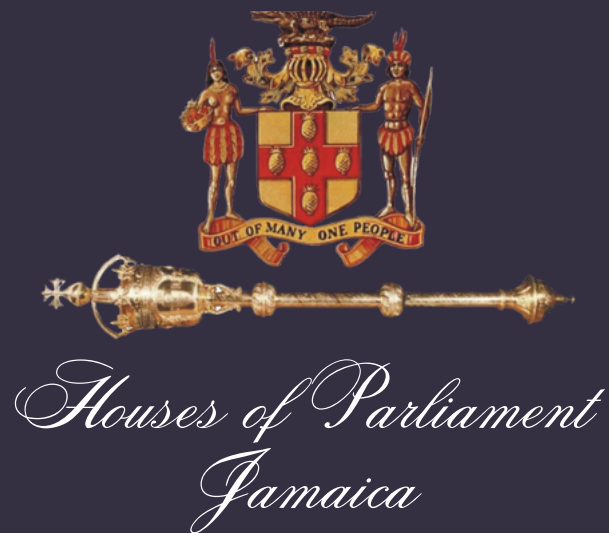


Parliamentarians' Handbook

Welcome To Gordon House



2
0
2
5



First published in Jamaica in 2007 by the Jamaica Printing Services Limited, 77 % Duke Street, Kingston, Jamaica.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any material form (including photocopying, recording, scanning), stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, whether electronic, mechanical, or otherwise, without the written permission of the copyright owner except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1993.

PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to provide Parliamentarians with basic information about the Parliament as well as their privileges and obligations, and the benefits and services that are afforded them during their tenure.

While the information contained in the publication is not exhaustive, it is hoped that it will serve as a quick reference and guide to other sources of information.

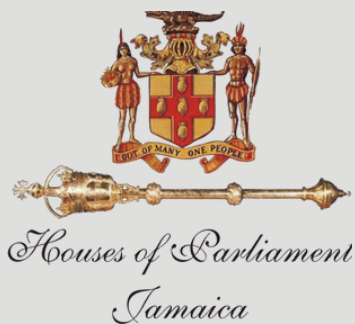


Table of Content

1. Composition of Parliament.....	1
2. Presiding Officers.....	1
3. Leader of Government Business.....	2
4. Cabinet.....	3
5. The Mace.....	3
6. Time and Duration of Sitzings of the Senate and House of Representatives	4
7. Quorum.....	4
8. Ceremonial Opening of Parliament.....	4
9. Budget.....	5
9.1 <i>Budget Debate.....</i>	5
9.2 <i>Sectoral Debate.....</i>	6
9.3 <i>State of the Constituency Debate.....</i>	6
9.4 <i>State of the Nation Debate.....</i>	7

10. Prorogation and Dissolution of Parliament....	7
11. Constitutional, Statutory, and Regulatory Provisions.....	8
12. Parliamentary Protocol.....	8
13. Absence from Sittings.....	11
14. Salary and Emoluments	12
15. Members' Constituency Staff.....	12
16. Constituency Allowance.....	12
17. Benefits.....	13
17.1 <i>Duty Concession on Motor Vehicle.....</i>	13
17.2 <i>Health Insurance.....</i>	13
17.3 <i>Pension.....</i>	14
18. The Office of the Clerk.....	14
18.1 <i>The Clerk to the Houses.....</i>	14
18.2 <i>The Legislative Counsel Branch.....</i>	15
18.3 <i>The Marshal to the Houses.....</i>	16
18.4 <i>Parliamentary Support Services Division.....</i>	18

18.4.1 Hansard.....	18
18.4.2 Library.....	19
18.4.3 Registry.....	19
18.4.4 Committee Administration and Research Branch.....	20
18.5 Human Resource Management and Development Branch.....	21
18.6 Finance and Accounts Branch.....	21
18.7 Information and Communication Technology Branch.....	21
18.8 Members' Lounge and Food and Beverage Services.....	22
18.9 Facilities and Office Management Branch...	23
18.10 Corporate Communications and Public Relations.....	23
19. Parking.....	23
20. Access Card.....	24

21. Official Motor Vehicle Plate.....	24
22. Official/Diplomatic Passport.....	25
23. Overseas Travel.....	26
24. Contact Information.....	27

1. Composition of Parliament

Under the Jamaican Constitution, the Parliament of Jamaica consists of His Majesty The King, the Senate and the House of Representatives. His Majesty's representative in Jamaica is the Governor-General.

The Senate consists of twenty-one (21) Senators, thirteen (13) of whom are appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister and eight (8) on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition. The House of Representatives consists of sixty-three (63) elected Members who are known as Members of Parliament

2. Presiding Officers

At the first meeting of a newly-appointed Senate and a newly-elected House of Representatives or when there is a vacancy, Members elect a Presiding Officer. The Presiding Officer in the Senate is known as the **President of the Senate** and in the House of Representatives, the Presiding Officer is known as the **Speaker of the House**.

Powers of the Presiding Officer

The role of the Presiding Officer is to ensure that Members keep within the rules of their respective Houses as contained in the **Standing Orders**, as well as those in keeping with standard Parliamentary practice and precedent.

Authority of the Presiding Officer

Rulings made by the Presiding Officer on points of order are final and not open to appeal and may only be reviewed by the House through a substantive motion submitted with prior notice.

If a Member disrespects the Chair's authority or repeatedly and deliberately disrupts the business of the House, the Presiding Officer may name the Member and bring the issue to the respective House. The Presiding Officer will then ask a Minister to move a motion to suspend that Member, the question will immediately be put to a vote with no seconder required and no changes, delays, or debate are allowed. (Standing Orders#43(4)).

3. Leader of Government Business

The Leader of Government Business in the Senate and the Leader of the House are responsible for arranging the business of the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively. It is their duty to ensure that the business of their respective Houses is conducted in a timely manner. In so doing, the Leader consults with the Leader of Opposition Business and seeks to reach an agreement as to the business to be transacted on a particular day.

Any item to be placed on the Order Paper must receive the approval of the House Leader, and matters for the Agenda are also discussed at Cabinet.

4. Cabinet

The Cabinet is the body responsible for determining government policy. According to section 69 of the Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council, 1962, the Cabinet must consist of the Prime Minister and at least eleven other Ministers, of which only two to four can be members of the Senate. The Cabinet ensures that policies are translated into laws and the government's decisions are effectively presented and justified in Parliament. Cabinet Ministers introduce and defend government bills, as well as responses to parliamentary questions prepared by ministries, which the Cabinet must first approve before they can be tabled by Ministers in the House.



5. The Mace

The Mace is the symbol of Royal Authority, and the Parliament is not properly constituted without the presence of the Mace on the Table. At the start of each day's sitting, the Presiding Officer is preceded by the Marshal bearing the Mace, and the Mace is placed on the Table of the House.

When the House resolves into a Committee of the Whole House and the Presiding Officer functions as Chairman, the Mace is placed below the Table.

6. Time and Duration of Sittings of the Senate and House of Representatives

The ***Standing Orders*** of the Senate provides for the Senate to meet on Fridays or on such other day as the President may determine. The meetings of the Senate commence at 10:00 a.m. (Standing Order #8).

The ***Standing Orders*** of the House of Representatives provides for the House to meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2:00 p.m. (Standing Order #8).

7. Quorum

The quorum of the Senate and of a Committee of the whole Senate is eight (8) Members besides the person presiding (Senate Standing Order #7). The quorum of the House of Representatives and of a Committee of the whole House is sixteen (16) Members besides the person presiding (House Standing Order #7).

8. Ceremonial Opening of Parliament

The commencement of the legislative year is marked by the Ceremonial Opening of Parliament. The Ceremonial Opening of Parliament is a joint meeting of both Houses where the Governor-General delivers the Throne Speech. The Throne Speech outlines the Government's plans for the upcoming legislative year. The Ceremonial Opening (followed by the tabling of the Budget Estimates) usually held in February so that all the processes related to budget scrutiny and approval for the incoming financial year can be completed before end of the existing financial year (March 31).

9. Budget

Each year, immediately following the Throne Speech, the ***Estimates of Expenditure*** is tabled and referred to the Standing Finance Committee which consists of all the Members of the House of Representatives. The ***Appropriation Bill*** is then presented to the Parliament to provide for the expenditure of the Government of Jamaica for the financial year.

9.1 Budget Debate

Once the report of the Standing Finance Committee on the ***Estimates of Expenditure*** is approved, the Minister of Finance opens and closes the debate on the ***Appropriation Bill***, which is referred to as the Budget Debate. In the Budget Debate, the Minister of Finance is given 45 minutes to open the debate (Standing Orders #32(9)) and outline the various programmes and policies of the Government and how they will be financed. The Minister is then given 30 minutes to close the debate.

According to the Standing Orders (Standing Order #32B), the other speakers in the Debate are:

- The Prime Minister
- The Leader of the Opposition
- The Opposition Spokesperson on Finance

These speakers are given 30 minutes to give their presentation according to Standing Orders #32(8). However, a motion can be moved for the time limit to be extended (Standing Orders #32(10)).

The Budget Debate must be concluded before March 31 so that the **Appropriation Bill** can be passed prior to the start of the new financial year (April 1).

9.2 Sectoral Debate

The Sectoral Debate is based on a Government motion or motions seeking the approval of the House for proposed programmes and projects within the different sectors. Ministers and Opposition Spokespersons may participate in this debate. According to the Standing Orders, Ministers are entitled to 45 minutes to deliver their speech in a Sectoral Debate (*Standing Orders #32(11A)*) and Opposition Spokesperson is given 30 minutes (*Standing Orders #32(11B)*)

9.3 State of the Constituency Debate

In the State of the Constituency Debate, Members of Parliament expound on matters related to the programmes they have implemented in their individual constituencies and make recommendations for the ensuing fiscal year. Members participating in this debate are given 15 minutes to complete their presentation (*Standing Orders #32C(3)*)

9.4 State of the Nation Debate

The State of the Nation Debate is based on a motion thanking the Governor-General for the Throne Speech and seeking the approval of the Senate for the Government's plans and programmes within the different sectors. All Senators may contribute to the State of the Nation Debate. The Senator who opens the debate is entitled to 45 minutes to deliver the opening speech, while the others are entitled to 30 minutes (*Standing Order #32(7) & (8)*).

10. Prorogation and Dissolution of Parliament

The life or term of Parliament is five years, but it may be terminated earlier to facilitate the calling of a general election is called, as outlined in section 64(2) of the Jamaica (Constitution) Order in Council, 1962. A Parliamentary term is divided into sessions, as each legislative year is considered one session of Parliament. **Prorogation** signals the end of a session.

Dissolution signals the end of the parliamentary term. When the Parliament is dissolved all matters before it are terminated and all Members vacate their seats; however, the Prime Minister, Ministers and the Leader of the Opposition continue to carry out their functions until new officials are appointed. Presiding Officers retain their positions, for limited purposes, until new Presiding Officers are elected.

11. Constitutional, Statutory and Regulatory Provisions

The main constitutional, statutory and regulatory provisions of which Members should be aware are as follows:

- The Constitution of Jamaica and Amendments
- Integrity Commission Act
- Senate and House of Representatives (Powers and Privileges) Act
- Attestation of Instruments (Facilities) Act
- Retiring Allowances (Legislative Service) Act
- Parliament (Members' Questions) Act
- Interpretation Act
- Defamation Act
- Representation of the People Act and Amendments
- Political Ombudsman (Interim) Act
- Election Petitions Act
- Standing Orders of the Senate of Jamaica
- Standing Orders of the House of Representatives of Jamaica

12. Parliamentary Protocol

Parliamentary protocol requires that Members observe certain rules, among which are the following:

- Members shall be present in the Chamber a few minutes before the scheduled time of commencement of a sitting.

- Members shall cease all conversation and rise in their places when the Marshal announces the arrival of the Presiding Officer. Members who are not in the Chamber on the arrival of the Presiding Officer shall stand silently in the corridors until after Prayers, after which they shall quickly and quietly take their seats.
- Likewise, at the adjournment of the sitting, Members shall rise in their places and remain silent until the Presiding Officer has left the Chamber.
- Members shall bow to the Presiding Officer on entering and leaving the Chamber.
- Members shall at all times address the Presiding Officer or, in Committee, the Chairman.
- Members shall not sit or stand with their backs towards the Presiding Officer.
- Members shall not leave the Chamber when the Presiding Officer is addressing the House.
- Members shall stand in their usual seat while addressing the House; otherwise, the leave of the Presiding Officer shall be sought.
- Members shall not pass between the Presiding Officer and another Member who is speaking.
- Members shall enter and leave the Chamber unobtrusively while the House is in session.

- Members present in the Chamber during a debate shall maintain silence while another Member is speaking, and shall not interrupt except in accordance with the provisions of the Standing Orders.
- Members shall not leave the Chamber immediately after delivering a speech; courtesy to the House requires that on concluding their speeches, members shall resume their seat to listen to the contribution of others and leave the Chamber only afterwards, if necessary.
- Members shall not stand in the aisles or other areas of the Chamber. They shall either remain seated or leave the Chamber.
- Members shall not disrupt the proceedings in the Chamber by talking or laughing loudly in the Lobby or corridors.
- Members shall not recognize individuals in the visitors' gallery.
- Members shall not read any publication or correspondence except in connection with the business of the House.
- Members shall not use laptop computers or other devices serving similar functions during the proceedings of the Senate, the House or in Committee except for the purpose of taking notes or consulting reference materials, or, in the House, as audio-visual aids. Where required, such devices shall only be used in silent mode and in a manner in keeping with the dignity and decorum of the House.

- Members shall not use mobile telephones or other devices serving similar functions during proceedings of the House or in Committee, neither should these be displayed on their person.
- Members shall not distribute, or allow partisan literature to be distributed, within the precincts of the House.
- Members shall not shout party slogans in either House.
- Members shall not wear or display partisan paraphernalia of any kind within the precincts of the House.
- Members shall not smoke within the precincts of the House.
- Eating is not allowed in the Chamber while either House is in session. However, members participating in a Debate or attending a Committee is in session may consume beverages.

13. Absence from Sitzings

Members are required to inform the Presiding Officer of their absence in order to satisfy provisions of the ***Constitution*** (Section 41 (1) (c)) embodied in the Standing Orders (Senate Standing Order 78; House Standing Order 81). Such notification should be given in advance of the sitting ***in writing via email at clerk@japarliament.gov.jm***. In the case of the Senate, the letter should be addressed to the Clerk to the Houses. In the case of the House of Representatives, the letter should be addressed to the Speaker. Failure to do so could result in a Member's seat becoming vacant.

14. Salary and Emoluments

Salary and emoluments are paid on a monthly basis. All Members of Parliament, Senate Ministers, Ministers of State, and Parliamentary Secretaries are asked to provide the Accounts section with the relevant information as outlined in the letter issued to new and returning Members.

Senators receive a stipend for attendance at meetings of the Senate and its Committees. The President of the Senate and all Committee Chairmen who are not Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, or the Speaker of the House receive an allowance for attendance at Committee meetings.

15. Members' Constituency Staff

All Members of Parliament may engage the services of a Constituency Secretary and a Chauffeur, to be paid by the Houses of Parliament. Members may recommend suitably qualified persons to fill the positions by submitting resumes and cover letters to the Clerk's Office, so that they can be processed through the Human Resource Branch.

16. Constituency Allowance

All Members of Parliament are entitled to a constituency allowance to defray the cost of office rental, utilities and office supplies, and stationery, including letterheads. This is paid to a bank account assigned to the constituency office.

17. Benefits

17.1 Duty Concession on Motor Vehicle

Members may submit an application to benefit from the 20% duty concession on motor vehicles in accordance with the applicable guidelines. Members are entitled to the concession once every five (5) years. Among the conditions which apply is that the vehicle may not be sold or otherwise disposed of within a three (3) year period; otherwise the duty has to be repaid.

To access the concession, Members are asked to submit a letter of request to the Clerk to the Houses together with the original pro forma invoice from the prospective dealer, a copy of their driver's licence and the completed concession form (available from the Ministry of Finance's website at www.mof.gov.jm), which will be submitted to the Ministry of Finance. The Ministry will then forward the letter granting the duty concession to the Commissioner of Customs. A copy of the letter will be sent to the Member.

17.2 Health Insurance

All Members of Parliament, the President of the Senate and Senate Ministers, Ministers of State, Parliamentary Secretaries, Chauffeurs and Constituency Secretaries are entitled to health benefits, which cover the Member, spouse and children under 18 years of age. Where a child is over the age of 18, but is pursuing tertiary education, the benefit may be extended to that child upon submission of proof of studies. This information is to be submitted to the Director, Human Resource Management and Development.

17.3 Pension

All Members of Parliament contribute to the National Insurance Scheme and a Government pension scheme. The Retiring Allowances (Legislative Service) Act makes provision for legislators (within the meaning of the Act) to receive a pension for service over two Parliamentary terms or a minimum of nine years. Where a Member does not satisfy the criteria to become eligible for a pension, the contribution made during the period of service is refundable, upon application.

Members who are retiring may contact the Ministry of Finance regarding the payment of a pension or the refund of pension contributions, as the case may be.

18. The Office of the Clerk

Parliament, as one of the three arms of government under the doctrine of separation of powers, operates independently from the Executive and Judiciary. Its administrative and procedural functions are supported by the Office of the Clerk, which ensures the efficient conduct of parliamentary business and the integrity of legislative processes.

18.1 The Clerk to the Houses

The officer responsible for the administration of the Parliament is the Clerk to the Houses. The Clerk is assisted by a Deputy Clerk and an Assistant Clerk. These officers also carry out procedural functions, and are known as Clerks-at-the-Table or Table Officers. The Clerks attend all meetings of the Senate and House of Representatives, and they are responsible for advising the Presiding Officers and Members on parliamentary procedure, as well as carrying out the administrative aspects of the Parliament's work both within and outside the Chamber.

The latter includes responsibility for the printing and circulation of Bills, the preparation of Minutes of Proceedings of the Senate and House, the laying of documents, the preparation of the Order Paper, the production of the official report of parliamentary proceedings (Hansard) and liaison with Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

The Houses of Parliament is involved in several public sector initiatives which the Clerk to the Houses oversees. The Clerk also has responsibility for inter-Parliamentary liaison and the Houses of Parliament's participation in the activities of international organizations such as:

- Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
- Inter-Parliamentary Union
- ParlAmericas

18.2 The Legislative Counsel

The Legislative Counsel serve as the legal advisors to the Parliament, offering expert legal advice to the Parliament, the Presiding Officers, Parliamentary Committees, and the Clerk to the Houses of Parliament on parliamentary procedures, constitutional law, statutory interpretation, and Standing Orders. Key responsibilities include:

- Drafting Private Members' Bills and Private Bills as required
- Ensuring accuracy of legislation at all stages (both primary and subsidiary)
- Collaborating with various legal and governmental bodies to support the legislative process

Additionally, the Legislative Counsel represent the Clerk in conducting seminars and workshops to educate Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) on parliamentary procedures and the legislative process. Overall, the Branch is crucial in supporting Parliament's mandate to uphold citizens' rights and promote good governance through policy implementation and legislative reform.

18.3 The Marshal to the Houses

The Marshal to the Houses is responsible for assisting the Presiding Officer in enforcing the rules of order in the Senate and House of Representatives. His role extends to the precincts of Parliament, permitting access to the public galleries, conducting tours of Parliament in collaboration with the Corporate Communications and Public Relations Branch, and carrying out ceremonial functions, such as attending on the President and Speaker for each day's meeting and ceremonial events. He attends to the preparation of the President and Speaker and ascertains the quorum before the start of each sitting.

The Marshal has the authority to remove disorderly visitors from the Gallery and, on the instruction of the Presiding Officer, disorderly Members from the Chamber. He has oversight of a team of Orderlies who are assigned to work in the Chamber to lay documents, assist in relaying information, copy official documents and assist Members wherever possible, among other tasks assigned to them outside the Chamber.

The Marshal is responsible for security and emergency management of the Parliamentary estate and adjunct offices, including the Office of the Leader of the Opposition. The Marshal has the powers of a constable under the Senate and House of Representatives (Powers and Privileges) Act section 19.

18.3.1 Security

As part of the security arrangements in place for the safety of Members, only members of the security forces are allowed to carry firearms while in the building. Members are asked to leave firearms and ammunition at the Police Post immediately on arrival. The Police will enter the relevant information in a log book, and return the firearms and ammunition on the Members' departure.

For the safety of Members, all visitors to the Parliament will be denied entry to the areas designated "Members Only", namely the Chamber Lobby, the Conference Rooms, and the Members' Lounge. Guests of Members will therefore only be permitted entry to those areas if they are accompanied by the Member who has invited them there.

Security personnel and drivers may accompany the Member to whom they are assigned to any area of the Parliament at the Member's behest; however, when dining alone, those persons are required to use the Staff Dining Room.

18.3.2 Emergency Management

The Parliament's emergency management plan includes an evacuation plan, and from time to time, drills will be carried out. All Members are asked to cooperate with the procedures and instructions, and to participate in these exercises.

18.4 Parliamentary Support Services Division

The Parliamentary Support Services Division provides professional, administrative, and research support to ensure Parliamentarians can effectively carry out their legislative, oversight, and representative duties.

18.4.1 Hansard

The Hansard is the official record of Parliament. Verbatim notes of all Parliamentary debates and meetings of Parliamentary committees are taken by Stenotype Writers. Hansard of the proceedings of the House of Representatives and Senate are printed and bound in volumes according to the Parliamentary Session in which the proceedings took place, and laid on the Table of the respective House.

Members who wish to review the notes of a particular meeting may request them from the Chief Stenotype Writer. While corrections may be made to typographical errors, no substantive changes may be made to the text, as the record is to faithfully reproduce what the person speaking actually said.

18.4.2 Library

The Parliamentary Library is available for the use of Members and the public. Material includes all records of parliamentary proceedings, namely Hansard and Minutes of Proceedings, committee reports, documents tabled in both Houses, Laws of Jamaica and Subsidiary Legislation, documentation relating to global parliamentary activities, journals, newsletters and other publications from a number of regional and international organizations, as well as information on a wide variety of subjects.

The Librarian periodically publishes a list of new material available in the library, which is placed on the Parliament's website and the Notice Board in the Chamber Lobby. Efforts are also made to secure documents from other libraries on behalf of Members, but adequate notice is required for this service. Members are encouraged to take advantage of the library services for research and information.

18.4.3 Registry

The Registry of the Houses of Parliament plays a vital role in supporting decision-making by providing accurate and reliable information. It is responsible for managing confidential records in a secure and organised manner. The Registry ensures proper classification, filing, and retrieval of documents to maintain efficiency across departments.

It also provides authorised access to records while protecting their integrity and confidentiality. The unit ensures compliance with legal and internal policies related to records management. Overall, the Registry enhances organisational effectiveness through structured information handling and secure recordkeeping practices.

18.4.4 Committee Administration and Research Branch

The Committee Division is responsible for supporting the work of the Parliament's Committees. The Division is responsible for the administrative and research activities of Parliamentary Committees. Each Committee is assigned a Committee Clerk. Committee Clerks provide procedural advice and administrative support to the committees assigned to them, ensuring their effective and efficient functioning in accordance with the Standing Orders and other relevant rules and guidelines.

The Committee Clerk's duties include offering procedural guidance, conducting research, coordinating meetings, managing attendance, drafting reports, preparing accurate minutes, and managing the committee's records, including verbatim notes and official documents.

The Committee Clerk's role is fundamentally administrative and supportive, providing the necessary infrastructure for the committee's work. While the Committee Clerk plays a crucial role in facilitating committee operations, they operate under the authority of the committee in carrying out their duties. The Committee Clerk does not have decision-making authority but supports the committee's goals through organisational and procedural expertise.

18.5 Human Resource Management and Development Branch

The Human Resource Management & Development Branch is responsible for the well-being and human resource requirements of Members. This includes the processing of health insurance and pension benefits for members and the retention of personal information for members and their staff. This Branch works closely with the Finance and Accounts Branch regarding changes in salaries and emoluments due to Members and their staff.

18.6 Finance and Accounts Branch

The Finance and Accounts Branch is responsible for the payment of salaries and emoluments to Members of Parliament and their staff and the payment of a stipend to Senators. Queries on all accounting matters may be directed to the Principal Finance Officer.

18.7 Information and Communication Technology Branch

This Branch is responsible for overseeing the information and communication technology needs of the Parliament.

18.7.1 Website

The Parliament's website (www.japarliament.gov.jm) provides information on current Parliamentary activities such as the Tabling of Bills, Reports, and Minutes of Proceedings. Copies of the Standing Orders of the Senate and the House of Representatives and information on Members, made available from the Biographical Data Form, can also be accessed on the website.

18.7.2 Computer and Internet Access

A computer workstation with Internet access has been installed in both Conference Rooms for the use of Members. Wireless Internet access is also available in the Conference Rooms.

Members are encouraged to check their e-mail on a regular basis for correspondence from the various administrative sections and, in particular, the Committee Division.

18.7.3 Telephone

Telephone service is provided in each Conference Room for the use of all Members. Calls are not charged to Members; however, in an effort to conserve on telephone charges, Members are asked to limit calls to matters of an official nature.

18.8 Members' Lounge and Food and Beverage Services

Members are invited to avail themselves of the facilities of the Members' Lounge. Lunch is available daily, and evening meals are also available when the House meets. Members may pay for their food and beverages on consumption or they may sign the vouchers on each occasion. Where the Member signs a voucher, the payments are deducted from his salary. Members who invite their staff or visitors to dine should make prior arrangements with the Food & Beverage Manager for settlement of the bill.

18.9 Facilities and Office Management Branch

The Facilities and Office Management Branch is responsible for the general upkeep and maintenance of the Parliamentary grounds, including the Office of Leader of the Opposition, and the maintenance of office equipment, furniture and general utilities.

18.10 Corporate Communications and Public Relations

The Corporate Communications and Public Relations Branch is responsible for promoting a positive image of the Parliament as a whole, Parliamentary Committees, and individual Members in the conduct of their Parliamentary duties. This is done through public education, internal communications and liaison with the media.

In keeping with the initiative to make the Parliament a paperless environment, documents for use in the House or Senate will be disseminated to Members electronically (on occasion hard copies will be made available.) Members are also asked to make electronic copies of their speeches available to the Corporate Communications and Public Relations Branch.

19. Parking

Parking is available at Gordon House and the parking lot at the Jamaica Manufacturers and Exporters Association (JMEA). When the House meets and access by the public is restricted, parking is allowed on the street in front of Gordon House.

20. Access Card

All Members will be issued an electronic access card. The card is the property of the Houses of Parliament and must be returned to the office of the clerk at the end of the Member's tenure. The cards are personalized and must be kept securely at all times. The loss or misplacement of the card will attract a replacement cost.

21. Official Motor Vehicle Plate

Each Member is assigned an official motor vehicle plate which is unique to that Member. The purpose of the plate is to facilitate access to the Houses of Parliament, and is therefore for the use of Members or their assigned Chauffeurs only. The plate must not be used for personal aggrandizement. Any unauthorized use of the plate is liable for referral to the Privileges Committee of the respective House.

The plate does not provide a guarantee against prosecution for breaches of the Road Traffic Act.

Members are responsible for the care and safekeeping of the plate and will be liable for any loss or damage. The plate is the property of the Houses of Parliament and is to be returned to the Office of the Clerk at the end of the Member's tenure. Appropriate measures will be employed to retrieve any outstanding plates.

22. Official/Diplomatic Passport

The President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, and all Ministers are eligible for diplomatic passports, while members who are not ministers can apply for an official passport. All applications for diplomatic and official passports should be submitted to the Clerk's office for delivery to the relevant agency. The following documents are required:

- Two (2) passport-sized photographs (identical)
- A Copy of the first page of the passport
- A completed application form signed by a Justice of the Peace.

Application forms can be downloaded from the Passport, Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) website, www.pica.gov.jm

23. Overseas Travel

The Leader of the House is responsible for nominating members to participate in official overseas travel, and the names of the nominee(s) are sent to the Prime Minister for further approval. Nominee(s) are written to and informed of their selection to participate and ascertain their availability to travel overseas.

Members must have a valid passport with an expiry date of not less than six (6) months from the proposed date of travel. If this is not the case, the Houses of Parliament will apply to PICA for a new passport on behalf of the nominee(s).

If a visa is required, the Houses of Parliament, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MFAFT), will assist with the process of application.

In seeking assistance from the MFAFT, the following documents should be sent under a cover letter:

- The passport of the nominee(s)
- Duly completed visa application form (printed)
- The invitation letter for the host
- Travel itinerary

Contact Information

Houses of Parliament

Gordon House

81 Duke Street

Kingston, Jamaica

Tel.: (876) 922-0200-7 Fax: (876) 967-1708

Website: <http://www.japarliament.gov.jm>

Email: clerk@japarliament.gov.jm

Office

Clerk to the Houses, Ms. Colleen Lowe

Deputy Clerk to the Houses, Mr. Christopher Cowan

Assistant Clerk to the Houses, Ms Chesanne Brandon

Principal Finance Officer, Mr. Loushane Robinson

Accounts Payable and Payroll Manager, Mr. Sterling

Howard

Director, Human Resource Management & Development,

Mrs. Camille Ashman Morris

Marshal, Captain Wayne Blake

Senior Legislative Counsel, Ms. Tiffany Stewart

Food and Beverage Services Manager, Mr. Tayse

Campbell

Facilities Manager, Mr. Renford Watson

Committee Coordinator, Ms. Tracy Cohen

Senior Research Officer, Ms. Stephanie Hamilton

Registrar, Ms. Sophia Newman

Librarian, Ms. Julian Wilson

Director, Corporate Communication & Public Relations,

Ms. Tashana Sewell

Parliamentary Liaison Officer, Ms. Shadaia Francis

Network Engineer, Mr. Peter Laing

Systems Administrator, Mr. Merrick Brown

Executive Secretary (Clerk's Office), Mrs. Georgina

Henry-Smith

Contact

876-847-2742

876-390-3768

876-382-6023

876-449-1467

876-564-4591

876-427-1786

876-427-1753

876-441-7977

876-295-4999

876-847-3031

876-564-4540

876-404-5141

876-583-3655

876-354-8595

876-564-7754

876-276-9740

876-448-1695

876-564-3130

876-298-6723