



National Assembly of Pakistan



Rules for Members

Every member is required to observe certain rules and conventions, as spelled out under rules 30 and 31, while present in the Assembly and/or while speaking on the floor of the House.

Conduct During House Sittings

While the Assembly is sitting, a member should not:

- ♦ Read any book, newspaper or letter, except in connection with the business of the Assembly.
- ♦ Pass between the Chair and any member who is speaking.
- ♦ Interrupt any member's speech by disorderly expression or noises or in any other disorderly manner.
- ♦ Obstruct proceedings or make running commentaries during the speeches.
- ♦ Indulge in rowdy behaviour, chant slogans, display banners/placards, throw and tear table documents/reports, etc.
- ♦ Approach the dais of the Speaker in a threatening manner.
- ♦ Act in any manner detrimental to the order and decorum of the House, or act to erode its sanctity or lower its dignity.
- ♦ Applaud when a stranger enters a gallery, except when a foreign delegation/dignitary is specially invited to the sitting.
- ♦ Make reference to a stranger in any of the galleries while speaking, except when a foreign delegation/dignitary is specially invited to the sitting.
- ♦ Occupy a seat in the galleries or engage himself in conversation with any visitor in a gallery.
- ♦ Use a mobile telephone.
- ♦ Chew or eat or drink or smoke.
- ♦ Bring any stick unless permitted by the Speaker.

Further, during Assembly sittings, a member should:

- ❖ Always address the Chair.
- ❖ Keep to his usual seat while addressing the Assembly.
- ❖ Maintain silence when not speaking in the Assembly.

Rules for Participation in Debates

Rule 31 requires that subject matter of every speech should be relevant to the matter before the Assembly. Further, a member may not read his speech. While speaking, a member should not:

- ❖ Discuss any matter which is subjudice.
- ❖ Reflect upon the President in his personal capacity.
- ❖ Discuss the conduct of any judge of the Supreme/High Court in the discharge of his duties.
- ❖ Make a personal charge against a member, Minister or the holder of a public office, except when relevant in regard to the matter before the Assembly.
- ❖ Use his right of speech for willfully and persistently obstructing the business of the Assembly.
- ❖ Use offensive expressions about the conduct of proceedings in the joint sitting, National Assembly, Senate or a Provincial Assembly or a Committee or Sub-Committee.
- ❖ Cast reflection on the conduct of any person who cannot defend himself before the Assembly.
- ❖ Reflect on any determination of the Assembly, except on a motion for rescinding it.
- ❖ Use the President's name for purpose of influencing the debate.
- ❖ Utter treasonable, seditious or defamatory words or make use of offensive or unparliamentary expression.

Mode of Address

Under rule 265, a member desiring to speak on any matter before the Assembly or to raise a point of order or question of privilege, shall speak only when called upon by the Speaker to do so. He shall speak from his place, shall rise when speaking and shall address the Speaker. The Speaker may, however, permit a member, disabled by sickness or infirmity to speak while sitting. Members should refrain from irrelevant or tedious repetition either of their own arguments or of the arguments used by other members in debates in accordance with the provisions of rule 268.

Procedure when Speaker addresses

Whenever the speaker address the Assembly, he shall be heard in silence, as per rule 272, and any member who is then speaking or offering to speak shall immediately resume his seat. Further, no member shall leave his seat while the Speaker is addressing the Assembly.

Withdrawal of Member

Under rule 20, in case of disorderly conduct, if the Speaker directs a member to withdraw from the Assembly, the member so ordered shall immediately withdraw and remain absent during the remainder of the day's sitting.

Suspension of Member

If a member disregards the authority of the Speaker or abuses the Assembly rules by consistently and willfully obstructing the business of the House, under rule 21, the Speaker may suspend that member from the service of the Assembly for a period not exceeding the remainder of the session.

Leave of Absence from Assembly

A member desirous of obtaining leave of absence from any sitting of the Assembly is required, under rule 40, to make an application in writing to the Speaker stating reasons for his absence. On receipt of application, the Speaker, immediately after the questions, if any, but before any other business of the day is entered upon, put the question, without debate, that the leave be granted. Where a member is prevented or incapacitated from making such an application, leave of the Assembly may be granted on a motion moved by any other member, or on the basis of an application made ex-post-facto.

Resignation of Seat

A member may resign his seat, under Article 64(1) of the Constitution. After the Speaker has received intimation from a member, in writing under his hand, as per rule 43, the Speaker shall inform the Assembly of the resignation. When the Assembly is not in session, the Speaker shall direct that intimation of his resignation, specifying the date of resignation, be given to every member immediately. The Secretary will then get the information published in the Gazette and forward a copy of the notification to the Chief Election Commissioner for taking steps to fill the vacancy.

Under Clause (2) of Article 64, the National Assembly may declare the seat of a member vacant if, without leave of the House, he remains absent for forty consecutive days of its sittings.

Rule 42 requires the Secretary to keep a register showing the attendance of each member at each sitting. The members can inspect the register, if they desire.

