



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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### SELECT COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES 2022-2023

Mr James Milligan MLA (Chair), Mr Andrew Braddock MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### Committee Statement

The Committee views COVID safety practices as a high priority and has undertaken a risk assessment for the purposes of holding Estimates hearings to comply with the WorkSafe ACT Prohibition Notice served on the Speaker in addition to the COVID safe plan already in place for the Assembly.

The office has in place the Legislative Assembly Health and Safety Committee, the Assembly COVID-19 Plan and Legislative Assembly Work Health and Safety Risk Register and last year received an assessment report from the CMTEDD Executive to Deputy-Director General, Dr Damian West, that it met the requirements of the COVID-19 Assurance Program.

We are now consulting with witnesses in line with the requirements of the notification. The Committee is only inviting Ministers, Officers of the Legislative Assembly, Statutory Officers and the Speaker to attend Estimates hearings. ACT public servants will be unable to attend at this stage.

In order to ensure that the hearings can proceed as soon and as safely as practical, hearings will be held in the Chamber to maximise social distancing and all other COVID safe protocols will be in place.

Further the Estimates hearings will be delayed in order to conduct the consultation process. Hearings will recommence on Monday 22 August 2022 in line with the current Hearing Schedule for that week provided the prohibition notice has been lifted. Hearings that were to be held during this week will now occur in the week starting 29 August 2022.

This position has been taken in order to start the Estimates processes as soon as possible while taking all necessary precautions in order to meet the condition of the Prohibition notice from WorkSafe ACT.

The Legislative Assembly yesterday agreed to establish a Select Committee on Privileges to inquire into this situation to understand if there has been a breach of privilege relating to the actions of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner and any other person and whether they have improperly interfered with the free exercise of the authority of the Select Committee on Estimates 2022-23 or breached any other privileges of the Assembly.

It is the Committee's view that its constitutional power of inquiry can be upheld to effectively scrutinise the budget in a COVID safe manner.

Subject to COVID safety room limits, the public and media are welcome to attend the hearings.

16 August 2022

STATEMENT ENDS.

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**For further information please contact:**

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Committee Secretary on (02) 6205 0129 or at [LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:LACommitteeEstimates@parliament.act.gov.au)