

17 May 2024

Dear Tribunal,

I am writing to make a submission on the proposed Determination (including Guidelines), as outlined here: [Members of Parliament salaries and allowances - annual adjustment | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/members-of-parliament-salaries-and-allowances-annual-adjustment).

My submission covers three areas:

1. Government and Opposition Whip expense allowances
2. Shadow Parliamentary Secretary roles
3. Classification of the Mornington Electorate

### **1. Government and Opposition Whip expense allowances**

Currently, both the Government Whip and Opposition Whip do not receive an additional office expense allowance.

This is in comparison to Shadow Ministers and others with additional office responsibilities who do.

As Opposition Whip, this is a role that in a regular sitting fortnight takes at least five full days of work, in addition to regular constituent, electorate and other responsibilities.

These additional responsibilities often mean sending up 1-2 staff members on sitting days, and sometimes on the day prior to sitting days, compared to many other MPs who bring 0-1 staff members and just on sitting days. This comes at a greater cost to the office budget in terms of staff travel, accommodation and other costs, and taking on more casual staff in the electorate office for longer to assist with electorate duties (due to less staff) when Parliament is sitting.

The Whip roles also involve significantly more printing for the chamber and in providing written information to members of one's party, and other office expenses.

Overall, the Whip role means from my calculation an additional expenditure across the financial year of at least \$10,000 extra in one's office Budget to cater for Whip responsibilities, meaning less available for spending on electorate and constituent responsibilities, communications and electorate office expenses.

***Recommendation 1*** - It would be suggested that a \$12,452 office expense allowance be provided, at least for the Government Whip and Opposition Whip in particular, which is the same expense allowance as provided to Shadow Ministers.

See the table below for current Whip expense allowances, and the full list here: [Members of Parliament salaries and allowances | vic.gov.au \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/members-of-parliament-salaries-and-allowances).

<b>Specified parliamentary office holder</b>	<b>Additional salary \$</b>	<b>Expense allowance \$</b>
Premier	221,871	60,480
Deputy Premier	187,644	23,125
<b>Any other responsible Minister of the Crown</b>	<b>167,132</b>	<b>17,789</b>
Leader of the Opposition	167,132	17,789
President	145,990	7,116
Speaker	145,990	7,116
Deputy President	56,094	3,558
Deputy Speaker	56,094	3,558
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly	79,954	3,558
Leader of the Opposition in the Council	79,954	3,558
Leader of the Third Party (unless they are also the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition or a Minister of the Crown)	79,954	3,558
Cabinet Secretary	79,954	3,558
Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier	56,094	3,558
<b>A Shadow Minister</b>	<b>17,375</b>	<b>12,452</b>
Government Whip in the Assembly	35,790	0
Deputy Government Whip in the Assembly	19,883	0
Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Council	35,790	0
A Parliamentary Secretary (other than the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier)	46,152	3,558
Deputy Leader of the Third Party (unless they are also the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Opposition or a Minister of the Crown)	35,790	0
<b>Government Whip in the Council</b>	<b>21,872</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Opposition Whip in the Assembly</b>	<b>21,872</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Opposition Whip in the Council</b>	<b>21,872</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Whip of the Third Party in the Assembly</b>	<b>21,872</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Whip of the Third Party in the Council</b>	<b>21,872</b>	<b>0</b>

## **2. Shadow Parliamentary Secretary roles**

Shadow Parliamentary Secretary roles involve greater responsibilities than backbench MPs, as well as greater travel, communications expenses, events, meeting, policy work and so forth, but involve less responsibilities than Shadow Ministers.

Ministers, Shadow Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are catered for in the list in terms of salaries and expense allowances, but Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries are not mentioned or catered for. See: [Members of Parliament salaries and allowances | vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au) ([www.vic.gov.au](http://www.vic.gov.au)).

Also in 'Schedule 2 – Office holders' of the Members of Parliament (Victoria) Guidelines No. 01/2023 (see <https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-06/Members-of-Parliament-%28Victoria%29-Guidelines-No.-01-2023.pdf>), Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries are not listed as being Office holders. Nor are Whips.

That means that, say under section 7(4)(f) of the Guidelines, a Shadow Parliamentary Secretary is not covered under 'Parliamentary business' for attendances that are occasioned by official business resulting from the office held, either directly or even when representing the portfolio Shadow Minister at an event, meeting or function, which may also require travel.

***Recommendation 2 - Consideration should be given to including Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries in the list of those catered for in terms of salaries and expense allowances, as well as listing Shadow Parliamentary Secretaries (and Whips) amongst the Office holder positions in Schedule 2 of the Guidelines.***

### **3. Classification of the Mornington Electorate**

Currently, the Mornington electorate is the only electorate based on the Mornington Peninsula, within the Eastern Victoria Legislative Council region, that is not listed in Schedule 1 of the Guidelines. In comparison, Hastings and Nepean electorates are listed in Schedule 1.

This is despite that fact that:

- Mount Martha in the Mornington electorate is the same distance travel time by car to the CBD as Geelong (which is listed in Schedule 1).
- People within all parts of the Mornington electorate refer to their own locality as being a town or village, not a suburb (such as in Mount Eliza in the north of the Mornington electorate where my family and I live).
- The shortest practicable route by road between parts of the south of Mount Martha (in the south of the Mornington electorate) and the Melbourne centre exceeds 80 kilometres.
- The Mornington electorate is entirely within the Mornington Peninsula Shire (not a city council), whereas electorates like Hastings (which are listed under Schedule 1) extend more north taking in parts of both Frankston City Council and Mornington Peninsula Shire.
- Most people in Mornington electorate would consider themselves as being inner regional, as opposed to metropolitan.
- The Mornington electorate has many farming and green wedge / reserve areas, in particular in Moorooduc and Tuerong, with multiple dirt roads and tracks, including dryland farming, wineries, vegetable growing, egg farms, cattle farming and more. However, due to Mornington electorate not being listed in Schedule 1, 4WD vehicle access as a Member of Parliament option is not a possibility.
- 82% of the Mornington Peninsula has no access to public transport. This includes the Mornington electorate, which has minimal and limited bus services, and no passenger rail services altogether. This compares with Geelong (under Schedule 1)

which has much better public transport options, including passenger rail, and a higher population density than much of the Mornington Peninsula. For example, from my family home in Mount Eliza the nearest bus service is a 17 minute walk away. This is similar for many people in the Mornington electorate, meaning that driving is often the only, or only convenient, option.

**Recommendation 3 - Consideration should thus be given to including the Mornington electorate in Schedule 1 of the Guidelines, consistent with other electorates Hastings and Nepean on the Mornington Peninsula within the Eastern Victoria region.**

Thank you for your consideration of these suggested updates to the proposed Determination incorporating the Guidelines.

Yours sincerely,



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Opposition Whip in the Legislative Assembly

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