



# VISITOR TOUR PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

---

## **GUIDED TOURS:**

### **How do I book a tour?**

Free guided tours can be booked by completing the tour reservation form and submitting it by email. You will receive an email confirming your booking upon receipt. Tours can also be booked by phone.

You will receive an email one to two weeks prior to your tour date reminding you of your visit. This confirmation email will include pre-visit information as well as a parking map for the Legislative grounds.

Please contact the **Visitor Tour Program** Office at (204) 945-5813 or **[tour\\_reservation@leg.gov.mb.ca](mailto:tour_reservation@leg.gov.mb.ca)** if you have any questions.

### **How far in advance do I need to book?**

Guided tours need to be reserved with a minimum of two weeks advance notice. The majority of our school tours take place between March and June. Requests for guided tours increase when the House is in Session. When the House is not in Session there are fewer school visits and it is often easier to make a reservation. Tours are booked on a first come, first served basis. It is best to contact our office with as much notice as possible to avoid disappointment.

### **Do you offer tours in languages other than English?**

Yes, guided tours are offered in English and French. Other languages may be available during the summer months depending on the availability of staff. Please contact the Visitor Tour Program Office for more information.

### **When is the best time to visit?**

The Visitor Tour Program office delivers more than 800 tours to approximately 17,000 visitors each year. The majority of school groups visit between March and June. Tours during those months are often booked months in advance.

We encourage teachers to consider visiting in the fall or winter when the tour schedule has more availability.

### **How long is a guided tour?**

A standard tour of the Legislative Building lasts 60 minutes.

### **What topics are discussed on a guided tour?**

Guided tours provide an overview of the history of Manitoba and of the Legislative Building as well as insight into the legislative process. We provide a variety of tours for various grade levels and various topics of interest. We also invite your local MLA to meet with the group during the tour. If there is a specific interest for your class, please let us know at the time of your booking.

Please note that tours may be rerouted, shortened, or cancelled at any time due to Legislative Assembly activities and events.

### **How many people can come on a guided tour?**

Ideally, no more than 35 visitors per tour, per tour guide. Larger groups can be accommodated provided we have the available staff. Our Summer Tour Program starts in late May, and it is easier for us to accommodate groups larger than 50 in June. Please contact the Visitor Tour Program Office for more information.

### **Do we need a certain number of chaperones for our visit?**

No. The teacher is required to accompany the students on tour, and depending on the behavior of the group, more chaperones may be beneficial. It is up to the teacher/tour leader to know and control the behavior of their group.

### **Is there public parking at the Legislative Building? Where does the bus park?**

Yes. Two hour free **visitor parking** is available at the Legislative Building. Please see the parking map for information on where the visitor spots are located as well as where the buses are to park.

### **Are there any outdoor activities for our visit to the Legislative Building?**

Yes. We have a **self-guided walking tour of the grounds**, as well as self-guided outdoor scavenger hunts, that are suitable for early years, middle years, and senior years' students. We are also developing new activities. Please contact the Tour Program Office for more information.

### **What are we not allowed to bring on tour?**

No backpacks, hats, drinks, food or chewing gum are allowed while on tour. Phones are to be turned to silent. Photos are permitted on tour. Contact the Tour Office if you have any questions.

### **Is there somewhere to leave our belongings while on tour?**

Yes. Coats and backpacks are to be left at the coat racks behind the Grand Staircase. Please note that the Tour Program is not responsible for belongings. For more information, contact the Tour Program Office.

### **Is there a lost and found at the Legislative Building?**

Yes. Please contact Protective Services at the Legislative Building at (204) 945-4830 if anyone in your group has lost anything.

### **Is the Legislative Building Wheelchair Accessible?**

Yes. While there are a lot of stairs, the Legislative Building is accessible for visitors with wheelchairs, those with limited mobility and young children in strollers. There is a ramp at the main entrance facing Broadway and elevators for access to all floors of the building.

### **Are there any resources to help me prepare my students for our visit?**

Yes. Click here for the [Fact sheets](#).

### **Are there programs for teachers offered by the Legislative Assembly?**

Yes. The Manitoba Legislative Assembly offers a Teachers' Institute. Please contact the [Teachers' Institute](#) coordinator for more information.

### **What is the Classroom in the Legislature?**

The Classroom in the Legislature provides Manitobans with the opportunity to attend the [Legislative Classroom](#) in the Legislative Building, learn about our democratic process and role play how laws are made in Manitoba. The program combines discussion and interactive, fun games! The program varies according to the grade level. It has been extremely well-received by schools across the province.

### **Can we take a tour and visit the Classroom?**

Yes. It is possible to have your group take a tour and participate in the Classroom. Please note that the maximum number of visitors that can be in the Classroom at one time is 30. Larger groups will require special arrangements. Please contact the Visitor Tour Program Office or the Classroom in the Legislature for more information.

### **Self-guided tours**

The building is open 364 days a year for self-guided tours from 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

## SESSION

### When is the Sessional Calendar released?

The **Sessional Calendar** is released at the discretion of the Government.

Please be aware that the Sessional Calendar can be changed at any time. The Calendar that appears on the Legislative Assembly's website is the most up-to-date listing for sittings of the Legislative Assembly.

Please note that staff of the Visitor Tour Program Office does not have any information about future sittings of the Legislative Assembly until the calendar is released and it appears on the website.

### Is it possible to view Session during our visit?

Yes. If the House is in Session the day of your visit, the Visitor Tour Program Office can arrange for seats in the Public Gallery for your group. Please note that viewing Session is booked on a first come, first served basis. Please note as well that most seats in the Public Gallery have partially obstructed views.

### Information on Legislative Assembly sittings:

The House is in Session from Monday – Thursday from 1:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. However, the House does not sit in the morning during the Budget and Throne Speech debates.

Afternoon Session starts at 1:30 p.m. with Routine Proceedings. This includes Question Period which lasts 40 minutes.

### What is Question Period (Oral Questions)?

Forty minutes is provided during each sitting day so that Members, primarily from the Opposition, may elicit information from the Government. The purpose of **Oral Questions** or **Question Period** is to provide MLAs with the opportunity to question the Premier and Members of Cabinet about the plans and activities of the Government.

Question Period is often lively, with MLAs intervening on each other's remarks to support or challenge what is being said. It is a dynamic style of discussion, in which MLAs generally respond to the points made by other Members rather than speaking from prepared notes.

While the rules may be different from those in your classroom, rules do apply during Question Period/**Oral Questions**. For example, Members have a right to be heard without overwhelming background noise and unparliamentary language is not permitted. It is the Speaker's responsibility to oversee the proceedings and to enforce the rules found in the **Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**.

### **Can we have a tour and watch Question Period?**

Yes. Tours that include viewing Question Period are booked on a first come, first served basis. We have two visits that include viewing Question Period:

- 12:15 p.m. – Your visit starts with the tour, and ends in the Public Gallery for Question Period. Please let us know at the time of reservation what time you need to leave the building. Typically this option is preferred by groups that need to leave by 2:00 - 2:15 p.m.
- 1:15 p.m. – Your visit starts with Question Period and the tour takes place afterward. If you opt to stay for all of Question Period, your visit will finish at 3:00 p.m. Please let us know if your group needs to leave the building before 3:00 p.m.

Other tour arrangements can be made to include Question Period, depending on availability. Please contact the Visitor Tour Program Office for more information.

### **What is the Private Members' Business?**

A Private Member is any Member who is not a member of Executive Council (Cabinet) and may be seated on the Government or Opposition side of the House. Government Private Members are often referred to as "backbenchers".

Private Members' Business takes place from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays except during Throne Speech and Budget debates. Members may introduce Private Members' Business and debate items other than Government motions. Private Members' Business and debates involve less intervening on each other's remarks than during Question Period. It is a less dynamic style of discussion and is an excellent opportunity for students to see the Legislative Assembly at work.

### **What are the rules for the Public Gallery while on a guided tour?**

1. Visitors on Visitor Tour Program guided tours do not require passes, as they are permitted into the gallery on behalf of the Tour Program.
2. Visitors may not bring food or drink into the galleries and are to be appropriately attired.
3. Backpacks are not permitted in the Public Gallery (or on tour).
4. Visitors sitting in the front rows are not allowed to lean on or over any part of the brass railing.
5. Video cameras, still cameras, audio recorders, cell phones or other electronic devices may not be used in the galleries. Pictures are not to be taken, nor are the proceedings to be recorded.

6. Visitors are asked to remain seated, except when entering or leaving the galleries, with the exception that they will rise when the Speaker enters the House and remain standing during the reading of the Prayer. Tour groups may also be asked to stand if their group is being recognized (announced) by the Speaker. Look to your Tour Guide for direction.
7. Visitors to the gallery may not participate in any way in the proceedings of the House. This includes applauding, commenting, distracting those seated around us, loud conversations or causing disturbances in any way.
8. Visitors may not display banners, signs or placards.

***Please note:*** tours may be rerouted, shortened, or cancelled at any time due to Legislative Assembly activities and events.