

Glossary of Terms

Act of Parliament	A law made by the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly, that has been assented to by the Administrator
Administrator	Appointed by the Governor-General, and has the role to sign all Bills that have been passed by the Legislative Assembly to make them law of the Northern Territory
Amendment	A change to a Bill or Act
Assent	Approval (by signature) given by the Administrator for a Law passed by the Parliament
Backbencher	Members of the Legislative Assembly who are not ministers, shadow ministers or presiding officers
Bells	This is the way that Members are called to the Chamber
Bicameral	A Parliament with two Houses, an Upper and Lower House
Bill	A proposal for a new law
Budget	The Government's plan for spending money and creating income for the government for the year ahead. The Budget is introduced by the Treasurer
Cabinet	The group of Ministers who develop and put in place the policies of the Government
Chamber	The room where the Members of the Legislative Assembly meet and debate
Chief Minister	The leader of the political party that has the majority of Members in the Legislative Assembly
Clerk	The senior official of the Legislative Assembly who advises the Speaker on the procedures of the chamber and records all the decisions made
Coalition	Two or more political parties who join together, usually to form government or opposition
Debate	The formal discussion on a Bill or other matters in the Chamber
Democracy	A way of governing where the people elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf
Division	Separating the members of the Legislative Assembly into two groups – for and against to determine how they have voted on a matter
Elections	The way representatives are selected to be members of the Legislative Assembly
Government	The party or coalition who has the majority of elected members in the Legislative Assembly
Hansard	The official written record of the Parliament
Independent	A member of Parliament who does not belong to a political party
Leader of the Opposition	The leader of the political party/parties which has the next largest number of representatives after the Government
Legislation	Bills that have received assent
Legislative Assembly	The sole house of the Northern Territory Parliament
Mace	Symbol of authority of the Legislative Assembly and the Speaker
Meeting	The day on which the Members sit to conduct parliamentary business
Member of Parliament	A person elected to the Legislative Assembly
Minister	A member of the parliament appointed to lead and manage government departments. The Minister is responsible for putting into action the law passed by the parliament.
Motion	A proposal for action put forward to the chamber for consideration, debate and decision



Opposition	The second largest party who has a formal status and whose role is to keep a check on the policies and the work being done by the Government.
Parliament	Assembly of elected representatives, who together with the Administrator makes laws for the Northern Territory
Petition	A formal request presented to the Parliament supported by signatures from the public which ask for action to be taken on a matter
Portfolio	An area of responsibility or duties of a minister in a government
Presiding officer	A member of Parliament who presides over the meetings of the Legislative Assembly. In the Northern Territory this role is undertaken by the Speaker, who is also responsible for the administration of the Parliamentary department and services
Question time	A period of time when Members may ask questions concerning their responsibilities
Quorum	The minimum number of members being ten (10) in the Chamber
Serjeant-at-Arms	A parliamentary officer (and carrier of the Mace) who assists the Speaker of the House in maintaining security and order in the Parliamentary precinct
Shadow Minister	A member of the opposition who closely follows the areas of responsibility of a Government Minister
Standing Orders	The rules which the parliament use to conduct the business of the Parliament
Treasurer	The Government Minister who is responsible for preparing the Government's budget
Unicameral	A Parliament which has one chamber such as the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory
Westminster System	The British system of government on which State and Territory Parliaments are based
Whip	Member who is responsible for organising other members of their party to take part in debates and voting