



Wes-Kaapse Provinsiale Parlement  
Western Cape Provincial Parliament  
IPalamente yePhondo IeNtshona Koloni

**MATTER OF PUBLIC OR URGENT  
PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

**FACT SHEET 13**

REVISION 1, 11 JULY 2016

Debates on matters of public or urgent public importance (commonly referred to as “snap” debates) are dealt with in the Standing Rules.

The Standing Rules on matters of public/urgent public importance provide Members with the opportunity to request the Speaker, in writing, to allow discussion of matters which they consider to be of public importance. Such matters must be of a topical nature and of recent occurrence.

In deciding whether a request for a debate in terms of these rules should be allowed, the Speaker takes the following guidelines into account:

- The *sub judice* rule applies;
- The request must deal with a matter for which the provincial government can be held responsible;
- The request will not be granted if the matter can be dealt with by some other means in the near future;
- The subject of the request must relate to a specific matter of recent occurrence and not to a general state of affairs or to a matter of policy;
- The matter must be raised at the earliest opportunity;
- The request must not deal with more than one matter; and
- The request for such a debate should be well motivated.

Matters falling outside the above can be dealt with by way of a motion which is programmed for debate in the normal way through a process of consultation. In this event, the Speaker’s intercession to arrange for a debate in the House is not required.