



Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement
Western Cape Provincial Parliament
IPalamente yePhondo IeNtshona Koloni

THE SPEAKER

FACT SHEET 17

REVISION 1, 5 JULY 2016

The Speaker is the principal office-bearer in the Provincial Parliament. The Speaker is the spokesperson of the House, chairs its meetings and is its “Minister” with regard to its support services. The Speaker is supported and assisted by the elected Deputy Speaker.

The Speaker is elected by the House and may also be removed from office by the House. The Speaker derives his/her authority from the House to which he/she is answerable.

In representing the House, the Speaker represents all the Members: those in government and those in opposition. The Speaker is, furthermore, not responsible to the executive authority and should preserve the Provincial Parliament’s independence from it. When chairing meetings of the House, the Speaker must ensure that proceedings take place in accordance with the standing rules, practice and precedent.

The Speaker interprets the rules and orders and gives rulings when necessary. When the House becomes unruly, the Speaker must maintain order. There are various disciplinary powers set out in the rules that the Speaker can use to maintain order.

The Speaker does not normally take part in debates and does not vote unless there is an equality of votes, in which case the Speaker exercises a casting vote.

Members are entitled to expect impartiality from the Speaker at all times just as the Speaker is entitled to support from all Members, irrespective of party affiliation.

The Speaker has ultimate responsibility for the parliamentary administration. He/she chairs the Rules Committee which is the directing authority of the parliamentary administration.

Whenever the Speaker is absent or otherwise unable to perform the functions of the office of the Speaker, or whenever that office is vacant, the Deputy Speaker acts as Speaker.