
STATES OF JERSEY



POLICY GUIDANCE IN RESPECT OF STANDING ORDER 53(2): PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

**Presented to the States on 11th January 2022
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee**

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

The Privileges and Procedures Committee has agreed that, for ease of future reference, the policy guidance in respect of 'parental responsibilities' under Standing Order 53(2) should be presented as a Report. The guidance was initially provided to States Members on 3rd December 2020 following a [Proposition by Deputy L.M.C. Doublet](#) which added a provision for absence of an elected member for parental responsibilities to Standing Order 53. The current guidance presented below has not been altered since that time.

Policy Guidance in respect of Standing Order 53(2): Parental Responsibilities

This guidance note has been prepared to provide clarity on the **types of circumstances** and **periods of absence** for which a States Member may request to be absent from the States citing ‘parental responsibilities’ under Standing Order 53(2). The reasons given in Standing Order 53(2) for a Member to be absent are automatically recorded without there being the possibility of a vote (the other reasons being illness and absent from Jersey on States’ business).

This guidance has been agreed by the Diversity Forum and will be kept under review by the Forum.

Members should note that failure to comply with this guidance could constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct for Elected Members.

Birth of a child

- In the event of the birth of a child, a States Member who is the mother or father of the child, or who is the partner of the child’s mother may be excused attendance under Standing Order 53(2) for States sitting dates during a period of up to 26 weeks.
- That period cannot start earlier than the beginning of the 11th week before the due date (unless the baby is born earlier in which case the 26-week period starts then).
- A Member may choose to attend the States during the 26-week period. However, they may still be excused attendance under Standing Order 53(2) if they do not attend subsequently, within the 26-week period.

Adoption

- A States Member who adopts a child (or children) may be excused attendance under Standing Order 53(2) for States sitting dates during a period of up to 26 weeks. This does not apply if a Member is a step-parent adopting their partner’s child, or if a Member is adopting a child that they have been fostering immediately before the adoption.
- That period cannot start earlier than 14 days before the date the child is expected to be placed with a Member, or in the case of an overseas adoption, not earlier than 14 days before the child is expected to enter Jersey.
- A Member may choose to attend the States during the 26-week period. However, they may still be excused attendance under Standing Order 53(2) if they do not attend subsequently, within the 26-week period.
- Members may be excused attendance from the States to attend interviews/appointments relating to the adoption of a child.

Ante-natal appointments

- A States Member who is the expectant mother, the partner of a pregnant woman or the father of the expected child, is entitled to be excused attendance for ante-natal appointments which may fall during a States sitting.

Breastfeeding breaks

- States Members are entitled to take breastfeeding breaks during a States sitting, including to express if they wish.

Child illness / breakdown in childcare arrangements

- A States Member may be excused attendance under Standing Order 53(2) due to a child's illness or a breakdown in childcare arrangements.

Other special or unexpected circumstances

- Special or unexpected circumstances which may fall out of the remit provided for in this guidance should be referred to the Bailiff for consideration on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the principles underpinning this guidance.