

# Commonwealth Youth Parliament

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November 6-10, 2016  
Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

## STANDING ORDERS OF THE 8<sup>TH</sup> COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PARLIAMENT





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## **Standing Orders of the 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Youth Parliament**

### ***Introduction***

The Standing Orders of the 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Youth Parliament are the formal written rules that govern the proceedings of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament, such as the rules of debate, the role of the Speaker, and the business and the conduct of Youth Parliamentarians. When a procedural question arises, the Speaker makes a ruling based on the Standing Orders as well as parliamentary practice and precedent. In instances where the Standing Orders do not provide detailed guidance, the Commonwealth Youth Parliament will refer to the *Standing Orders of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia*.

### ***Proceedings of the 8th Commonwealth Youth Parliament***

1. Proceedings of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament are open to the public and will be recorded and transcribed by Hansard Services.

### ***Decorum in the Chamber***

2. All Youth Parliamentarians shall rise and remain standing when the Speaker enters the Legislative Chamber until the Speaker has reached the Speaker's Chair, acknowledges Youth Parliamentarians on both sides of the Chamber and states, "Please be seated."
3. At the end of a sitting, Youth Parliamentarians shall rise and remain standing in their places until the Speaker has left the Legislative Chamber.
4. Youth Parliamentarians shall wear business attire or their traditional national attire, as befits the dignity and decorum of the Legislative Chamber.
5. Refreshments, other than water, are not permitted in the Legislative Chamber.
6. Electronic devices may be used in the Legislative Chamber in silent mode, but not by a Youth Parliamentarian who is speaking in the Legislative Chamber and is in possession of the floor.
7. Photography is permitted in the Legislative Chamber during proceedings and recess periods.

### ***Conduct of Youth Parliamentarians***

8. Youth Parliamentarians shall not refer to one another in debate in the second person singular (“you”), only by title and surname (“Mr. Jones” or “Ms. Smith”) or in general by title (“the Honourable Youth Parliamentarian”).
9. A Youth Parliamentarian shall not personally criticize another Youth Parliamentarian.
10. A Youth Parliamentarian wishing to speak shall stand in his or her place and shall only speak when recognized to do so by the Speaker.
11. When two or more Youth Parliamentarians rise in their places to speak, the Speaker shall call upon the Youth Parliamentarian who, in the Speaker’s opinion, rose first.
12. A Youth Parliamentarian who is addressing the Commonwealth Youth Parliament shall take his or her seat when
  - a. Called to order by the Speaker;
  - b. A point of order is raised by another Youth Parliamentarian; or
  - c. The Speaker rises.
13. A Youth Parliamentarian shall always speak to the subject matter of the debate.
14. The use of unparliamentary language is prohibited during proceedings in the Legislative Chamber. Expressions which are unparliamentary include those which involve an accusation of false motives, the suggestion of misrepresentation or falsehood, and abusive or insulting language. Good temper and moderation are the characteristics of parliamentary behaviour and language.
15. The Speaker shall call to order any Youth Parliamentarian using unparliamentary language and ask the Youth Parliamentarian to withdraw the unparliamentary remark. If the remark is not withdrawn, the Speaker may order the Youth Parliamentarian to leave the Legislative Chamber.
16. When a Youth Parliamentarian is speaking, no other Youth Parliamentarian shall pass between the person speaking and the Speaker, nor interrupt the Youth Parliamentarian speaking, except to raise a point of order.
17. No Youth Parliamentarian may pass between the Speaker and the Mace.

18. On entering or leaving the Legislative Chamber, Youth Parliamentarians should give a slight bow to the Speaker's Chair, as a gesture of respect. Youth Parliamentarians shall refer to the Speaker as "Madame Speaker", or in the case of a Deputy Speaker taking the Chair, "Mister Speaker", at all times.

## **The Speaker**

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The Speaker maintains order and decorum in debate during the Commonwealth Youth Parliament, and ensures that all Youth Parliamentarians have an opportunity to take part in debates. The Speaker will have ensure that Youth Parliamentarians conduct their business according to the *Standing Orders of the 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Youth Parliament*.

It is essential that the Speaker be seen to be neutral and above party politics. As such, the Speaker does not participate in debate and does not vote, unless a tie vote occurs. All remarks made in the 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Youth Parliament must be addressed to the Speaker, not directly to other Youth Parliamentarians. No Youth Parliamentarian may stand when the Speaker is standing.

### ***Powers of the Speaker***

19. The Speaker, or her designate, shall preside over all debates and proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> Commonwealth Youth Parliament.
20. The Speaker shall preserve order and decorum and shall decide questions of order and practice. During committee stage debate on a bill, the Deputy Speaker or Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall preserve order and decorum in Committee. No decision of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, or of the Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall be subject to an appeal.
21. A Youth Parliamentarian who has been called to order by the Speaker must apologize to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament immediately; failure to do so, or refusal to comply with an order of the Speaker, may result in expulsion from the Legislative Chamber for a period of time as specified by the Speaker.

22. The Speaker may ‘name’ any Youth Parliamentarian who acts in a grossly disorderly fashion. A Youth Parliamentarian who has been ‘named’ shall be required to leave the Legislative Chamber immediately, and may only return to the Chamber after they have apologized to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament. The Speaker has sole discretion over the interruption of proceedings to allow a Youth Parliamentarian to make such an apology.

## Daily Schedule

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**Prayers** – at the beginning of each day’s proceedings, the Speaker will invite a Youth Parliamentarian to “lead the House in prayer”. The prayer may be of any faith or denomination, or may be a moment of reflection.

**Introductions by Youth Parliamentarians** are intended to allow Youth Parliamentarians an opportunity to briefly (not more than 30 seconds) introduce a dignitary or visitor on the floor of the Legislative Chamber or in the Legislative Galleries. Youth Parliamentarians may also use introduction time to send greetings or special wishes on a notable occasion (e.g. a milestone birthday or anniversary) to a constituent.

**Introduction of Bills** allows Youth Parliamentarians to introduce a bill. See Standing Orders 59 to 63 for detailed procedure.

**Youth Parliamentarians’ Statements** are intended to give Youth Parliamentarians the opportunity to address the Commonwealth Youth Parliament for up to two minutes on virtually any matter of local, national or international concern.

**Oral Question Period** is a 15-minute period that allows Youth Parliamentarians (usually those not part of the Government Caucus) to ask questions that hold the government to account for its administrative policies and the conduct of its Ministers, both individually and collectively.

23. The daily routine business of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament shall be as follows:

- a. Monday, November 7, 2016 – First Afternoon Sitting
  - i. Prayers
- b. Monday, November 7, 2016 – Second Afternoon Sitting
  - i. Introductions by Youth Parliamentarians
  - ii. Introduction of Bills
  - iii. Youth Parliamentarians’ Statements
  - iv. Oral Question Period

- c. Tuesday, November 8, 2016 – Morning Sitting
  - i. Prayers
  - ii. Introductions by Youth Parliamentarians
  - iii. Introduction of Bills
  - iv. Youth Parliamentarians’ Statements
  - v. Oral Question Period
- d. Tuesday, November 8, 2016 – Afternoon Sitting
  - i. Introductions by Youth Parliamentarians
  - ii. Youth Parliamentarians’ Statements
  - iii. Oral Question Period
- e. Wednesday, November 9, 2016 – Afternoon Sitting
  - i. Prayers
  - ii. Introductions by Youth Parliamentarians
  - iii. Youth Parliamentarians’ Statements
  - iv. Oral Question Period
- f. Thursday, November 10, 2016 – Morning Sitting
  - i. Prayers
  - ii. Oral Question Period

## Orders of the Day

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24. Unless otherwise ordered, the order of business for consideration of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament day by day, after the above daily routine business, shall be as follows:

- a. Monday, November 7, 2016
  - i. Speech from the Throne
  - ii. Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne
- b. Tuesday, November 8, 2016
  - i. Second Reading Debate on *Youth Apprenticeship and Internship Act*
- c. Wednesday, November 9, 2016
  - i. Committee of the Whole (including amendments) on *Youth Apprenticeship and Internship Act*
  - ii. Third Reading of *Youth Apprenticeship and Internship Act*
- d. Thursday, November 10, 2016
  - i. Closing Speeches

### ***Reading of Speeches***

25. The reading of prepared speeches by Youth Parliamentarians is discouraged. The Commonwealth Youth Parliament is intended to be a place of debate, not of reading into the record.
26. Notwithstanding Standing Order 25, it is acknowledged that on some occasions, it may be necessary to read part of a prepared text. In practice, some Youth Parliamentarians may wish to have notes from which to speak.
27. A Youth Parliamentarian may refer to notes to make brief quotations or points of fact.

### ***Debate – Background***

Debate is intended to give Youth Parliamentarians the opportunity to speak to a bill, amendment or motion in the Legislative Chamber. A bill is proposed legislation that is presented to the Legislative Assembly for its consideration, and must pass through three readings for it to be approved and presented to the Crown for assent.

**First reading** is the introduction of a bill to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament. The Youth Parliamentarian sponsoring the bill introduces the proposed law to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament and explains its purpose. The bill is not debated, but Youth Parliamentarians vote on whether to accept it for further debate. If approved, the bill is scheduled for second reading.

**Second reading** is the stage of a bill when Youth Parliamentarians consider the bill's general principles and goals. If approved, the bill is sent to Committee of the Whole, which examines in detail each section of the bill. The Committee of the Whole will then report the bill back to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament.

**Third reading** is the final stage of consideration of a bill by the Commonwealth Youth Parliament. If a bill is approved at third reading, it is presented to the Crown for assent.

### ***Rules of Debate***

28. The Youth Parliamentarian who introduces a bill, amendment or motion will be called to speak first.
29. A right of reply shall be allowed to a Youth Parliamentarian who has introduced a motion or moved second reading of a bill, and the reply must pertain to the matters raised during the debate.

30. A Youth Parliamentarian may speak more than once on any question in Committee of the Whole, such as committee stage debate of a bill.
31. A Youth Parliamentarians may not speak more than once in debate on a single motion, unless in right of reply (see Standing Order 29).

### ***Time Limits on Speeches***

32. All Youth Parliamentarians are invited to make a brief introductory statement during the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Youth Parliamentarian shall not speak for more than 2 minutes during Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne and shall not speak for more than 5 minutes during Second Reading debate on a bill. After that time, the Speaker may ask the Youth Parliamentarian to conclude their speech.
33. The Speaker has the discretion to change the allotted maximum length of speeches.

### **Votes**

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34. At the end of any debate, the Speaker shall present the question for decision on the motion to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament.
35. The Speaker shall then collect the opinion of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament by asking for a show of hands.
36. All Youth Parliamentarians present in the Legislative Chamber must vote.
37. In the case of an equal vote, the Speaker shall cast the deciding vote.

### **Committee of the Whole**

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#### ***Introduction***

All members of the Youth Parliament are members of the Committee of the Whole and can participate in its proceedings by asking questions of the Minister or Member sponsoring the bill and by moving amendments. Meetings of the Committee of the Whole are held in the Legislative Chamber and provide an opportunity for detailed consideration of a bill. The Deputy

Speaker, as Chair of the Committee of the Whole, presides over the meetings of the Committee.

The Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall sit at the Clerks' Table, in the chair of the Clerk of the House, while the Speaker's chair remains vacant. The Mace is removed from the top of the Table and rests in the lower cradle below the Table to show that the Commonwealth Youth Parliament is sitting as a Committee of the Whole.

38. All Youth Parliamentarians may participate in the Committee of the Whole.

39. The Minister responsible for the bill shall call the bill to be considered in Committee of the Whole.

40. The Speaker shall call upon the Chair of the Committee of the Whole to preside over debate, and the Speaker shall vacate the Chair while the Committee of the Whole is meeting.

41. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall call the Committee to order and shall guide the Commonwealth Youth Parliament through Committee stage of the bill, section by section.

42. Any Youth Parliamentarian may ask questions on any section of the bill and propose amendments.

43. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall call the question on each section, amendment, and the title.

### ***Amendments***

An amendment may be made to any part of a bill. Proposed amendments must be in writing and signed by the Youth Parliamentarian proposing the amendment. Amendments may be tabled (submitted) in advance to the Clerks, or may be submitted during debate on the floor of the Legislative Chamber.

There are three different forms of amendments to a bill:

- Omitting a word or words;
- Omitting a word or words to insert or add other another word or words instead; and
- Adding a word or words.

## ***Admissibility of Amendments***

44. The Clerks may advise the Speaker and Youth Parliamentarians on the admissibility of amendments. The following general rules shall be observed:

- a. Amendments must be relevant to the subject matter of the bill and to the section or schedule to which they are proposed;
- b. Amendments to the long title are not in order unless they are to rectify a mistake in the original title, to restate the title more clearly, or to reflect amendments to the bill which are relevant to the bill but not covered by the former long title; and
- c. Section headings, and headings placed above parts of the bill or above groups of sections, are technically not part of the bill, and so are not open to amendment. Punctuation is also technically not part of the bill.

45. Amendments are considered in section order subject to the rules below:

- a. Amendments to the preamble and the long title, in that order, are taken last;
- b. Amendments to leave out words take precedence over amendments to leave out the same words and insert others;
- c. Amendments to leave out any block of text other than a complete section or schedule come before amendments to that text;
- d. Amendments to a section are considered before the question that the section of the bill<sup>1</sup> carry;
- e. Amendments to leave out a section and substitute another are considered after any amendments to the section;
- f. Amendments to divide a section are taken after the section has carried;
- g. Amendments to transpose a section or sections, or part of a section, to another place in the bill are taken after the section (or the last of the affected sections) are carried;
- h. Amendments to insert a new section are considered at the place in the bill where it is proposed that the new section is to be inserted;
- i. Where alternative amendments are tabled to the same place in the bill, they are debated in the order in which they are tabled, except that priority is given to an amendment tabled by the Youth Parliamentarian sponsoring the bill. A decision

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<sup>1</sup> Each section and schedule of a bill must be “stood part”. This means that for each section and schedule a question is put to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament inviting it to confirm that the particular clause or schedule be part of the bill.

may be taken on each in turn, even if the second amendment is in substitution for the first amendment to which the Committee of the Whole has already agreed to.

### ***Procedure on Amendments***

46. An amendment must be moved for debate to take place on it.
47. Unanimous consent of the Committee of the Whole is required for the mover of an amendment to withdraw an amendment that has been moved.

### ***Pre-emption***

48. If an amendment has been pre-empted by one previously agreed to by the Committee of the Whole, the Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall inform the Committee that the amendment will not be called.

### ***Reporting to the Commonwealth Youth Parliament***

49. When the Committee of the Whole has completed its review of all sections of the bill and the title has carried, the responsible Minister shall move that the Committee rise and report the bill complete with/without amendment.
50. The Chair of the Committee of the Whole shall send for the Speaker and the Chair shall report to the Speaker "The Committee on Bill No. xx reports the Bill complete with/without amendment."
51. The Speaker will put the Question, "That the Bill be read a third time and passed".
52. Once the Speaker has put the question on a bill, there shall be no further debate and the Commonwealth Youth Parliament shall proceed immediately to decide the question. If the House agrees to the question, the Speaker shall announce that the bill has become an Act. If the House disagrees to the question, there shall be no further proceedings on the bill.

### ***Rules of Conduct in Committee of the Whole***

53. The rules of conduct as observed in the Legislative Chamber are followed in Committee of the Whole.

## Oral Question Period

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54. Oral Question Period shall be subject to the following rules:

- a. Questions and answers shall be brief and precise, stated without lengthy preambles;
- b. A Youth Parliamentarian may be permitted only one supplementary question; and
- c. Points of order arising during Oral Question Period may, at the discretion of the Speaker, be deferred until the Oral Question Period has been completed.

55. The purpose of parliamentary questions is to seek information from the government, and thus to assist Youth Parliamentarians in holding the government to account.

### ***Admissibility of Questions***

56. The Clerk(s) may advise the Speaker and the Youth Parliamentarians on the admissibility of questions. The following rules shall be applied in respect to the admissibility of questions:

- a. Parliamentary questions should relate to matters of government responsibility.
- b. Questions may be addressed to a particular Minister; however, it is for the government to decide which Minister should answer a particular question.
- c. Questions shall be short, as clear as possible, and precise in their requests for information. Statements of fact should be included in questions only to the extent necessary to elicit the information sought.
- d. Questions shall not ask about the internal affairs of another country (save for questions about human rights or other matters covered by international conventions to which Commonwealthland is party).
- e. Questions shall not be hypothetical, and should address issues of substance. Questions which are deemed by the Speaker to be “trivial, vague or meaningless” are not permitted.

### ***Ministerial Replies***

57. A Minister’s answer to an oral question should generally be precise and brief.

58. A Minister may respond to a question or defer to another Cabinet colleague.

## **Introduction of Bills**

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59. To introduce a bill, a Youth Parliamentarian shall provide its short title (by which it is known) and its long title (which describes briefly what it does). Complete texts are not required.
60. A Notice of Bill to introduce a private member's bill must be tabled with the Clerk(s) one day in advance. This may only be done on Monday, November 7, 2016 and Tuesday, November 8, 2016.
61. The Speaker shall select bills for introduction on a caucus rotational basis.
62. The Youth Parliamentarian introducing a bill may make a statement of up to 2 minutes to explain its purpose.
63. When a bill is introduced, the question "That this Bill be now read a first time", shall be decided without amendment or debate.

## **Quorum**

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64. The quorum in the Legislative Chamber is 20, including the Speaker or the Chair of the Committee of the Whole. If a quorum is not present, the Speaker or the Chair of the Committee of the Whole will suspend proceedings until a quorum is re-established.
65. Every Youth Parliamentarian must attend sittings of the Commonwealth Youth Parliament.