

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA



## Fact Sheet No. 12 THE CHAMBER

The Chamber, where the Assembly meets to conduct its affairs, is situated at the centre of the Legislative Building.

The horseshoe-shaped layout of the Members' desks in the Legislative Chamber is unique in Canada. The design, which can accommodate up to 60 Members, demonstrates foresight on the part of the builders of 70 years ago, when there were just 41 MLAs.

Each desk is equipped with a microphone, and each word uttered in debate is tape recorded. The Speaker's Chair is placed at the open end of the horse shoe, for a clear view of the proceedings. The Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Clerk Assistant sit at the table in the centre. The Sergeant-at-Arms sits opposite the Clerk at the end of the table, with the Mace set on the table; its crown toward the Government side of the House. The Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms sits near the north door, and two duty Pages sit one on either side of the Speaker.

See Fact Sheet No. 8 *The Role and Functions of the Table and Procedural Staff* for more details.

No piece of legislation may be debated or voted upon unless the Mace is in its appointed place: resting on the Table on the floor of the House. The Mace signifies that the Legislative Assembly draws its power from the people, and its executive authority from the Crown.

### **THE PRESS GALLERY**

Above the Speaker's Chair is the Press Gallery, providing an excellent view. When a TV camera is present, it can be seen peering through the blue curtain behind the Speaker.

### **THE VISITORS GALLERY**

Around the Chamber is a semi-circle gallery for visitors of the House. The gallery is open to anyone wishing to watch the proceedings. Visitors must obtain a pass from Security at the main front lobby of the building to enter the gallery.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GALLERY VISITORS**

Gallery doors open half an hour before the scheduled sitting start times noted below:

Monday	1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday	10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon* & 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 pm
Wednesday	1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Thursday	10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon* & 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 pm
Friday	10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**
Friday	10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.***

\* except during Throne Speech and Budget Debates

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\*\*\* only during consideration of estimates

### **PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

10:00 a.m. to 12 noon on Tuesday and Thursday, except during Throne Speech and Budget debates.

### **QUESTION PERIOD**

Begins shortly after the opening of each sitting, and continues for 40 minutes. (See Fact Sheet No. 7).

### **RULES FOR THE PUBLIC GALLERIES**

1. Visitors must be appropriately attired.
2. Visitors are asked to remain seated, unless entering or leaving the galleries, or rising for the Speaker's entrance to the House or the reading of Prayers.
3. Visitor participation in House proceedings is not permitted.
4. Comments, applause or other disturbances by visitors are not permitted.
5. Smoking, loud conversations and other interruptions by visitors are not permitted.
6. The display of banners, placards and signs by visitors is not permitted.
7. The use of cameras, tape recorders, cell phones, transistor radios or other electronic devices in the gallery is not permitted.
8. Any briefcases, parcels, bags, etc. may be inspected by an attendant.