

# Supporting Ministers

## On this page

**Working with the minister's office**

**Working with Members of Parliament**

As a senior executive, you and your team will be required to support Ministers in the exercise of their parliamentary duties, including:

- preparing parliamentary briefing notes, or house folder notes, for the Minister concerning the functions of your Minister and agency in relation to matters which may be the subject of a question to your Minister during question time
- briefing your Minister in relation to responses to questions on notice
- supporting your Minister in relation to the passage of bills through the parliament
- preparing budget estimates notes for use by your Minister during budget estimates inquiries.

It is critical that accurate information is provided to the Minister, noting that Ministers must not mislead parliament.

Speaking 'truth to power' is not always easy but is a critical senior executive capability in the NSW public sector. As a senior executive, you should:

- ensure you follow **the Ethical Framework** when making decisions and providing recommendations
- work on building a relationship of trust with the Minister and other key stakeholders.

When advice or information has been considered and a lawful decision made by the Minister or Cabinet, it is the responsibility of your agency to implement that decision diligently and professionally.

## Working with the minister's office

Ministers are responsible for developing and implementing government policy and ensuring agencies deliver on their priorities within their allocated budgets.

Senior executives may support ministers in:

- developing and advising on policy options and draft legislation

- implementing the government's decisions, policies and programs
- delivering services to the community
- managing the state's resources, assets and finances.

Each Minister will have an individual operating style and support requirements. This may include agreed protocols for briefing the Minister and their staff and a preferred style for briefings and correspondence. Senior executives have a duty to respond promptly and professionally to requests for advice or information in ways that are consistent with the relevant agency policies or procedures.

As a senior executive you may be required to brief or advise a Minister or their staff. Ministerial staff members are employed under the ***Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013***, to support their Minister undertake portfolio responsibilities. They facilitate communication by assisting agencies to understand the Minister's requirements, priorities and availability. Each Minister's office is managed by a Chief of Staff.

Another key contact in the Minister's office is the **Departmental Liaison Officer** (DLO). DLOs are assigned by their relevant Secretary or agency head to work in the Minister's office. The DLO is a public servant, not a member of the Minister's staff. DLOs perform an important function, which includes coordinating communication between the Minister's office and the agency and enabling the timely processing of documents.

## Working with Members of Parliament

Members of Parliament can request information by writing to the responsible Minister, contacting the Minister's staff, or writing to the head of an agency. This ensures that information given to members of Parliament is accurate and as complete as possible.

As a senior executive, you should ensure that your employees are aware of the principles that apply where a member of Parliament, or their staff, contacts them directly to seek information on a particular issue. The Department of Premier and Cabinet have prepared **[advice on the provision of information to Members of Parliament](#)**.