



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA
OFFICE OF THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE

PATI Information Statement

Name of Public Authority: Office of the Clerk of the Legislature

Introduction:

The Public Access to Information Act (PATI) 2010 was designed to give the public the right to obtain access to information held by public authorities to the greatest extent possible, subject to certain exceptions. PATI is also intended to increase transparency and accountability in the public sector and provide information on the activities of public authorities and the manner in which they make decisions. As a result of PATI more information will be routinely placed in the public domain.

The following document is the Information Statement for the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature. It contains information regarding the organizational structure, mission statement, legislative responsibilities, departmental objectives and records held by the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature.

Some records of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature are protected under parliamentary privilege under Section 36(b) of the PATI Act and Parts II and III of the Parliament Act 1957. As a consequence, these records fall within Part 4 of the PATI Act and should be viewed as exempt records. Therefore, not all records can be accessed.

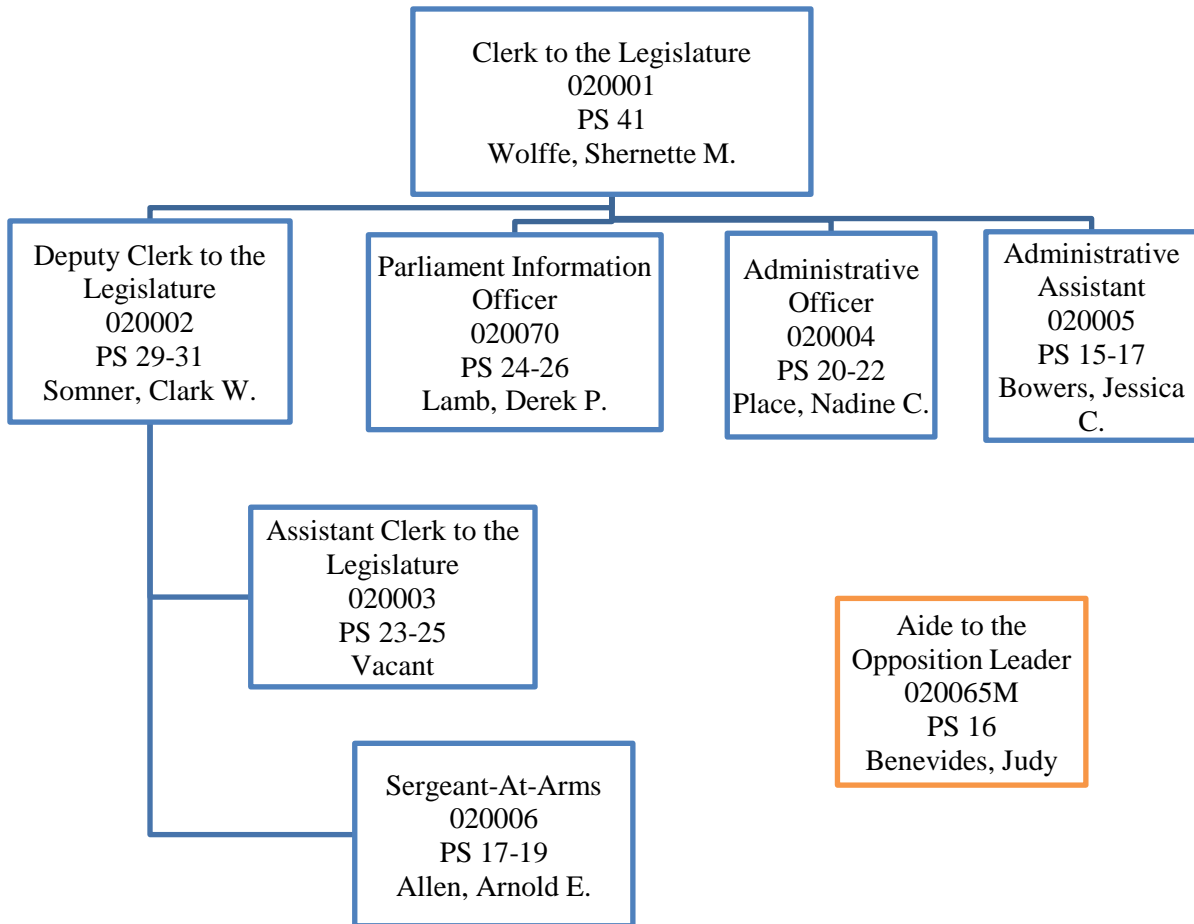
The Office of the Clerk of the Legislature's mission is to provide an impartial advisory service to Parliamentarians by performing administrative and professional services for both Houses of the Legislature and for the Parliamentary Committees; and to foster mutually beneficial relationships with other Commonwealth parliaments.

Section A: Structure, Organization and Legislation [s5(1)a]

Positions:

Mrs. Shernette M. A. Wolffe – Clerk to the Legislature
Mr. Clark W. Somner – Deputy Clerk to the Legislature
Vacant – Assistant Clerk to the Legislature
Mr. Arnold E. Allen – Sergeant-at-Arms
Mr. Derek P. Lamb – Parliamentary Information Officer
Mrs. Nadine C. Place – Administrative Officer
Ms. Jessica C. Bowers – Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Judy Benevides – Aide to Opposition Leader

Office of the Clerk to the Legislature
Current Organizational Chart



Legislation

The Office of the Clerk of the Legislature is governed by The Bermuda Constitution Order 1968, The Parliament Act 1957, and The Ministers' and Members of the Legislature (Salaries and Pensions Act) 1975.

Section B: 1) Functions, powers, duties of the Authority [s5(1)b]

Mission Statement and Objectives

The aim of the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature is to provide Parliamentarians with procedural advice, research and administrative support services to enable them to discharge their responsibilities as Legislators in an effective and efficient manner.

Vision: To strengthen oversight and to build a People's Parliament that is responsive to the needs of the community.

The Office's Objectives are as follows:

- (a) To provide the best advice and information on a range of parliamentary practices to support the Speaker of the House, the President of the Senate and other Members of the Legislature
- (b) To promote respect for Parliament by educating the public on its history and role as an institution, integral to the democratic process
- (c) To inform the Civil Service on the developments in Parliamentary practices and procedures
- (d) To facilitate the enactment of legislation
- (e) To facilitate legal advice on Constitutional Matters and questions of Parliamentary procedure
- (f) To ensure that both Houses of the Legislature and the Parliamentary Committees operate within the provisions of the Official Standing Orders.

Section B: 2) Obligations under PATI Act [s5(1)b]

Same for all public authorities

To provide an **information statement** for the public and promulgate it [s5],

- To provide **other information** to the public so that the public needs only to have minimum resort to the use of the Act to obtain information [s6]. This includes:
 - General information, e.g. activities of the Authority
 - Log of all information requests and their outcome
 - Quarterly expenditure (upon request) [s6(5)]
 - Contracts valued at \$50,000 or more.
- To **respond to information requests** in a timely manner [s12-16]
- To **track information requests**, and provide this data to the Information Commissioner
- To respond to requests from the Information Commissioner [s9]
- To **amend personal information** held by the Authority that it is wrong or misleading following a written request by the person to whom the information relates [s19]
- To conduct an **internal review** if formally requested [part 5]
- To give evidence for **review by the Information Commissioner** [part 6, 47(4)], or for **judicial review** [s49], if required
- To provide an **annual written report** to the Information Commissioner of the status of information requests [s58 (3)].

- **To do anything else as required** under the PATI Act and subsequent Regulations [s59, 60], including:
 - **Fees** for Requests for information
 - Management and maintenance of **records**
 - **Procedures** for administering the Act
- To **train staff and make arrangements** so as to facilitate compliance with the Act [s61]
- To **designate one of its officers** to be the person to whom requests are directed [s62]

Services and Programmes

Administration – The office of the Clerk of the Legislature provides impartial advisory services and assistance to Members of Parliament and the various parliamentary committees; manages the legislative process in the House of Assembly and the Senate; assists other Public Officers and members of the public on general inquiries, and those related to the legislative process and proceedings of the Legislature; manages the operations of the Legislature Department.

Ministers and Members of the Legislature – Administration of parliamentary salaries; grant funding for the Bermuda Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association as it relates to participation in overseas and local parliamentary seminars, to enhance professional development of Members.

Bermuda Youth Parliament – Funding provided for honorariums for the Youth Parliament advisors; office supplies and refreshments for formal debates conducted in the House of Assembly Chamber; end of year award ceremonies; travel and participation at international Youth Parliament conferences.

Opposition Leader's Office – Funding for the Aide to the Opposition Leader, administrative services and the operations of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition's Office.

Section D: Records and documents held [s5(1)d]

1. Hansard Proceedings of the House of Assembly and the Senate
2. Minutes of the House of Assembly and the Senate
3. Completed Journals of the House of Assembly and Senate
4. Public Bills and other Legislation tabled in the House of Assembly and Senate
5. Parliamentary Committee Reports
6. Throne/Budget Speeches/Opposition Replies
7. Various Government Reports
8. Annual Approved Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for each fiscal year
9. Official Gazettes
10. Private Bills tabled in the House of Assembly and Senate
11. Standing Orders of the House of Assembly and the Senate
12. Various performance measures for the Office of the Clerk of the Legislature

Note: There may be incomplete records of some of the listed items.

Section E: Administration (all public access) manuals [s5(1)e]

Financial Instructions
Code of Conditions and Employment
Dignity in the Workplace

Section F: Decision-making documents [s5(1)f]

Insert list and description of all policies and guidelines for decision making in respect to any person:
(Records are likely a result of decision making documents in procedures/guidelines etc. If don't have decision making documents need to create)

Section G: The Information officer [s5(1)g]

Clark W. Somner
Deputy Clerk to the Legislature
House of Assembly – Legislature Office
Veritas Place (Fourth Floor)
65 Court Street
Hamilton HM 12
Tel: (441) 292-7408 Ext. 222 Email: csomner@gov.bm

Section H: Any Other Information [s5(1)h]

See also www.parliament.bm, www.bermudalaws.bm www.elections.gov.bm

Section I: Any Other Information To be Provided? [s5(1)i]

Section J: Information Statement: Copies and Updates [s5(2,3,4,5)]

Every public authority shall update its information statement at least once a year, and make it available for inspection by the public at reasonable times by [s5(1-5), PATI Act]:

Date Information Statement was updated: 30th December, 2019

Locations of Information Statement:

Confirm copies of Information Statement are available at the following sites:

- Your principal office: Veritas Place, 65 Court Street, Hamilton HM 12 Y
- The Bermuda National Library; Y
- The Bermuda Archives; Y
- Available electronically, Y
- Website for public authority www.parliament.bm Y
- Have you published a notice in the Gazette indicating the places where the information statement is available for the public? Y
- With the Information Commissioner. Y

Sign and Date: 30th December, 2019