STATES OF JERSEY

GUIDANCE ON PERSONAL STATEMENTS

Presented to the States on 6th November 2026
by the Privileges and Procedures Committee

STATES GREFFE

REPORT

The Privileges and Procedures Committee has decided to publish guidance on Personal Statements following approval by the Bailiff.

Standing Order 16 allows a Member to seek the leave of the Bailiff to make a personal statement during a States meeting.

Standing Orders give no guidance on what a personal statement may or may not contain other than that it must be 'personal in nature'. A personal statement is not intended to contain contentious material since no questions are allowed. If such material were included in a statement, a Member criticised might wish to make a personal statement in response. Having regard to these and other considerations, the guidelines applied by the Bailiff in assessing whether or not to give permission for the making of a personal statement are as follows.

A personal statement must be a personal explanation by a Member of his or her own actions. This could, for example, be to explain a matter such as the reasons for resigning as a Member or as a Minister or as Chair/Member of a committee/panel or to offer an apology for a particular action.

A personal statement may not be used to attack other Members, officers or members of the public, as no questions are allowed after a statement and no right of reply is possible. Direct criticism of others will only be permitted if it is considered by the Bailiff to be necessary in order to allow the Member making the statement to explain his or her own actions. For example, if a Member has resigned from a particular office because of concerns about the actions of a political colleague it may be in order to explain those concerns. However, even then, criticism must be in appropriate terms and to the extent that it is absolutely essential to the Member's explanation.

Personal statements cannot be used to set out the individual views of the Member making the statement on a range of issues. Such views can only be included in a statement if they are considered by the Bailiff to be necessary to explain the Member's actions.

Personal statements cannot be used to circumvent the provisions of other Standing Orders, including Standing Order 103 that governs how many times a Member may speak during debate. In respect of votes of no confidence, votes of censure or votes to suspend, a personal statement may not be made by the Member subject to the proposition unless the statement is made at least 14 days before the debate on the proposition or the statement is intended to signal the Member's decision to resign from the office or body in question or from the States.

In order to ensure that Standing Order 16 and these guidelines are followed, the text of a personal statement must be provided to the Bailiff when leave is sought to make the statement.