



What are the Principles?

The introduction of a principles-based approach and the establishment of a new legal framework to govern the use of public resources for parliamentary business are key components of streamlining parliamentarians' work and travel expenses. From 1 January 2018, parliamentarians must ensure that any expenditure for parliamentary business is consistent with the principles outlined below.



The new principles-based expenses framework requires that parliamentarians:

- use public resources only for the dominant purpose of parliamentary business;
- conduct their parliamentary business in a way that achieves value for money;
- meet any conditions connected to expenses and allowances they claim;
- are prepared to be personally responsible and accountable for their use of public resources in the conduct of their parliamentary business;
- are prepared to publicly justify their use of public resources in conducting their parliamentary business; and
- act ethically and in good faith in using, and accounting for the use of, public resources in the conduct of their parliamentary business.

What is parliamentary business?

'Parliamentary business' includes activities that fall within four streams:

- **parliamentary duties:** covers activities of the parliamentarian that relate directly to the parliamentarian's role as a member of Parliament;



- **electorate duties:** activities of the parliamentarian that support or serve their constituents;
- **party political duties:** activities of the parliamentarian that are connected with both their political party and their membership of the Parliament; and
- **official duties:** activities that relate to the parliamentarian's role as an office holder or Minister.

These streams of parliamentary business will be further refined by a Ministerial Determination.

Principle: Dominant Purpose

From 1 January 2018, parliamentarians must ensure that any expenses incurred are for the 'dominant purpose' of conducting parliamentary business (i.e. expenses should not be claimed if they relate to personal or commercial activities).

Principle: Value for Money

The new expenses framework also requires that parliamentarians use public resources for parliamentary business in a way that achieves value for money. Value for money means using public money efficiently, effectively and economically, consistent with the obligations on the proper use of public resources by Commonwealth officials under the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

Principle: Good Faith

Parliamentarians need to act ethically and in good faith when using, or accounting for, public resources. For example, they must not seek to disguise their personal or commercial business as parliamentary business. Acting in good faith would require that parliamentarians act honestly and consider all of the reasons for claiming or using public resources in the circumstances.

Principle: Personal Responsibility

A parliamentarian is ultimately responsible for their use of resources and should consider how the public would perceive their use of public resources for travel in particular circumstances. Personal responsibility extends to the use of public resources in the parliamentarian's name by others who may be authorised to incur expenses within their office or for family reunion purposes.

Principle: Accountability

If a parliamentarian were to be publicly questioned over their use of public resources for travel, they would be expected to publicly account for their use of those resources. Simply stating that a parliamentarian's use of expenses in the circumstances in question was consistent with the rules may not be enough to meet the obligations of the new framework.

Further information on the principles is available at www.ipea.gov.au.