

060329-Jc disabled
save as: harpen

PARLEMENT VAN DIE REPUBLIEK VAN SUID-AFRIKA
PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Telefoon 403-2911
Telephone



Posbus 15
P.O. Box
KAAPSTAD
CAPE TOWN
8000

Verw./Ref.

POLICY ON FACILITIES FOR MEMBERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

1. Introduction and Background

Members of Parliament are citizens of the Republic of South Africa. In terms of our Constitution, all citizens are equally entitled to the rights, privileges and benefits of citizenship; and everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. This policy seeks to remove barriers and equalize opportunities for Members with special needs; and to provide for incidental matters.

2. Definition of terms

Paraplegia involves a loss of sensation and movement in the legs and in part or the entire trunk. This varies according to the level of the injury. Generally, the lower the injury, the less the loss of movement and sensation. Paraplegia usually results from an injury to the spinal cord in the mid and lower back.

Quadriplegia normally means a loss of sensation and movement in all four limbs and the trunk. This generally results from a spinal cord injury to the neck. However, the loss of sensation and movement may not be complete with some sensation and movement being retained in parts of the arms and legs.

Blind means the inability to see or the loss or absence of perception of visual stimuli.

Visually impaired means reduced or weakened sight.

Partially sighted means not completely blind.

Deaf means partial or total inability to hear. A condition in which the sense of hearing in one or both ears is not functional.

Other special needs include but are not limited to severe arthritis and conditions requiring use of walking aids.

Official business means any activity that is related to the business of the Houses and committee meetings.

Member means a Member of Parliament.

Presiding Officers mean the Speaker of the National Assembly and the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces.

Assistant means a person assisting the Member with special needs.

3. Policy Statement

Parliament recognizes that Members with special needs must participate effectively and efficiently in all parliamentary structures.

4. Purpose

To ensure that Members with special needs properly integrate and participate meaningfully in all parliamentary structures through the equalization of opportunities and the elimination of physical barriers to ensure equal access to goods and services.

5. Scope of application

This policy applies to all Members with special needs.

6. Objective

To provide the necessary facilities to Members with special needs.

7. Legislative Framework/mandate

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

8. Policy provisions

Members with special needs must inform the Chief Whip or the most senior whip of their party of his/her special needs. The Chief Whip or most senior whip must in writing request the Secretary to Parliament to provide the affected Member with the necessary facilities.

The Secretary to Parliament may provide the following facilities:

8.1. For Paraplegia and Quadriplegia

- a) Computer equipment that is suitable to the needs of the Member.
- b) Specialized transport to and from Parliamentary Villages or reimburse the Member in full for daily commuting in his/her own car
- c) Large office that is easily accessible.
- d) Desks on pillar legs that are height adjustable.