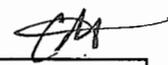


CASEY
4.5.17 

**RESEARCH FOR STANDING COMMITTEE ON RULES,
REGULATIONS, PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVILEGES**

**What are the rules in other Canadian jurisdictions concerning written questions and answers?
Are members limited in the number of questions? Does government have a time limit to respond?**

Jurisdiction	Applicable Rule or Standing Order	Additional
Alberta	<p>34(1) Written questions and motions for returns may be placed on the Order Paper seeking information from members of the Executive Council relating to public affairs, and such questions or motions are debatable.</p> <p>(2) A written question or motion for a return shall be accepted or rejected within 15 sitting days of its appearing on the Order Paper.</p> <p>(3) On Thursday, the Government House Leader shall give the Assembly notice of any written questions or motions for returns that will be accepted or otherwise dealt with on the following Monday.</p> <p>(3.1) On Monday afternoon, written questions and motions for returns are deemed to stand and retain their places except those for which notice has been given under suborder (3) or those which are otherwise due for consideration.</p> <p>(3.2) The Clerk shall read the number, text and name of the sponsor of any written question or motion for return of which notice of acceptance has been given pursuant to suborder (3) when this item of business is called.</p>	<p>Written questions must be accepted or rejected with 15 sitting days; and, if accepted, must be answered within 30 sitting days.</p> <p>As of March 7, 2017, for the 3rd Session of the 29th Legislature, there are 10 written questions, none of which have been accepted to date.</p>

Alberta	<p>(3.2) The Clerk shall read the number, text and name of the sponsor of any written question or motion for return of which notice of acceptance has been given pursuant to suborder (3) when this item of business is called.</p> <p>(4) Amendments to written questions and motions for returns must (a) be approved by Parliamentary Counsel on the Wednesday preceding the day the amendment is to be moved, and (b) be provided to the mover of the written question or motion for a return no later than 11 a.m. on the day the amendment is to be moved.</p> <p>(5) When a written question or a motion for a return is accepted, the member of the Executive Council or Member to whom the question is addressed must file the answer with the Assembly within 30 sitting days of its being accepted.</p> <p>(6) The Clerk of the Assembly shall record the acceptance, rejection, order to stand, or filing of an answer, as the case may be, in Votes and Proceedings.</p>	
British Columbia	<p>47(1) Questions may be placed on the Order Paper seeking information from the Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs, or other public matter connected with the business of the House, in which such Members may be concerned; but in putting any such question no argument or opinion is to be offered, nor any fact stated. And in answering such question the matter to which the same refers shall not be debated, and the substance of all replies made by Ministers of the Crown to questions put to them shall be in writing and handed to the Clerk of the House, and entered in the Journals of the Session.</p>	<p>Schedule B of the Order Paper contains the list of written questions. A written question will stay on the Orders of the Day until the Cabinet minister responds or until the legislative session ends. If a question remains unanswered, the MLA can re-submit the question at the start of the next session.</p> <p>As of March 7, 2017, there were no questions on the Order Paper.</p>

<p>House of Commons, Canada</p>	<p>39. (1) Questions may be placed on the Order Paper seeking information from Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs; and from other Members, relating to any bill, motion or other public matter connected with the business of the House, in which such Members may be concerned; but in putting any such question or in replying to the same no argument or opinion is to be offered, nor any facts stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain the same; and in answering any such question the matter to which the same refers shall not be debated.</p> <p>(2) The Clerk of the House, acting for the Speaker, shall have full authority to ensure that coherent and concise questions are placed on the Notice Paper in accordance with the practices of the House, and may, on behalf of the Speaker, order certain questions to be posed separately.</p>	<p>While oral questions are posed without notice on matters deemed to be of an urgent nature, written questions are placed after notice on the Order Paper with the intent of seeking from the Ministry detailed, lengthy or technical information relating to "public affairs".</p> <p>Forty-eight hours' written notice is required before a question may be placed on the Order Paper.</p> <p>Members are allowed a maximum of four questions on the Order Paper at any one time. A Member may indicate that he or she wishes to receive an oral reply to a question during Routine Proceedings by marking the written question with an asterisk at the time it is submitted. Questions so designated are known as "starred questions", and Members are permitted a maximum of three starred questions out of the allowed four at any one time. Members may also request that the Ministry respond within 45 calendar days, generally by adding a sentence to that effect either before or after the text of the question, or by so indicating to the Clerk when submitting the question. All questions are assigned a number when they are submitted.</p>
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Manitoba	<p>61(1) Each Member may place up to five Written Questions on the Order Paper per session. A Written Question may seek information from</p> <p>(a) a Minister of the Crown relating to public affairs; or</p> <p>(b) another Member relating to any Bill, motion or other public matter connected with the business of the House in which the Member may be concerned.</p> <p>In putting any such Written Question, or replying to it, no argument or opinion shall be offered or any facts stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain it.</p> <p>61(2) A Member replying to a Written Question must do so within 30 days of the Written Question appearing on the Order Paper. If the reply is received when the House is not sitting, the Clerk shall provide the answer in writing to the Member who asked the question, while also notifying all Recognized Party Caucuses and Independent Members that a reply has been received and is available upon request.</p> <p>61(3) A Written Question that remains unanswered will be listed on the Order Paper once every two weeks.</p> <p>61(4) A Member replying to a Written Question shall table the answer in the House or, if the House is not in session, follow established intersessional tabling provisions in accordance with sub-rule 25(3).</p>	<p>Members are limited to 5 written questions per session. Responses are due within 30 days.</p> <p>There have been no written questions in either the first or second sessions of the current legislature (since April 2016).</p>
New Brunswick	<p>37. Questions may be placed on the Order and Notice Paper seeking information from Ministers of the Crown relating to public affairs, and in putting any question or replying to it, no argument or opinion shall be offered, nor any facts stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain; and in answering a question the matter to which it refers shall not be debated.</p> <p>38 When a reply has been tabled to a written question, the question and the reply shall be printed in the Journal of Debates (Hansard). If, in the opinion of the Clerk, the question and answer is voluminous, or deals with replies from several departments, it may be made a Sessional Paper.</p>	<p>Members rarely make use of written questions; the most recent written questions were submitted in 2012/13 when 10 questions were tabled.</p>

Newfoundland and Labrador	<p>51. (1) Questions may be placed on the Order Paper seeking information from the Ministers relating to public affairs; and from other Members relating to any Bill, motion or other public matter connected with the business of the House, in which such Members may be concerned; but in putting any such question or in replying to the same, no argument or opinion is to be offered, nor any facts stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain the same. And in answering any such question the matter to which the same refers shall not be debated.</p> <p>(2) If in the opinion of the Speaker a question on the Order Paper put to a Minister be of such a nature as to require a lengthy reply he or she may, upon the request of the Government, direct same to stand as a notice of motion, and to be transferred to its proper place as such upon the Order Paper, the Clerk of the House being authorized to amend the same as to matter of form.</p> <p>(3) If a question is of such a nature that in the opinion of the Minister who is to furnish the reply, such reply should be in the form of a Return, and the Minister states that he or she has no objection to laying such Return upon the Table of the House, his or her statement shall, unless otherwise ordered by the House, be deemed an order of the House to that effect.</p> <p>(4) Notice of every question shall be given by reducing the question to writing and handing 4 copies thereof to the Clerk, and if not ruled out in accordance with these Standing Orders, the question shall appear on the Order Paper on the next day.</p> <p>(5) The Clerk of the House shall cause written answers to questions which had been placed upon the Order Paper to be printed in the Verbatim Report of the day on which such answers are tabled unless such answers are of a lengthy or voluminous nature in which case the Clerk shall make them a Return.</p>	Since Feb. 2016, there have been 32 written questions filed.
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<p>Northwest Territories</p>	<p>44 (1) Under the item "Written Questions", written questions may be asked of Ministers. A question which would be likely to require a detailed or complex answer, or which would not reasonably be assumed to be within the present knowledge of the Minister, should be posed as a written question.</p> <p>(2) All written questions shall be filed with the Clerk, who shall endorse the date of filing and provide copies to all Members.</p> <p>(3) The Speaker shall ensure that the Written Question conforms to the Rules and practices of the House and may rule a written question out of order.</p> <p>(4) A Written Question may only contain the one initial question and four supplementary questions.</p> <p>(5) A Member may only have five Written Questions on the Order Paper at any one time.</p> <p>45 (1) A Minister shall provide a Return to a Written Question within 21 calendar days by filing a reply with the Clerk, who shall endorse the date of filing.</p> <p>(a) if an extended adjournment of the House occurs before 21 calendar days have passed, the Minister shall file a reply with the Clerk no later than the first day of the next sitting; and</p> <p>(b) if the Minister cannot provide an answer in the time allotted, he or she may file a provisional return with the Clerk indicating that the return to the written question is not ready, (ii) the reason for the delay, and (iii) the date upon which the information will be provided.</p> <p>(2) Under the item "Returns to Written Questions", the Clerk shall inform the Assembly of the returns or provisional returns received, deliver copies to all Members, and have the returns printed in Hansard.</p> <p>(3) Under the item "Returns to Written Questions", a Minister may read a return which has been filed in accordance with Rule 45(1).</p>	<p>Members are limited to 5 written questions on the Order Paper at any one time. Minister have 21 days to respond.</p>
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<p>Nova Scotia</p>	<p>30 (1) A Member may give written notice to the Clerk of the House of a question to a Minister of the Crown to which he desires a written answer; and such questions must be limited to requesting information or action on matters for which a Minister is officially responsible.</p> <p>(2) A list of all such questions of which notice has been given but which have not yet been answered shall be published with the Orders of the Day; and the question shall be published in the Report of the Debates and Proceedings of the House on the day following the day it is filed with the Clerk.</p>	<p>There are currently no written questions on the order paper.</p>
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Nunavut	<p>40 (1) Under the item "Written Questions", written questions may be asked of Ministers. A question which would likely to require a detailed or complex answer, or which would not reasonably be assumed to be within the present knowledge of the Minister, should be posed as a written question.</p> <p>(2) All written questions shall be filed with the Clerk, who shall endorse the date of filing and provide copies to all Members.</p> <p>(3) Under the item "Returns to Written Questions", a Minister may read a return which has been filed in accordance with Rule 41(1).</p> <p>(4) A Minister shall provide a Return to a Written Question within 21 calendar days, unless the Minister files a provisional return with the Clerk indicating:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) that more time is required; b) the reason for the delay; and c) the date upon which the return will be provided <p>5) The date specified in Rule 41(4)(c) must be within 21 calendar days of the date of the filing of the provisional return.</p> <p>6) No more than two provisional returns may be filed in response to the same written question.</p> <p>(7) A Return to a Written Question may be filed with the Clerk of the House when the House stands adjourned or prorogued. A return shall be deemed for all purposes to have been presented to or laid before the House. A return shall be tabled at the appropriate point in the daily order of business at the first opportunity when the House sits.</p>	<p>There are currently no written questions on the Order Paper.</p> <p>Minister have 21 calendar days to respond to written questions, or provide a provisional response, which gives them another 21 days.</p>
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<p>Ontario</p>	<p>99. (a) Questions seeking information from the Ministry relating to the public affairs of the Province may be placed by notice on the Orders and Notices Paper.</p> <p>(b) Such notices shall be dated and, where a member repeats an unanswered question in the ensuing Session, the date of the original notice shall be shown.</p> <p>(c) In putting any written question, no argument or opinion shall be offered nor any facts stated, except so far as may be necessary to explain the question.</p> <p>(d) The minister shall answer such written questions within 24 Sessional days, unless he or she indicates that more time is required because the answer will be costly or time consuming or that he or she declines to answer, in which case a notation shall be made on the Orders and Notices Paper following the question indicating that the minister has made an interim answer, the approximate date that the information will be available, or that the minister has declined to answer, as the case may be.</p> <p>(e) The answers to such written questions shall be given to the member who asked the question and to the Clerk of the House who shall print a notation in the Votes and Proceedings that the question has been answered.</p> <p>(f) If a minister is of the opinion that any written question under this Standing Order requires by way of reply any statement of facts, or records, or statistics of a lengthy or a voluminous nature, the minister may require it to be made a motion for a return.</p> <p>(g) No member shall have more than 10 questions on the Orders and Notices Paper at any one time.</p>	<p>Within 24 sitting days of the day on which the presentation of the question is recorded, the government is required to file a response.</p> <p>The response is delivered to the Clerk of the House and to the MPP who presented the question.</p> <p>Members are restricted to 10 questions at any one time.</p>
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Quebec	<p>313. Questions on matters that are not sufficiently urgent or important to justify an immediate answer, or that are of such a nature as to require research, shall be placed on the Order Paper and Notices. Replies to written questions shall be tabled at the time set aside for this purpose during the Routine Proceedings.</p> <p>314. Procedure - Except as otherwise provided, the Standing Orders pertaining to oral questions shall apply to written questions.</p>	<p>Since the beginning of 2016, there have been 74 responses from government to written questions. The average length of time for a response is 2-3 months.</p>
Saskatchewan	<p>21(1) Written questions seeking detailed information from the government or a Minister of the Crown may be placed on the Order Paper.</p> <p>21(2) Notice of five sitting days shall be given for placing a written question on the Order Paper. Such notice shall be laid on the Table and printed in the Votes and Proceedings.</p> <p>21(3) The rules that govern the nature of questions allowed to be asked during Question Period shall apply to written questions.</p> <p>21(4) A written question may seek information on the same subject for multiple years and from more than one government ministry, agency or Crown corporation. A written question may not ask for the return of a document.</p> <p>21(5) A response may not redirect the question to any committee.</p> <p>21(6) On the sitting day when a written question is required to be answered, the government shall either table the response with the Clerk or convert the question as follows:</p> <p>(a) to an Order for Return if, in the opinion of the government, the response requires more time to prepare or if the answer should be in the form of a return; or</p> <p>(b) to a Notice of Motion for Return (Debatable) if it is the intention of the government to amend the wording of the question or to debate the matter</p>	<p>Five sitting days notice is required to place a question on the Order Paper.</p> <p>Ministers have the option to answer a written question directly within five sitting days or to convert the question into a return. A return is necessary when a response would be too detailed to prepare within the normal time limit. A controversial question is usually converted to a motion for return, which can be debated and amended.</p> <p>A review of the list of written questions from the first session of the 28th Legislature shows an average of 6 months elapses between a order for a return (of information) and the filing of the return.</p>

Saskatchewan	21(7) When a response to a written question is tabled, the Clerk shall cause the answer to be published in the Votes and Proceedings and shall provide a copy of the response to the Member who asked the question. The Clerk is authorized to convert the response into a return if the answer is too lengthy for publication.	
Yukon	<p>7(1) Written questions may be placed on the Order Paper seeking information from</p> <p>(a) members of the Executive Council relating to public affairs; and</p> <p>(b) private members, including Committee Chairs, relating to any bill, motion or other public matter connected with the business of the Assembly in which such members may be concerned.</p> <p>(2) Except to explain the written question or the answer, no argument or opinion shall be offered.</p> <p>(3) No member shall have more than five written questions at a time on the Order Paper.</p> <p>(4) All replies to written questions shall be tabled as Legislative Returns during the Daily Routine.</p> <p>(5) Written questions, until answered, shall be printed each Monday on the Order Paper under the heading "Written Questions."</p>	There have been no written questions presented since the General Election of November 2016.
<p>Summary:</p> <p>The following jurisdictions place limits on the numbers of written questions that can be asked at any one time:</p> <p>House of Commons - Members are allowed a maximum of four questions on the Order Paper at any one time.</p> <p>Manitoba - Members are limited to five written questions per session.</p> <p>Northwest Territories - Members are limited to five written questions on the Order Paper at any one time.</p> <p>Ontario - Members are restricted to ten questions on the Order Paper at any one time.</p> <p>Yukon - Members are restricted to five written questions at any one time.</p>		

The following jurisdictions place a time limit to receive the responses to written questions:

Alberta - When a written question is accepted (which must be within 15 sitting days), the answer must be filed within the next 30 sitting days.

House of Commons - Members may request that the Ministry respond within 45 calendar days.

Manitoba - Responses are due within 30 days.

Northwest Territories - Ministers have 21 calendar days to respond.

Nunavut - Ministers have 21 calendar days to respond.

Ontario - Within 24 Sessional days of the day on which the presentation of the question is recorded, the government is required to file a response.

Saskatchewan - Government has the option of answering the question directly within five sitting days, or converting the question into a return. A written question must have five sitting days notice to be placed on the Order Paper