

Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législative  
de l'Ontario

# STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## TELEVISION GUIDELINES

1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament  
68 Elizabeth II

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The Honourable Ted Arnott, MPP  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Sir,

Your Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly has the honour to present its  
Report and commends it to the House.

Jane McKenna, MPP  
Chair of the Committee

Queen's Park  
April 2019



STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
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1<sup>st</sup> Session, 42<sup>nd</sup> Parliament

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## **TELEVISION GUIDELINES**

The guidelines for the television coverage of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario are as follows:

1. The television coverage of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly should be an accurate, factual and coherent record of the legislative proceedings which is understandable to the viewing public and which does not dramatize or editorialize such proceedings.
2. The guidelines shall be enforced by the Speaker. Specific concerns of members regarding the televising of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly should not be raised in the House. Such concerns should be raised in private with the Speaker. The television guidelines shall stand referred to the Standing Committee on the Legislative Assembly. The Committee shall conduct periodic reviews of the televising of the legislative proceedings and consider such matters or concerns as may be referred to the Committee by the Speaker, and it shall report its opinions and observations upon any matters referred to it.
3. The proceedings in the Legislative Chamber beginning with the Speaker's Parade and Prayers until the adjournment of the Assembly shall be recorded, broadcast live on the Ontario Parliamentary Network and streamed over the internet. Proceedings of any standing or select committee may be recorded, broadcast and streamed by agreement of the House Leaders.
4. Only the member who has been recognized by the Speaker shall be the primary focus of the camera shot recorded, broadcast or streamed.
5. The initial shot of the member shall be of his or her head-and-shoulders, or medium shot showing some of the members who are seated on either side of the speaking member.
6. When the Speaker is standing, the active camera shall always include the Speaker. A wider shot of the Chamber may be used during a division in the Chamber.
7. In Committee of the Whole House, when the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House is speaking, the active camera shall always include the Chair. A wider shot of the Chamber may be used during a division in the Chamber.
8. When the Speaker or the Chair of the Committee of the Whole House is giving a ruling or calling the House or Committee to order, the active camera should include the Speaker or the Chair.

9. Except as provided in paragraph 10, coverage of the legislative proceedings should be limited to the strict confines of the floor of the House and cameras are not to record shots of public interruptions or public demonstrations.
10. Medium close-up shots may be taken of any distinguished visitors sitting in the Speaker's Gallery and introduced by the Speaker.
11. Applause shots may be taken, however care should be taken to ensure that the decorum of the Chamber is maintained.
12. The name, constituency, portfolio and political affiliation of a member of a recognized party, as the case may be, shall be shown periodically on the screen while he or she is speaking and, that for any member not of a recognized party, the member shall be recognized as an Independent member, and only the name and constituency shall be shown.
13. Factual information shall be shown in print across the bottom of the screen from time to time to explain the proceedings. Such information should be shown only after consultation with the Clerks-at-the-Table.
14. The television content which is produced by the Legislative Assembly may be broadcast or streamed by television stations, news organizations and/or cable casters live or by means of recordings.
15. Copies of the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly may be obtained from the Broadcast and Recording Service. Access to this service shall be according to the following priority: members of the Legislative Assembly, members of the press, officers and officials of the House, and the general public. This service shall be provided free of charge. The Broadcast and Recording Service will provide a link where the file can be downloaded.
16. The Broadcast and Recording Service shall ensure that a complete record of the day's proceedings is archived. This material should be kept indefinitely.

**APPENDIX A:  
DISSENTING OPINION FROM THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY MEMBERS OF THE  
COMMITTEE**



In keeping with our established position on the matter of acknowledging the party affiliation of all Members of the House, New Democrats are submitting this dissenting opinion because the revisions to the Television Guidelines passed by the Progressive Conservative majority of the Committee fail to reflect this principle. While the Standing Orders have historically maintained a threshold for recognized party status for the purpose of allocation of resources and access to certain privileges in the Assembly, the House also operates with the understanding that the complement of MPPs in any parliament may consist of one or more duly elected representatives from a number of legally constituted parties beyond those historically represented, a reality in keeping with the provisions of legislation passed by the House itself.

Section 10 of the *Election Finances Act* sets out the requirements that must be met for a party to be formally recognized by the Chief Electoral Officer; it is only when these conditions are satisfied that candidates are allowed to stand for election as affiliates of a legally recognized political entity. While no one questions the authority of the House to establish its own rules to govern the distribution of resources, it is counterintuitive to arrive at the conclusion that these rules would be designed with the intent to both abrogate relevant provincial legislation governing the electoral process and at the same time undermine the electoral outcome in a riding or ridings. If a candidate runs under the banner of a legally registered political party and voters intentionally elect the Member in that context, it is incumbent on the House to respect and reflect the outcome of the race. Simply put, if the MPP did not run as an independent, then the adoption of a policy that deliberately and retroactively disassociates a Member from her/his party affiliation is not only disrespectful to the Member, but also to the voters that knowingly chose this person to represent their community. The authority of the House lies in the understanding that the outcomes of votes are to be respected; this new policy advanced by the Progressive Conservative majority of the Committee fails to uphold this foundational principle of our democracy.



**APPENDIX B:  
DISSENTING OPINION FROM THE LIBERAL INDEPENDENT MEMBER OF THE  
COMMITTEE**



## DISSENTING OPINION FROM THE LIBERAL MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE

In my opinion the changes made to Paragraph 12 of the Television Guidelines is inconsistent with a 2003 Speaker's ruling.

Specifically the amendment moved by MPP Coe which reads:

"Paragraph 12 be amended to include the phrase "of a recognized party" after the word "member; and that after the word "speaking" the following clause be added "and, that for any Member not of a recognized party, the Member shall be recognized as an Independent Member, and only the name and constituency shall be shown." of the Television Guidelines is inconsistent with a 2003 Speaker's ruling.

First, the committee's mandate was to update the guidelines because they date back to 1986 and are outdated. This amendment is not simply an update, and will make a significant change to the Television Guidelines.

Second, on November 27, 2003, Speaker Alvin Curling ruled on this matter.

In his ruling, he stated: "Having said this, I note that Speaker Parent of the Canadian House of Commons, in his June 16, 1994 ruling, accommodated those members who were not affiliated with a recognized party by allowing the members of one particular group to be seated near each other and to be identified by the group's traditional name, by allowing the members of another political group to be seated near each other and to be identified by their group's traditional name, and by then assigning other independent members the remaining seats according to their seniority. In keeping with the thrust of that ruling, I too am able to make some accommodation and so I'm ruling that, in this chamber, the member for Niagara Centre and the other six members not affiliated with a recognized party may collectively be referred to as the third party. Further, since party identification is permissible in certain Assembly print and electronic publications, such as Hansard and Ont.Parl, they can be referred to as the New Democratic Party in those publications, in accordance with usual practice and policy."

During committee discussion MPP Coe stated that "Furthermore, dealing with paragraph 12 as amended to include the phrase "of a recognized party" after the word "member," hearken back, members, to our discussion of independents and the discussion of what constitutes a member of the independents. Again, this is consistent with the prevailing practice in the Legislature." The Speaker's ruling clearly shows that this change is not consistent with the prevailing practice.