



# How do Members perform their duties? What Members do

Legislative Council Members attend Legislative Council meetings, participate in the work of committees, handle complaints from the public, take part in liaison activities, and conduct various work to perform their functions and duties.



## Supplementary information

### **(a) Attend Council meetings**

Attend Council meetings to raise questions on the work of the Government, enact laws and debate issues concerning public interest.

### **(b) Participate in the work of committees**

Participate in the work of the Legislative Council committees to scrutinize bills and subsidiary legislation, examine and approve public expenditure and monitor the work of the Government.

## Work of Legislative Council Members

### **(c) Handle complaints from the public**

Handle complaints from the public who are aggrieved by government actions or policies, and deal with public representations on government policies and legislation as well as other matters of public concern.

### **(d) Take part in liaison activities**

Receive visitors, visiting dignitaries and parliamentary organizations to share knowledge and exchange ideas, as well as take part in meetings and social functions to establish and reinforce links with consular officials and local organizations.

### **(a) Attend Council meetings**

#### *Raise questions*

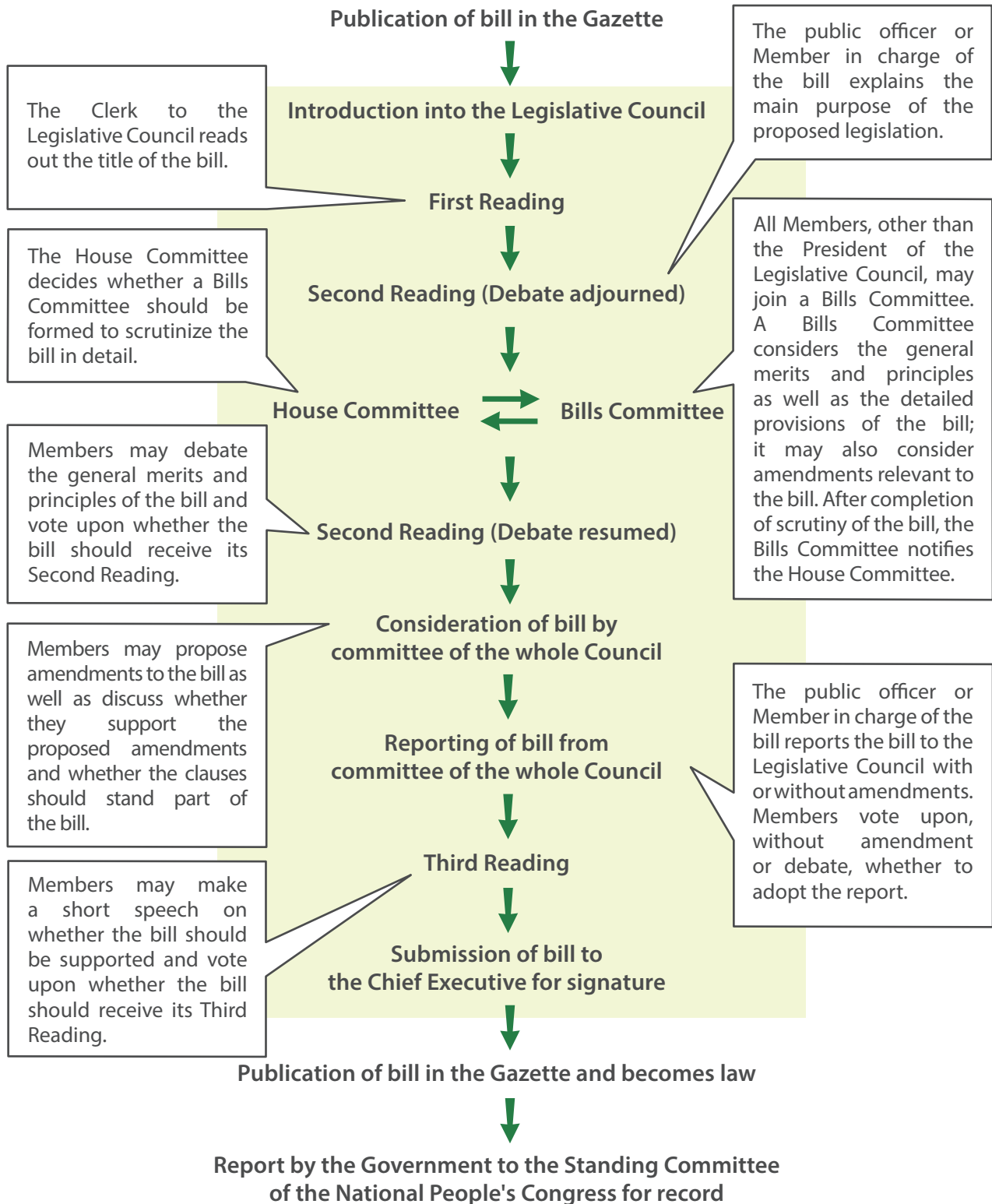
Members may raise questions on the work of the Government at Council meetings to monitor the work of the Government. For example, Members have raised questions regarding sports facilities and competition events, improving taxi services, and expediting public housing production.

#### *Enact laws*

One of the functions of Members is to enact laws. A proposed new law or amendments to an existing law is called a "bill". The Government is primarily responsible for proposing new legislation or amendments to existing legislation, in the form of bills which are considered by the Legislative Council for enactment. Under Article 74 of the Basic Law, bills which do not relate to public expenditure or political structure or the operation of the Government may be introduced individually or jointly by Members. As for bills relating to government policies, the written consent of the Chief Executive is required before they can be introduced by Members. A bill must go through the three-reading procedure in the Legislative Council before it becomes a law.

For example, the Legislative Council passed the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2021 in July 2021 which increases progressively the number of statutory holidays from 12 to 17 days.

There are three main stages in the three-reading procedure, namely First Reading, Second Reading, and Third Reading. The following diagram shows the law-making process and how Members enact laws in the Legislative Council:



### ***Debate issues concerning public interest***

Members may debate motions not intended to have legislative effect to express their views on issues concerning public interest or call on the Government to take certain actions. For example, the Legislative Council has debated and voted on motions which requested the Government to enact legislation to combat false information on the Internet, and foster the achievement of carbon neutrality.

### **(b) Participate in the work of committees**

Apart from attending Council meetings to conduct Council business, Members perform the functions of scrutinizing bills and subsidiary legislation, examining and approving public expenditure, and monitoring the work of the Government through a committee system. There are three standing committees of the Legislative Council, namely the Finance Committee, the Public Accounts Committee and the Committee on Members' Interests. In performing their functions, the standing committees, and other committees if so authorized by the Council, may summon any person to give evidence and produce documents.

Standing committees aside, the Legislative Council has other committees. These include the Committee on Rules of Procedure, the Committee on Access to the Legislature's Documents and Records, the House Committee, Bills Committees, Panels and subcommittees. Select committees may also be formed to consider matters or bills which the Council may refer to the committees.

For details of the committee system, please refer to the supplementary notes on exhibition panels "Committee system" under the "Education" section of the Legislative Council Website.

### **(c) Handle complaints from the public**

The Legislative Council operates a Redress System to receive and handle complaints from individual members of the public and deputations who are aggrieved by government actions or policies. It also deals with public representations on government policies and legislation as well as other matters of public concern. For example, Members have handled cases concerning waiving of fees for staying in temporary accommodation sites for compulsory quarantine, enhancement to the online application system of the Working Family Allowance Scheme, and revision to the Service Handbook for New Arrivals published by the Home Affairs Department.

Members take turns, in groups of nine, to be on duty each week to oversee the Redress System and to receive and handle representations of and complaints made by deputations. During their duty week, they also take turns to undertake "ward duty" during which they meet with individual members of the public and provide guidance to staff on the processing of cases.

If Members consider it appropriate, they may ask the Government to take remedial action; and/or refer the issue to the relevant Legislative Council committee or raise the issue at a Council meeting, if a change in policy or law is considered necessary.

### **(d) Take part in liaison activities**

Members receive visitors and visiting dignitaries referred by government departments and consuls-general in Hong Kong, as well as other parliamentary organizations, to brief them on the work of the Legislative Council and the latest developments in Hong Kong. These visitors include members of overseas legislatures, political and business leaders, government officials, as well as prominent people from international organizations and renowned institutions.

Members also attend luncheons held for consular officials and public officers/senior government officials respectively, to enhance relationship and communication. In addition, the Legislative Council normally hosts a tea reception each year for Members and Boards of Directors of six charitable organizations to meet and discuss issues of mutual concern in a relaxed atmosphere.

Members exchange views on the work of the Legislative Council as well as matters of mutual interest with District Council members and Heung Yee Kuk Councillors, through regular meetings and luncheons. Matters raised at these meetings which require follow-up actions will be referred to the relevant Panels or the Public Complaints Office.

## Questions and answers

*Q1: How do Members perform their duties? Please give four examples.*

Members perform their duties by (a) attending Legislative Council meetings; (b) participating in the work of committees; (c) handling complaints from the public; and (d) taking part in liaison activities.

*Q2: What do Members do at Council meetings to perform their duties?*

Members perform their duties by (a) raising questions; (b) enacting laws; and (c) debating issues concerning public interest at Council meetings.

*Q3: What system does the Legislative Council operate to handle complaints from the public who are aggrieved by government actions or policies?*

The Legislative Council operates a Redress System to receive and handle complaints from members of the public who are aggrieved by government actions or policies.

## Online resources

(a) *Legislative Council in Brief*

Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Legislative Council in Brief](#)

(b) *Animations and videos*

Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Animations and videos](#)

(c) *Exhibition panels*

Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Understand → [Exhibition panels](#)

(d) *PowerPoint slides*

Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → Education → Teach → [PowerPoint slides](#)

(e) *Committees/Liaison/Redress System*

Legislative Council Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) → LegCo Business → [Committees/Liaison/Redress System](#)