

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA



Fact Sheet No. 10 ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Routine Proceedings is the most familiar aspect of the daily sitting of the Manitoba Legislature.

Following the daily prayer, the Speaker calls the items of Routine Proceedings. This segment lasts about 45 minutes and covers eight items listed in the Order Paper.

The eight items are as follows:

1. INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Where prior notice has been given, an MLA may move that a Bill be introduced and read a first time. The motion for introduction and First Reading is neither debatable nor amendable.

Please refer to Fact Sheet #4: *How Laws are Made*, for further details.

2. PETITIONS

Petitions are requests for the Legislative Assembly to consider certain issues or to consider taking action in certain areas. Any person may petition the Assembly on any matter with the exception of matters concerning the spending of public funds. An MLA however, may petition the House in this regard.

An outline as to the Process for Presenting a General Petition to the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba is available from the Clerk Assistant/Journals Clerk (204) 945-6331 or may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly Internet site at:

www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/house_biz/guidelines.html

If in the opinion of the Speaker, a petition conforms with all House practices, privileges and Rules, the MLA may present the Petition from his or her place in the House by reading the full text of the petition and the names of the first three Petitioners.

When the MLA reads the Petition it is deemed to be received by the House.

3. COMMITTEE REPORTS

When this item is called, the Chairperson or a Member of a Committee of the Assembly, may state that he or she "has the honour to present the (first or subsequent) report of the Committee". The Clerk unless instructed otherwise, reads the report. The MLA presenting the report then moves that the report be received. This motion is not debatable. The Committee report consists of a summary of Committee decisions and proceedings regarding the examination of either legislation or annual reports of Crown Corporations.

4. TABLING OF REPORTS

At this stage, a Minister may table an Annual Report. (These are reports of Government agencies and departments, which are required to be tabled by statute, by Rules of the House, or by Order of the House.) Copies of Annual Reports are provided to the critics and opposition party research offices. Reports can also be tabled intersessionally by filing with the Clerk's Office.

5. MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

A Minister may make an announcement or statement of government policy under this heading. In addition, a spokesperson for each Recognized Opposition Party may comment briefly on the Minister's announcement or statement. The reply cannot exceed the time used by the Minister making the statement.

Also at this stage, responses to Written Questions, Orders for Returns, or Return Addresses for Papers, which have been accepted by the Government or agreed to by the Assembly, are tabled, then printed or referred to in the Votes and Proceedings for that day.

6. ORAL QUESTIONS

Oral Questions, or Question Period, is probably the most exciting and best-known element of Routine Proceedings. Forty minutes is set aside each day to allow MLAs to direct brief questions at Ministers. MLAs may seek information about important matters of some urgency, which are within the administrative responsibility of the Government or specific Ministers.

Please refer to Fact Sheet #7: *Question Period*, for further details.

7. MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Each sitting day up to five MLAs may make a statement of a maximum of two minutes. The statement may be on virtually any topic, except that Ministers may not comment on ministerial or departmental action or government policy while making a Member's Statement.

8. GRIEVANCES

Once in each session, each MLA is allowed to raise a grievance. There is no restriction on the subject matter of the grievance. Each grievance is limited to 10 minutes, but there is no limit on the number of grievances raised on one day.