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Meetings of Parliament

New Parliaments

A Parliament lasts for the term of the Legislative Assembly, which is a maximum of four years calculated from the day on which it first meets after a general election.

The Legislative Assembly is subject to earlier dissolution by the Governor.

Members of the Legislative Council (MLCs) are elected for a fixed term of four years, and take office on 22 May following their election.

Unlike the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative Council cannot be dissolved before its full term expires.



Parliament House

Sessions

Parliament meets and transacts business for a period known as a 'session'.

The *Constitution Act 1889* provides that there must be at least one session every 12 months.

Sessions are convened by the Governor on the advice of the Executive Council.

References to Spring, Autumn, or Budget sessions are not the correct technical descriptions of parliamentary sessions. They are merely colloquial references to the seasons during which the sittings occur (spring, autumn) or the purpose for which they are held (Budget).

A session commences with the official opening of Parliament by the Governor, and does not end

until prorogation of both Houses or the dissolution or expiry of the Legislative Assembly.

In practice Parliament can consist of one session which runs for the duration of the Parliament (maximum four years).



Parliament of Western Australia

Sittings

A sitting is a meeting, or series of meetings, of a House.

Sitting days, and the times of meeting and adjournment on those days, are fixed by each House through standing or sessional orders.

In the course of a session, a House has the right to adjourn by its own motion for a specified period without prior permission of the Governor.

At the close of the last sitting day in a session, both Houses adjourn to a date to be fixed by the President or Speaker respectively.



Sitting of the Legislative Assembly

Prorogation

A session is terminated by a prorogation of Parliament, which is put into effect by proclamation by the Governor on the advice of the Executive Council.

Prorogation has the following effects:

- all business of the two Houses lapses;
- any Temporary Orders cease to have effect;
- resolutions or orders made by either House cease to have effect, unless otherwise determined;
- bills not passed by both Houses must be reintroduced in the next session as if for the first time, unless restored to the Notice Paper of the House in which the bill lapsed. On restoration, the bill proceeds from the stage it had reached in the previous session of Parliament;
- bills that have completed their passage through the Parliament may lawfully be assented to after prorogation;



Legislative Council Committee

In recent times, the Parliament has been prorogued and the Legislative Assembly has been dissolved simultaneously, immediately before a State General Election.

Recess

The period between a prorogation of Parliament and the commencement of a new session is known as a recess.

Adjournment

An adjournment occurs when a House stands adjourned, by its own motion, for any period of time. For example, between the end of one sitting day and the commencement of the next, or between blocks of sitting weeks. An adjournment does not affect the continuation of business of the House.

Dissolution

Dissolution of the Legislative Assembly occurs when the Governor, acting on the advice of the Executive Council, calls for the current Legislative Assembly to end all business and be subject to a general election.



Legislative Assembly Committee

- standing committees appointed by either House still exist, although they may not meet and transact business; and
- select committees cease to exist. If a select committee inquiry is to continue in the next session, the committee must be reestablished.



Legislative Council Chamber