



Australian Government

Department of Finance

Key Points

- *Effective from 15 May 2018, the parliamentary business resources framework covers:*
 - (a) *the reimbursement of expenses up to \$20,000 (GST inclusive) in 2017-18 (indexed annually) for private electorate office leasing and service costs for Members of the House of Representatives who represent electorates of 25,000km² or more, and*
 - (b) *mobile office facilities and equipment.*
- *The arrangements relating to private electorate office leasing costs are retrospective, applying to existing leases from the commencement of the 2017-18 financial year.*
- *These work expenses are subject to the obligations under the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017.*

Circular No 2018/05

**All Senators and Members
All MOP(S) Act Employees**

AMENDMENTS TO THE *PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS RESOURCES REGULATIONS 2017* – REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR PRIVATELY-LEASED ELECTORATE OFFICES, AND MOBILE OFFICE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

On 15 May 2018, the *Parliamentary Business Resources Amendment (2018 Measures No. 1) Regulations 2018* (the amending regulations) amended the *Parliamentary Business Resources Regulations 2017* (PBR Regulations), introducing two broadened work expenses that may be claimed by parliamentarians to assist them in conducting their parliamentary business.

Specifically, the work expenses that may be claimed are:

- the reimbursement of expenses up to \$20,000 (GST inclusive) in 2017-18 (indexed annually) for private electorate office leasing and service costs for Members of the House of Representatives who represent electorates of 25,000km² or more, and
- mobile office facilities and equipment (such as a marquee) as office expenses that are subject to parliamentarians' annual budget for office expenses.

In accessing the above work expenses, parliamentarians are reminded of their [obligations under the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017](#), including the dominant purpose and value for money tests.

Further information on each of these claimable expenses is provided at [Attachment A](#).

The amending regulations also make a number of technical amendments to the PBR Regulations including reinstating the pro-rata provisions for people who become a member during a financial year that existed under the previous framework.

Should you require any further information regarding these work expenses, please contact your Ministerial and Parliamentary Services' Advice and Support Director on the number below*.



Lauren Barons
A/g Assistant Secretary
Advice and Support Branch
Ministerial and Parliamentary Services

15 May 2018

* Advice and Support Directors	State and Territory	Contact Number
Ms Donna Fiveash (A/g)	ACT, NSW, WA	02 6215 3426
Mr Daniel Collet (A/g)	QLD, SA	02 6215 1373
Mr Shane McGaughey	NT, TAS, VIC	02 6215 3827

Attachment A**Reimbursement of Expenses for Privately-Leased Electorate Offices**

This provision allows Members of the House of Representatives with electorates of 25,000km² or more to claim reimbursement of up to \$20,000 in the 2017-18 financial year to lease, operate, maintain, establish or vacate a privately-leased office within their electorate. The maximum amount of reimbursement each year is GST inclusive and indexed for future financial years in line with CPI. A similar arrangement is already in place for Members of the House of Representatives with electorates between 5,000km² and 25,000km².

Consistent with the existing provision:

- To be eligible for the reimbursement, a parliamentarian must, in their individual capacity, enter into a commercial property lease arrangement with a minimum term of six months, for fixed premises located within their electorate.
- Associated services include expenses connected with the operation of the office, including electricity, gas, water and sewerage, repairs and maintenance that are not the landlord's responsibility, insurance, lease costs for office furniture and equipment, and any relevant Commonwealth, State and local duties, charges and taxes.
- Any costs relating to the purchase of office furniture and equipment (or other assets or physical items) which could provide a personal benefit to the parliamentarian will not be reimbursed. This includes lease costs for office furniture and equipment which results in the item being wholly or partially owned by the parliamentarian following the expiration of the lease (such as lease/rent to buy schemes).
- To be eligible to claim the work expense the office must be for the dominant purpose of conducting the Member's parliamentary business under the Parliamentary Business Resources Act 2017, which specifically excludes activities that are for the dominant purpose of providing a personal benefit to, or pursuing the commercial purposes of, the parliamentarian or another person.
- Parliamentarians are personally responsible for all arrangements, statutory obligations and expenses for the office, including work health and safety obligations and the payment of rent and associated and non-associated services. The limit of the Commonwealth's involvement will be the reimbursement of eligible expenses.
- The total reimbursement claimed by a parliamentarian in a financial year cannot exceed whichever is the lesser of the total office lease and service costs paid by the parliamentarian for that financial year or the maximum amount claimable for the financial year.

Further information on this work expense, including how to claim the expense, is available on the [Satellite Electorate Offices guidance page](#) on the M&PS website.

Mobile Office Facilities and Equipment

Further to the existing mobile office signage that can be met from the annual budget for office expenses introduced as part of the new parliamentary work expenses framework, parliamentarians may now claim expenses relating to mobile office facilities and equipment.

This provision allows parliamentarians to procure a range of facilities and equipment for use as part of a mobile office. For example, a member could procure a marquee to provide coverage when they are conducting their parliamentary business outdoors, and other necessary items such as a table and chairs, or the cost of an exhibition booth.

The cost of items procured under this provision is deducted from the annual budget for office expenses.

Claims in relation to this work expense should be made using [Form 155 - Certification and Request for Payment - Office Stationery & Supplies, Minor Office Equipment, ICT Accessories, Publications and Mobile Electorate Office Expenses](#).