

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – ADDITIONAL ELECTORATE STAFF RESOURCES

The FAQ's below address the following issues and actions:

- Employment of new EOBs
- Review of office structure
- Allocation of ESA
- Nomination of specified traveler

The new provisions come into effect from 1 July 2023. Parliamentarians may wish to consider arrangements most suitable for their office/s with the additional allocation and flexibilities offered by these changes. Please contact Ministerial and Parliamentary Services to discuss the new provisions or any requirements you may have.

Questions relating to the additional EOB:

- When can I engage a person/s against the new EOB position?

While the additional allocation is effective from Saturday 1 July 2023, new employment contracts cannot have a commencement date earlier than Monday 3 July 2023. Ministerial and Parliamentary Services can receive new employment contracts for processing from 1 June 2023.

- I have someone I want to hire now. Can I offer them a contract?

Yes, you and the prospective employee can complete an employment agreement now, noting the earliest commencement date of 3 July 2023.

- Can I promote a person from within my office (e.g. promote an EOA)?

Yes, as long as your office maintains either a BBBBA or CBBAA structure - based on a standard electorate office. The promotion cannot commence until 3 July 2023, the first working day when the allocation takes effect.

- Can I competency assess another EO?

The competency assessment provisions outlined at clause 17.7 of the Enterprise Agreement remain in place. An ongoing electorate employee who reaches the top of the salary range for an Electorate Officer classification may:

(a) after 12 months at that salary point; and

(b) subject to competency assessment undertaken by the employing parliamentarian,

be moved to the next Electorate Officer classification. However, at any time, only one employee of an employing parliamentarian can be at the next Electorate Officer classification as a result of the process undertaken under this clause.

- How will I fit them in my office?

If you have any concerns regarding office space or accommodation, please contact your Ministerial and Parliamentary Services State or Territory Manager as they are best placed to advise on arrangements.

- Is an office permitted to advertise for the additional EOB position ahead of the funding allocation? Currently MOPS Support generally only supports the advertisement of vacant positions, not potentially vacant positions.

Yes, noting you can only employ from 3 July 2023.

- How will I organise a desk for the new employee/s?

Your Ministerial and Parliamentary Services State or Territory Manager can advise.

- How will I organise ICT equipment for the new employee/s?

The Department of Parliamentary Services (DPS) is responsible for the provision of ICT equipment and services to parliamentarians and their staff, including computers and peripherals.

Please contact [DPS' 2020 Service Desk](#) to discuss ICT arrangements.

- Can you help me with recruitment?

The MOPS Support team - MOPSSupport@finance.gov.au - can assist you with any recruitment queries. A job advertisement template is available on the MaPS website.

The MOPS Support team can organise or reimburse the placement of up to three standard job advertisements for an ongoing position.

Offices are welcome to seek feedback regarding compliance on job advertisements or position descriptions for ongoing, non-ongoing and casual roles.

- Can I restructure my office?

It remains open to parliamentarians to restructure e.g. if changes in role and responsibilities are required to incorporate the increase.

- Can I employ a personal employee instead?

No, the additional position is for an Electorate Officer B.

- Can my new EOB position be based in any of my offices?

Existing work base arrangements remain unchanged. Depending on the circumstances, approval for an alternative work base may be required. For example, if an employee wishes to work from home, approval is required. Requests for alternative work bases can be made to MPShelp@finance.gov.au.

- Where will the new EOB position working for a parliamentarian with multiple offices be allocated? What will be their work base?

In accordance with the *Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020-23* (MOPS EA), an employee's work base is:

- a) for an ongoing or non-ongoing employee, to the place of work where the employee spends most time on duty; and
 - b) for a casual employee, to the place of work where the employee spends most time on duty. The separate instances of work during the period in their employment agreement will be considered together for the employee's work base.
- Can a new EOB request to work at APH in addition to an existing employee?

Existing arrangements for the nomination of work bases for electorate employees have not changed.

Parliamentarians with a standard 5 person office structure may nominate 4 electorate employee to have a work base of the parliamentarian's EO, and the other one to have a work base of the EO, Parliament House office, or other Ministerial office (if relevant).

A request for an alternative work bases outside of this arrangement, including for an additional Electorate employee to also work from Parliament House requires approval from the Delegate at Ministerial and Parliamentary Services. Requests can be made by emailing MPSHelp@finance.gov.au.

Questions relating to the extra points of ESA

- Does this new allocation mean I can reallocate ESA to everyone in my office?

The additional allocation itself is not a 'trigger' for reallocation. However, as the allocation will be provided at the commencement of the financial year, the parliamentarian may vary the allocation of ESA for each employee.

When will my parliamentarian receive the allocation?

1 July 2023

- What if we do not hire someone to fill the new position for a while – does the Parliamentarian still get the additional 8 points of ESA?

All parliamentarians will receive the additional EOB position and additional 8 ESA points from 1 July 2023. Even if an employee is not engaged in the new position, the additional ESA will be available for the parliamentarian to allocate.

- Does the per-person allocation cap of 16 points remain the same?

Yes, the maximum number of points which can be allocated to a single employee will still be ESA-16.

- If our office forgets to allocate the additional ESA-8 on 1 July 2023, can we back-date our request to allocate these points?

No. In line with the Additional Hours Guideline, changes to ESA will be effective from the date Ministerial and Parliamentary Services receives the ESA allocation advice.

Questions relating to the nominated traveller provision

- When will this change take effect?

1 July 2023

- Can a nominated traveler also travel business class if directed?

It depends whether their travel and employment conditions meet the criteria and provisions as outlined in clause 14 and 15 of the Staff Travel Determination.

- Will there be any other changes to the flexibility of this provision?

Yes. Parliamentarians can now make changes to the nominated traveller up to three times within a financial year period to accommodate for any unforeseen circumstances or staffing arrangement changes that arise. A reason does not need to be provided to IPEA in these circumstances, however a new [IPEA: Electorate Employee Travel Nomination](#) (form to be updated) must be submitted to enable the change/s to be processed.

- Will there be any other changes to the flexibility of this provision? For example, will I be able to change the nomination to another staff member within the 12 month nomination period?

Any changes to the provisions are a matter for the Special Minister of State. In the event there are any changes, Ministerial and Parliamentary Services will communicate this to all parliamentarians and staff.

- Can I nominate two part-time employees to share the role?

No. The provision is currently only available to one employee and is a standing arrangement for 12 months with the flexibility of being amended up to three times per financial year.

Other frequently asked questions

- Is the annual budget for office expenses (office budget) provided under the *Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017* changing?

No. The office budget is prescribed under the *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* and is a fixed amount for senators and members of the House of Representatives.

- When will PEMS reflect the additional resources?

Updates and additional resources will be reflected on PEMS on 1 July 2023. This includes updates to the 2023-24 Electorate Support Budget (ESB).