

# Voters' Expectations of Members of Parliament

## Introduction

CAPaD aims to help voters and candidates understand what MPs do on our behalf. MPs include those elected to federal, state, and territory parliaments, whether in government, opposition, or on the crossbench.

MPs act as a crucial bridge between the public and the parliament, ensuring that diverse voices are heard in policy and law making. Their primary role is to represent us and work for the public good.

This description focuses on MP's core roles.

## We expect you to:

### 1. Represent and support us by:

- Listening to and engaging with us, especially the more disadvantaged,
- Understanding our collective issues,
- Representing and advocating for our collective interests in parliament,
- Assisting us with issues related to government services and policies,
- Regularly informing us about your contributions to parliamentary and government outcomes.

### 2. Facilitate our participation and engagement by:

- Educating us about how we can participate in democracy and fostering our understanding of political processes,
- Informing and involving us in policy discussions and decision-making on key issues,
- Using various methods for us to input on policy issues, planned actions and legislation,
- Representing our collective views while acknowledging any dissent,

### 3. Carry out your legislative and parliamentary duties by:

- Attending parliamentary sessions,
- Actively seeking to participate in discussions, committees, inquiries and debates to develop, amend, and repeal laws.

### 4. Scrutinise and oversee the government by:

- Monitoring and questioning government policies, expenditures and actions through questions, reports, and inquiries to make sure they align with our interests.

## **5. Be transparent by:**

- Prioritising the public good over ideology and vested interests,
- Promptly disclosing financial and other interests, funding sources and spending, lobbyist interactions and other potential conflicts,
- Communicating openly about lobbyist interactions,
- Addressing dis- and misinformation by explaining policy positions and uncertainties,
- Standing up to undue influence while maintaining integrity.

## **6. Hold yourself accountable to us by:**

- Explaining your voting decisions and reasoning,
- Gathering feedback from us on your performance,
- Reporting to us on progress on your pre-election statements.

## **We expect you to have these skills and attributes:**

- A commitment to public service,
- A strong understanding of political systems and policy processes,
- A proactive systemic approach to addressing social and economic challenges,
- Leadership experience, preferably within political, legal, or community settings, in a team context,
- Excellent communication, negotiation, and public speaking skills,
- Critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, and
- A values-grounded practice (see full list at <https://canberra-alliance.org.au/what-canberrans-expect-of-their-mlas/>).