

# STANDING ORDERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF TONGA

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## STANDING ORDERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF TONGA

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## STANDING ORDERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF TONGA

### PART 1 PRELIMINARY

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|----------------|----|--|
| Title          | 1. | These Orders may be cited as the Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga.   |
| Interpretation | 2. | In these Orders unless the context otherwise requires, the Interpretation used in the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Assembly of Tonga shall apply. |

### PART 2 OFFICIAL VISITS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

- |                            |    |  |
|----------------------------|----|--|
| Official visits            | 3. | All official visits of the Legislative Assembly shall be approved by a resolution of the Legislative Assembly or allowed under the provisions of these Orders, whether local or overseas.  |
| Circulation of invitations | 4. | (1) If there is an invitation from overseas, or if anything is required while the Legislative Assembly is not in session, a circular submission shall be made and taken to each member present in Tongatapu.<br><br>(2) If the majority of the members in Tongatapu approved the submission, the Speaker shall |

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complete all requirements to effect such matters.

(3) Such circular submission shall be referred to the next meeting of the Legislative Assembly for information.

Report of official visit

5. At the end of each official visit of the Legislative Assembly, a member who participated in such a visit shall submit a written report of the visit to the Legislative Assembly.

## **PART 3 GRATUITIES AND EMOLUMENTS FOR MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Annual salary and allowances

6. (1) Every member shall be given an annual salary and the allowances approved in the Estimates and at the rate determined by the Legislative Assembly.
- (2) Every officer of the Legislative Assembly shall be given an annual salary and the allowances approved in the Estimates and at the rate determined by the Legislative Assembly.

Location and constituency allowances

7. (1) The Nobles' representatives and the People's representatives shall be given an

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annual constituency allowance at the rate determined by the Legislative Assembly.

(2) The Nobles' representatives and the People's representatives of Vava'u, Ha'apai, 'Eua and the Niuas shall be given an annual location allowance at the rate determined by the Legislative Assembly.

Absent with leave

8. If a member of the Legislative Assembly is unable to attend a meeting and has been excused by the Speaker, such member shall receive the benefits in Order 7.

Committee meetings

9. The members of a Select Committee, Standing Committee or Sub-Committee will be paid a meeting allowance at an hourly rate determined by the Legislative Assembly for every meeting they attend.

Local visits

10. In all local visits approved by the Legislative Assembly, each member shall be paid the travelling allowance together with regular daily allowances.

Visits to electoral district

11. (1) The Legislative Assembly shall pay for four return air fares for each member to travel to his district to visit during the session, to

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meet and consult his voters on the work of the Legislative Assembly, except the representatives of the People of Tongatapu.

- (2) (a) On a visit referred to in sub-Order (1), a member shall be paid travelling allowance together with normal allowances.
- (b) Each visit shall not be longer than four days unless authorized by the Legislative Assembly or the Speaker.

Tongatapu  
Representatives

12. The Representatives of the People of Tongatapu shall be paid such amounts as directed by the Legislative Assembly for their local visits.

Allowances for  
overseas travel

13. (1) The allowances for all Legislative Assembly overseas travels approved by the Legislative Assembly shall be paid as follows –
- (a) The Speaker and the Ministers shall be paid the per diem rate that Government uses for Ministers in their overseas travel;
- (b) Other members shall receive the per diem rate that Government uses for the Chief Secretary and Secretary to Cabinet

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and the Chief Justice.

(2) Appropriate air fare rates shall be paid according to the Government Travel Table.

Overseas Travel 14. The Legislative Assembly shall pay the member's allowances for overseas travel as follows –

(a) meetings in the Pacific Islands including Australia and New Zealand -

- (i) three (3) days travelling to the meeting;
- (ii) days of the meeting;
- (iii) three (3) days to return to Tonga;
- (iv) only the actual travelling days shall be paid;
- (v) the most direct route may be utilized; and
- (vi) extra days may be included.

(b) Meetings in the Pacific Rim Countries -

- (i) five (5) days to travel to the meeting;
- (ii) days of the meeting;
- (iii) five (5) days to return to Tonga;
- (iv) only the actual travelling days shall be paid;



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- (v) the most direct route may be utilized;  
and
- (vi) extra days may be included.

- (c) meetings elsewhere –
  - (i) seven (7) days to travel to the meeting;
  - (ii) days of the meeting;
  - (iii) seven (7) days to return to Tonga.
  - (iv) only the actual travelling days shall be paid;
  - (v) the most direct route may be utilized;  
and
  - (vi) extra days may be included.

Travel paid from overseas

15. If travelling is paid from overseas, the member shall be entitled to all travelling allowances except for the allowances and days paid from overseas.

Difference in air fare

16. If the airfare paid from overseas differ from that approved for members, the Legislative Assembly shall pay the difference to bring it up to the approved level.

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## PART 4 MEMBERS INSURANCE AND MEDICAL EXPENSES

- Life, accident and travel insurance 17. Each member shall have valid life insurance, accident insurance and travel insurance for each year he is a member.
- Medical Trip 18. (1) If a member becomes ill or in need of medical examination, the Minister of Health shall notify the Speaker in writing that such illness and medical examination cannot be treated here in Tonga.  
(2) The Speaker may approve that referral at the expense of the Legislative Assembly.
- Letter of authorisation 19. The Speaker shall issue the approval by giving a letter of authorization to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Finance to proceed with the medical trip for that member.
- Clerk to assist member 20. The Speaker shall, in consultation with the Minister of Health, direct the Clerk to carry out all matters to enable the travel to be effected as follows –  
  
(a) transportation to take the member to the airport (if needed);  
(b) two business class airline seats for the member and an attendant of his choice;

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- (c) one business class airline seat one way for a doctor or nurse, if needed and one return economy seat plus the appropriate overseas travelling allowances for that officer for the trip over and back;
- (d) transportation to take the member and the attendant from the airport overseas to the hospital (if needed).
- (e) overseas travelling allowances for the member in accordance with Order 14 but shall not exceed 14 days; and
- (f) All other direct medical expenses approved by the Speaker.

Medical treatment exceed 14 days

21. If a medical treatment exceeds 14 days, the member shall on the written confirmation from the doctor, receive only his annual salary, daily allowance, vehicle allowance and rent allowance.

Special payments

22. If Government has already made any special payments to a member because of sickness, the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly shall not pay out any further allowances in connection with that sickness.

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Medical treatment while on official visit

23. If there is a need to carry out any medical treatment to any member while he is on a Legislative Assembly visit, the Legislative Assembly shall bear all costs in accordance with Order 18 to 22.

## PART 5 OFFICERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Clerk

24. (1) The Principal officer of the staff of the Legislative Assembly shall be the Clerk.  
(2) The Clerk shall work in and carry out the instructions of the Legislative Assembly.

Record of vote and proceedings

25. The votes and proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and of the Committee of the Whole House shall be noted by the Clerk, as specified in Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Assembly.

Sergeant-at-Arms

26. The Sergeant-at-Arms is the officer to maintain order in the Legislative Assembly and carry out the functions and implement instruction of the Legislative Assembly.

Journal of Debates

27. The duties of the Clerk with regards to the custody of the Journal of Debates and Records of all documents whatsoever laid before the Legislative Assembly shall be as specified under Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure of the

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Legislative Assembly.

- |                                      |     |   |
|--------------------------------------|-----|---|
| Committee Meetings                   | 28. | The officers working for a Select Committee, Standing Committee or Sub-Committee will be paid a meeting allowance at an hourly rate determined by the Legislative Assembly for every meeting they attend.                           |
| Officers attending local visits      | 29. | In local official visits of the Legislative Assembly where officers are directed to participate, they shall be paid the travelling allowances together with the regular daily allowances as determined by the Legislative Assembly. |
| Officer's overseas Travel allowances | 30. | The Legislative Assembly shall pay the officer of the Legislative Assembly the applicable allowances for overseas travel set out under Order 14.  |
| Officer's insurances                 | 31. | If the expense for the overseas travel approved by the Legislative Assembly for an officer is paid from abroad, the provisions under Order 15 shall apply.  |
| Officer's insurances                 | 32. | Each officer shall be covered with insurances which apply to members under Order 17.  |

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Medical expenses of officers

33. Should any member of the staff of the Legislative Assembly become ill, the provisions of Order 18 to 23 for members shall also apply except the following –
- (a) two economy airline seats for the staff member and an attendant;
  - (b) overseas travelling allowances for 14 days on the per diem rate extended to the staff of the Legislative Assembly;
  - (c) one return economy airline seat for a Doctor or Nurse.

## PART 6 ATTIRE OF MEMBERS, STAFF AND VISITORS AND ADMISSION OF VISITORS DURING SESSION

Attire

34. The Legislative Assembly, from time to time shall determine by vote the attire to be worn by members, staff and visitors to the Legislative Assembly during the meetings of the Legislative Assembly.

Visitor

35. Each member of the Legislative Assembly may authorize admission to the Legislative Assembly of not more than three visitors on any given day. Provided that the number of visitors who may be admitted by the Speaker shall be unlimited.

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- Order for admission      36. Every Order for Admission shall be dated and signed by the member issuing it and shall be valid only on the date mentioned therein.
- Order to be presented      37. All Orders for Admission shall be given by the holders to the Officer at the door of the Legislative Assembly.
- Conduct of visitors      38. All persons admitted to the Legislative Assembly pursuant to these Orders shall occupy the seats set apart for visitors. They shall not in any way interfere with or interrupt the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly and shall refrain from expressions of approval or disapproval and they shall not bother the members.
- Security officer      39. It shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Security Officer to ensure that no one enters the Legislative Assembly without permission during the meeting of the Legislative Assembly or the Committee of the Whole House.

Made at Nuku'alofa this                      day of    2013

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Lord Fakafanua  
**Speaker of the Legislative Assembly**