



Premier of Queensland
Minister for the Olympics



Brisbane 2032
Olympic and Paralympic
Games Host
Queensland



For reply please quote: CAPS/AT – TF/21/26446 – DOC/21/231552

29 NOV 2021

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
clerksoffice@parliament.qld.gov.au

1 William Street Brisbane
PO Box 15185 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3719 7000
Email ThePremier@premiers.qld.gov.au
Website www.thepremier.qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to Petition 3612-21 about access to Parliament House which was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 26 October 2021.

Under section 50 of the *Parliamentary Service Act 1988* (the Act), all persons entering or upon the parliamentary precinct are required to comply with the directions of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly as to their behaviour, demeanour and conduct.

However, it is noted that section 50(7) of the Act provides that the Speaker's directions in this regard do not apply to members of the Legislative Assembly in the conduct of their parliamentary business. The rationale for this exclusion being that the Legislative Assembly as a whole, rather than the Speaker, should deal with its members.

Vaccination forms a critical part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Queensland. In line with *Queensland's COVID-19 Vaccine Plan to Unite Families*, my Government has taken an active role in encouraging all eligible Queenslanders to get vaccinated.

Eligible Queenslanders aged 12 years and over can access the vaccine in a range of ways including at Queensland Health sites, outreach clinics, or through General Practitioners, community pharmacies or First Nations healthcare services.

Workplaces are encouraged to consider their own risk profile, as well as programs which can support vaccination, such as special leave provisions. COVID-19 has been shown to disproportionately affect and pose a significantly higher risk to certain workers. That is why Queensland has mandated COVID-19 vaccinations in certain high-risk environments, including for health, disability and aged-care workers, quarantine workers, law enforcement officers and essential workers crossing into Queensland from interstate.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Parliament has already passed laws and agreed to special procedures to enable the transaction of the business of the Legislative Assembly during exceptional circumstances brought on by the pandemic.

Under the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*, the Committee of the Legislative Assembly (CLA) is responsible for oversight of Standing Orders as well as oversight of the Legislative Assembly's practices and procedures.

As the request made in Petition 3612-21 encroaches on the responsibilities of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, as well as the practices and procedures of the Legislative Assembly, I believe that it would be more appropriate for the Speaker and the CLA to consider the petition in the first instance rather than the Government.

As such, I have written to the Speaker and Chair of the CLA, the Honourable Curtis Pitt MP, asking if he and the CLA will consider Petition 3612-21.

If the CLA decides to make any recommendations to the Legislative Assembly about the petition, then the Government will consider them and respond in accordance with section 107 of the *Parliament of Queensland Act 2001*.

I hope this information is of assistance to the petitioners, and I thank them for their support for vaccinations against COVID-19.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annastacia', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**ANNASTACIA PALASZCZUK MP
PREMIER OF QUEENSLAND
MINISTER FOR THE OLYMPICS**