

# Elected Members of Parliament, Senators, and candidates for political office, seeking to visit a Hospital and Health Service, Queensland Ambulance Service facility or Statutory Agency.

## Queensland Health Guideline

QH-GDL-960

### 1. Purpose

Hospital and Health Services (HHSs), the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) and the health portfolio statutory agencies are an integral part of Queensland communities and are therefore of significant interest to Members of Parliament (MPs) and candidates for political office. Federal elected Members of Parliament and Senators also visit these health portfolio facilities as part of their role.

The purpose of this guideline is to set out the requirements to ensure safe, effective, and respectful access to Queensland's public health facilities by both State and Federal elected MPs and Senators, when they visit HHSs, QAS and statutory agency facilities in their official capacity, and to outline the appropriate protocols for any candidates for political office seeking to visit these facilities.

### 2. Scope

The requirements in this guideline apply to:

- State and Federal elected MPs, Senators and candidates for political office visiting a facility operated by any of Queensland Health's 16 HHSs, any QAS facility, and any statutory agency;
- The Board Chairs and Chief Executives of the HHSs;
- The QAS; and
- All health portfolio statutory agencies.

The guideline does not apply to:

- State and Federal elected MPs, Senators and candidates for political office who work in HHSs from time to time to maintain their professional registration, noting that these arrangements must be consistent with advice from the Clerk of the Parliament;
- State and Federal elected MPs, Senators and candidates for political office attending a health portfolio facility in a private capacity as either a patient or friend/family member of a patient; or
- Ministers performing official duties.

### 3. Related documents

- HHS contact details: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/health-system/key-people/members>
- Health Statutory Agencies: <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/health-system/managing/statutory-agencies>
- *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*
- *Ambulance Services Act 1991*
- *Right to Information 2009*
- Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service

### 4. Guideline

Visits to health portfolio facilities by State and Federal elected MPs, Senators and candidates running for political office should occur with the knowledge and agreement of the Board Chair and Chief Executive of the HHS or Statutory Agency, or Queensland Ambulance Commissioner (for ambulance-related visits), at mutually agreed times.

Board Chairs, Chief Executives and the QAS Commissioner are responsible for approving and facilitating requests to visit to health portfolio facilities in line with the guidelines below.

#### 4.1. Visits within Members' own electorate

Elected representatives wishing to visit HHS facilities within their own electorate must contact the Office of the Health Service Chief Executive (HSCE) to enquire about arranging a visit to a specific facility. The HSCE will agree the details, taking account of the matters to consider set out below in 4.3. As a courtesy, the HSCE will notify their Board Chair prior to the visit occurring, and the Office of the Director-General, via email to [SDLO@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:SDLO@health.qld.gov.au), who will share the advice with the Office of the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women (the Minister). The Minister's Executive Assistant will be copied into these notifications.

Elected representatives wishing to visit ambulance facilities within their own electorate must contact the Assistant Commissioner of the relevant region to enquire about arranging a visit to the specific facility. The Assistant Commissioner will agree the details, taking into account the matters to consider set out below in 4.3, and then inform the QAS Commissioner, who will advise the Office of the Minister, prior to the visit occurring.

#### 4.2. Visits outside of elected Member's own electorate, Federal Members of Parliament and Senators and candidates running for political office

Elected representatives wishing to visit a health facility (including an ambulance facility) outside of their own electorate, Federal MPs and Senators, and candidates for State or Federal political office wishing to visit a HHS, QAS facility or other health portfolio statutory agency within or

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outside of the electorate they seek to represent, must write to the Minister, via email to Health@ministerial.qld.gov.au, proposing a visit to the nominated facility.

The request must be submitted at least seven working days in advance of the proposed visit.

The Minister's office will send the request to the relevant HHS or Statutory Agency Board Chair and HSCE, or the QAS Commissioner (for ambulance visits) for consideration and response.

The relevant Board Chair/HSCE or QAS Commissioner will make a decision about the visit request by the elected Member taking into account the matters to consider set out below in 4.3.

Visits to health facilities are to assist Members and candidates to understand health service delivery and are not intended to be media events. Media events should be referred to Queensland Health's Strategic Communications Branch. For further information regarding media events, see the Media relations Standard here: [Media relations \(https://www.health.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0037/397378/qh-imp-423-1.pdf\)](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0037/397378/qh-imp-423-1.pdf).

Consultation with the relevant local Union consultative group prior to the visit is mandatory. This should be managed locally by the relevant HHS.

The QAS Commissioner (or delegate) or relevant HHS Board Chair or Chief Executive will contact the elected Member directly to negotiate arrangements for the visit.

Once finalised, the relevant Board Chair/HSCE or QAS Commissioner will write, via email, to the elected Member, Senator or candidate confirming the visit schedule, and copy in the Minister's office.

### 4.3. Matters to consider for all visits

The HHS or Statutory Agency Board Chair/HSCE or Queensland Ambulance Commissioner will make a decision about the visit request taking into consideration:

- The purpose of the visit;
- Operational constraints, including the length of the proposed visit;
- Operational convenience;
- Patient safety and patient confidentiality;
- Feedback from staff regarding the proposed visit;
- Consultation with the relevant Union consultative committee; and
- Any other factors which may influence the visit.

### 4.4. When HHSs invite elected Members to their facilities

HHSs can host or invite Members of Parliament to visit a HHS facility at their discretion. In these circumstances, the Board Chair or HSCE should write to the Minister's office, via email to SDLO@health.qld.gov.au, who will share the advice with the Minister's office, outlining the details of the elected Member's visit, including the purpose, length of visit and whether media personnel will be accompanying the Member. The Minister's Executive Assistant will be copied into these notifications.

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Candidates for political office should only be invited during an official election period.

The notification to the Minister's office should be sent at least seven working days in advance of the proposed visit.

#### 4.5. Obligations of visiting parties

Visiting Members should be accompanied by the HSCE or other senior member of staff at the HHS or relevant departmental facility. For visits to QAS facilities, visiting Members should be accompanied by the Assistant Commissioner or other senior member of staff at the relevant facility. The Chief Executive, Assistant Commissioner or senior staff member must advise the visiting MP, Senator or candidate that client privacy encompassing patients, residents and their families, must be strictly observed.

#### 4.6. After the visit has occurred

HHSs or QAS must provide the Minister outcomes of the meeting or visit. This should be sent via email to SDLO at email [SDLO@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:SDLO@health.qld.gov.au), and include details of any discussions, including outcomes or decisions agreed to.

### 5. Document approval details

#### Document custodian and approval officer:

Executive Director, Office of the Director General.

**Approval date:** 25 June 2024

### 6. Version control

Version	Date	Comments
1.0	27/11/15	
2.0	26/03/18	Modifications made to document to encompass visits by candidates for political office, Federal Parliamentarians and Senators and Union consultation.
3.0	25/06/2024	Update to title of Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women. Addition of paragraph 4.6 After visit has occurred. Clarification of notification/communication details. Review by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. Review and endorsement by the Queensland Ambulance Service.