be deposited at the Table shall be signed by the member before deposit at a central location. A Table officer will retrieve the paper, convey it to the Speaker for endorsement when necessary, and ensure its inclusion in the sessional record. Such papers include notice papers, motions, amendments, petitions, written questions, notices of motions for return, committee reports, tally sheets for recorded divisions, and other documents normally provided to the Table. Two central locations will be provided: one on the opposition side of the committee table and one on the government side (See Appendix 6 for layout of Chamber).
Distribution of documents to members	79(2); 81	There shall be no physical distribution of documents to members with the exception of a newly introduced bill, which will be available upon request from the Office of the Clerk.
c) Members' participation in Chamber proceedings		
Attendance	2 Attendance required	Rule 2 shall not be applicable to any member unable to attend a sitting for reasons of the Legislative Assembly's compliance with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders or the temporary modification to the rules for members' participation in proceedings.
Quorum	11(1) Quorum	Notwithstanding rule 11(1), quorum shall be the number of members present as specified by <i>The Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan Act, 2007</i> .
Number of members to participate in Chamber proceedings	Modified practice and procedure	The maximum number of members in the Chamber at any given time shall be 16, inclusive of the Speaker. Members present will include no more than 10 government members and no more than 5 opposition members at any given time. Members shall be allowed to rotate in and out of the Chamber in accordance with the maximum number of members allowed. Members are required to maintain physical distancing and avoid person-to-person contact when entering and leaving the Chamber.

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Seating arrangements	Modified practice	Members will sit in every second desk as designated by the Speaker (See Appendix 6 for seating plan).
	49 Members speaking	The enforcement of rule 49 shall be suspended so that a member may speak and vote from any member's desk in the Chamber.
Desk disinfection procedure	New procedure	To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 through surface contact, members entering the Chamber will be required to sanitize their seat and desk prior to taking their place.
Speaker's authority		The Speaker shall have the authority to enforce compliance with the restriction on the number of members present in the Chamber and their seating arrangements.
d) Recorded divisions		
Voting in recorded divisions	69 Divisions	<p>When a recorded division is demanded on a question, the regular rules for a recorded division shall apply except the yeas and nays shall be tallied by the respective caucus whips (or designate) and reported to the Speaker, and those names shall be entered in the <i>Votes and Proceedings</i> accordingly.</p> <p>Each member voting is required to authenticate his or her vote on the tally sheet by signature. The tally sheet shall be retained as part of the sessional record as bona fide evidence of the member's vote (See Appendix 4 and Appendix 5 for tally sheets).</p> <p>The following voting process will be observed:</p> <p>When a division is called, the Clerk will issue tally sheets to the whips for the vote. Tally sheets will be placed at a central location on the floor of the Assembly. The respective whips shall retrieve their tally sheet from the central location.</p>
	71(1) Length of division bells in the Assembly	The bells will ring for the time limit prescribed by rule 71. During this time, the whips will collect the signatures of members present in the building and wishing to record their vote.
	71(2) Length of division bells in a committee of the whole	<p>After the bells have been extinguished, the Speaker will call on the government whip and then the opposition whip (or their designates) for the tallies of yeas and nays. After reporting their tallies to the Speaker, the whips shall deposit the tally sheet at the designated document deposit location.</p> <p>The tally sheets shall be considered a sessional paper and the names of members voting yea and nay shall be entered into the <i>Votes and Proceedings</i> for that sitting day, and subsequently into the <i>Journals</i> of the Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>A separate tally sheet shall be provided for each vote.</p>

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in the Legislative Assembly	Temporary rule	<p>Proxy voting shall be available to any member physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Assembly due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place.</p> <p>This temporary order shall apply to recorded divisions required in the Legislative Assembly or any committee of the whole Assembly.</p> <p>A member shall be free to choose any other member who is eligible to vote in divisions to act as a designated proxy.</p> <p>A member must register a signed declaration of proxy with the Speaker at least 30 minutes before the daily commencement of proceedings. The declaration of proxy shall include the name of the designated proxy and the date or dates the designated proxy shall be authorized to vote on the member's behalf (See Appendix 2 for designated proxy form for the Legislative Assembly).</p> <p>The signed declaration may be submitted to the Speaker by email.</p> <p>Any declaration received by the Speaker before June 15, 2020 shall be considered valid immediately upon the adoption of this report by the Legislative Assembly.</p> <p>A designated proxy shall act in strict accordance with the instruction given by the member.</p> <p>A member may change their designated proxy or withdraw their declaration of proxy by submission to the Speaker.</p> <p>A member's registered declaration of proxy shall be suspended when the member is present and able to vote in person.</p> <p>The designated proxy shall sign the tally sheet under the name of the absent member with notation of their designation as proxy.</p> <p>The record of a proxy vote shall be treated as part of the sessional record.</p> <p>Declarations submitted to the Speaker shall be provided to the Clerk and retained as part of the sessional record.</p>

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Proxy vote authorized for recorded divisions in standing committees	Temporary rule	<p>Notwithstanding rule 130(1), any member not present due to the COVID-19 public health emergency or any related measures shall be allowed to cast a recorded vote by proxy (See Appendix 3 for designated proxy form for standing committees).</p> <p>The procedures for vote by proxy in the Legislative Assembly shall apply except:</p> <p>(a) A member of a standing committee must register a signed declaration of proxy with the Speaker at least 30 minutes before the commencement of the daily proceedings of the Legislative Assembly;</p> <p>(b) The committee clerk shall advise the committee Chair of any members designated by proxy to vote;</p> <p>(c) The respective vote of each member present and any vote by designated proxy shall be recorded in the committee minutes.</p>
SECTION 5 Committee of Finance and Committee of the Whole on Bills		
Seating of Chair in Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills	Modified practice	The Chair of Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills shall sit at the Table in the chair normally occupied by the Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel. The Clerk shall sit in the Clerk Assistant's seat.
Participation of officials in Committee of Finance or Committee of the Whole on Bills	Modified practice	Executive Council officials shall sit in desks one desk removed from the premier during the consideration of premier's estimates or the appropriation bill in Committee of Finance. Similarly, ministerial officials shall be one desk removed from the minister during consideration of bills in Committee of the Whole on Bills.
SECTION 6 Standing committees a) Location		
Standing committee meetings in the Chamber	Modified practice	<p>All committee members may participate (See Appendix 7 for the seating plan for committee proceedings in the Chamber).</p> <p>The number of witnesses will be limited in order to comply with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing.</p> <p>A stand-up mike shall be in place for witness testimony.</p>

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Affected procedure and process	Affected rule, practice or service	Modifications to rule or practice
Standing committee meetings in Room 8	131(1) Quorum	Physical distancing can be maintained at the committee table in Room 8 with quorum only. Quorum for standing committees is 4 except for Public Accounts and House Services which is 5 (a majority) (See Appendix 7 for the seating plan for committee proceedings in Room 8).
	Witness participation in Room 8	Seating arrangements of witnesses will be limited to comply with Saskatchewan Health Authority public health orders for physical distancing. The minister and deputy minister shall sit at opposite ends of the witness table. One or more additional people (e.g., witnesses, media, caucus, or ministerial staff) could physically distance in seats behind them. A stand-up mike can be used for witness testimony.
b) General		
Public access	128(1) Admission to meetings	Notwithstanding rule 128(1), all committee proceedings shall be closed to the public. The media shall not be allowed unrestricted access to committee meetings due to tight confines in committee room 8 and disinfecting requirements in the Speaker's gallery.
Substitutions	122(5) Temporary substitutions	Notwithstanding the requirement of rule 122(5) for the written notice of a temporary substitution of membership, a signed substitution notice may be filed by email with the Chair of the committee.
Witnesses	Modified practice	Procedure for ministers to confer with officials: Witnesses may be allowed to rotate in and out of the committee room. They may wait in the hallway while maintaining their required physical distances from one another until they are required to provide testimony at the stand-up mike. The minister may need to exit the committee room to consult privately with officials.
Recesses during and between items of business		Adequate recesses must be scheduled during the transition between items of committee business when separate ministries and their officials are to attend. Similarly, brief recesses may be necessary when Legislative Assembly Service personnel change shifts.
Refreshments	47(2)(c)	All participants must bring their own beverages in a plain container approved by the Speaker.

Appendix 2 — Designated Proxy Form (Legislative Assembly)

Proxy Form



Mr. Speaker,

If I am physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Assembly due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place, I authorize the member designated by this form to be my proxy for such purposes.

I hereby designate the following member to cast my vote by proxy

Proxy member's name

☐

On

(Date(s))

☐

For the period

(Dates)

Member's name

Member's signature

Date

Appendix 3 — Designated Proxy Form (Standing Committees)

Standing Committee Proxy Form



Mr. Speaker,

If I am physically unable to vote in a recorded division in the Standing Committee on _____ due to the COVID-19 public health emergency and the related measures that are in place, I authorize the member designated by this form to be my proxy for such purposes.

I hereby designate the following member to cast my vote by proxy

Proxy member's name

☐

On

(Date(s))

☐

For the period

(Dates)

Member's name

Member's signature

Date

Appendix 4 — Tally Sheet (Government)

RECORDED DIVISION – GOVERNMENT MEMBERS

Question _____ Date _____ Clerk Initials _____

YEA VOTE (Signature)	NAME	NAY VOTE (Signature)	
	Moe		
	Beaudry-Mellor		
	Bonk		
	Bradshaw		
	Brkich		
	Buckingham		
	Carr		
	Cheveldayoff		
	Cox		
	D'Autremont		
	Dennis		
	Doke		
	Duncan		
	Eyre		
	Fiaz		
	Francis		
	Goudy		
	Hargrave		
	Harpauer		
	Harrison		
	Hart		
	Heppner		
	Hindley		
	Kaeding		
	Kirsch		
	Lambert		
	Lawrence		
	Makowsky		
	Marit		
	McMorris		
	Merriman		
	Michelson		
	Morgan		
	Nerlien		
	Olauson		
	Ottenbreit		
	Reiter		
	Ross		
	Steele		
	Stewart		
	Tell		
	Weekes		
	Wilson		
	Wyant		
	Young		
YEAS TOTAL		NAYS TOTAL	

Proxy to be indicated by placing (P) after signature of designated member.

Print name _____

Whip / Designate signature _____

Appendix 5 — Tally Sheet (Opposition)

RECORDED DIVISION – OPPOSITION MEMBERS

Question _____ Date _____ Clerk Initials _____

YEA VOTE (Signature)		NAME	NAY VOTE (Signature)	
		Meili		
		Beck		
		Belanger		
		Chartier		
		Forbes		
		McCall		
		Mowat		
		Pedersen		
		Rancourt		
		Sarauer		
		Sproule		
		Vermette		
		Wotherspoon		
YEAS TOTAL			NAYS TOTAL	

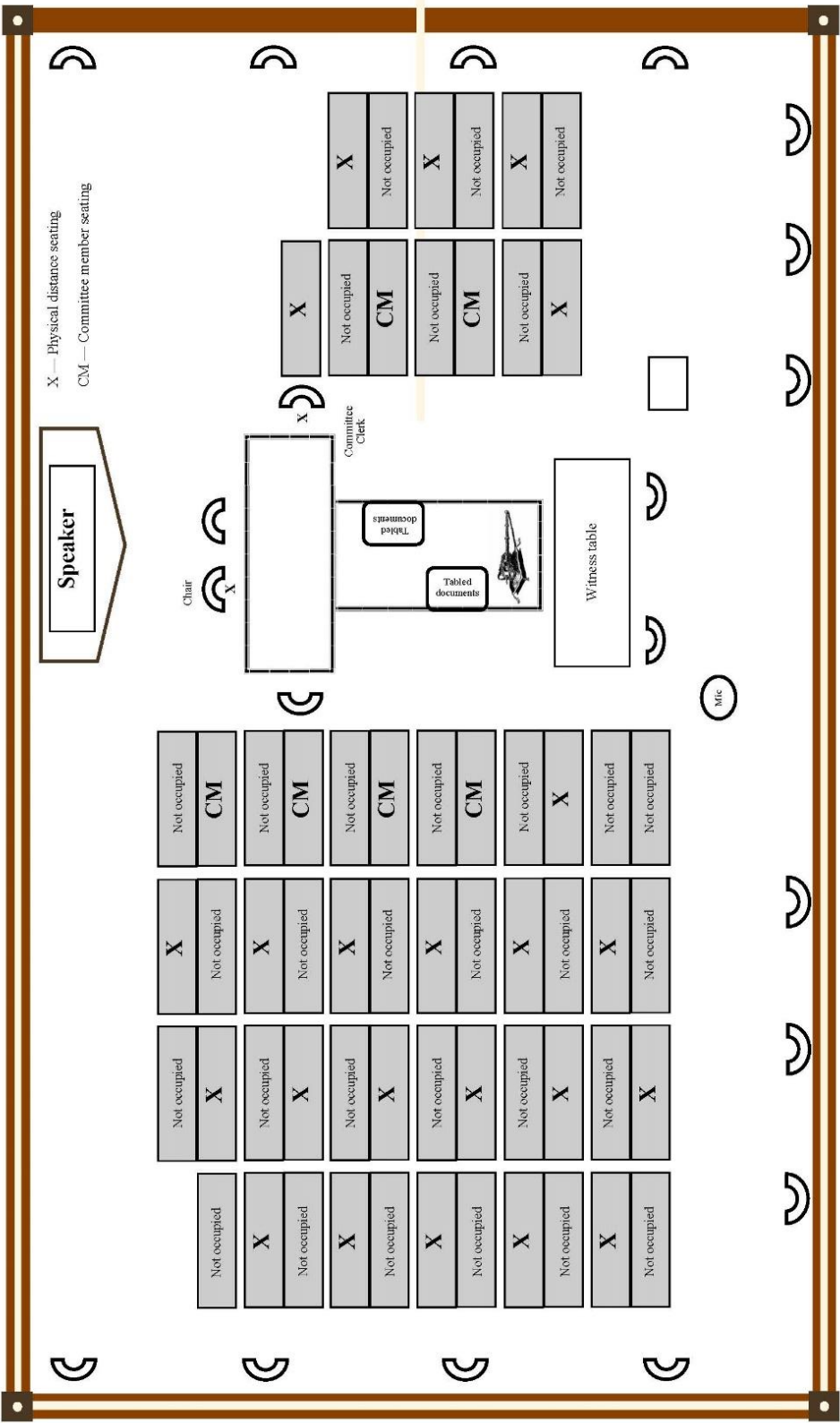
Proxy to be indicated by placing (P) after signature of designated member.

Print name

Whip / Designate signature



Appendix 7 — Seating Plan for Committee Proceedings (Chamber)



Appendix 8 — Seating Plan for Committee Proceedings (Room 8)

