

complaint of privilege shall be entertained on the ground that such evidence has been published before having been reported to the House.

**136.** The report of a standing committee or of a select committee shall be brought up by the chairman and may be ordered to be laid on the Table, or may be otherwise dealt with as the House may direct. Report brought up.  
Amended by:  
Resolution 198 of  
1995.

**137.** Every standing committee and every select committee may, in its discretion, resolve not to allow strangers to be present during any of its proceedings. Strangers.  
Substituted by:  
Resolution 198 of  
1995.

**138.** *(Deleted by Resolution 198 of 1995).* Not to sit while  
House is sitting.

**139.** Counsel and experts, when appearing before a standing committee or before a select committee, shall be bound to observe such directions and conform to such rules in the conduct of matters before such committee as shall be required by the chairman thereof. Counsel to  
conform to rules  
made by chairman.  
Amended by:  
Resolution 198 of  
1995.

#### XI. - Petitions

**140.** (1) A petition can be either made in writing or electronically. Form of petition.  
Substituted by:  
Resolution 382 of  
2016.

(2) Every petition shall be free from interlineations or erasures and in the form shown in the appendix to these standing orders.

**141.** No applications may be made by petition for grants of public money, for compounding sums of money due to the Republic of Malta, nor for the remission of duties payable by any person. This rule, however, shall not be construed so as to prevent any person from praying the House to take his case into consideration for the purpose of obtaining for him such relief as he shall appear to the House to be entitled to. No application for  
grant of money,  
etc.

**142.** Every petition shall be written in the Maltese or English language and shall be signed by the petitioner. In case of incapacity to write, petitioners shall affix their marks and have them legally certified. To be in Maltese or  
English.

**143.** No reference shall be made in a petition to any debate in the House, nor to any intended motion, unless a notice of such motion stands upon the order paper of the House. Reference to  
debate or intended  
motion.

**144.** Petitions may be presented: By whom petitions  
may be presented.  
Substituted by:  
Resolution 382 of  
2016.

(a) by a member or members in writing:  
Provided that no member may present his own petition but such petition may be presented by any other member; or

(b) by a citizen in electronic form on the Parliament website.

**145.** Every petition shall, before it is presented, be signed at the beginning thereof by the member in charge of it, and deposited for at least one clear day with the Clerk of the House, who, after examining the same, shall submit it for the Speaker's approval and no petition shall be presented to the House until such approval has been obtained. Such approval shall be conveyed by the petition To be deposited  
with Clerk for one  
day.  
Amended by:  
Resolution 382 of  
2016.

being certified by the Clerk of the House as follows: "House of Representatives, Passed by the Speaker". The same verifications shall be made by the Clerk of the House when a petition is presented by a citizen.

Number of signatures to be ascertained.  
*Amended by: Resolution 382 of 2016.*

**146.** Any member before presenting a petition shall ascertain the number of signatures to the petition, and shall write the same number at the head of the petition. The same verifications shall be made by the Clerk of the House when a petition is presented by a citizen.

To be perused by member in charge.

**147.** It shall be incumbent on every member presenting a petition to acquaint himself with the contents thereof and to ascertain that it does not contain language disrespectful to the House.

Procedure for member in charge.

**148.** Every member offering to present a petition to the House, shall confine himself to a statement of the parties from whom it comes, of the number of signatures attached to it, of the material allegations contained in it, and to the reading of the prayer of such petition.

No debate on presentation.

**149.** Every petition not containing matter in breach of the privileges of the House, and which, according to the rules or usual practice of the House, can be received, shall be brought to the Table by the direction of the Speaker, who shall not allow any debate, or any member to speak thereon or in relation to such petition; but it may be read by the Clerk of the House, if required.

Reference of petitions to standing committee or select committee.  
*Amended by: Resolution 49 of 2013.*  
*Substituted by: Resolution 382 of 2016.*

**150.** Every petition, both if presented by a member or by a citizen, shall be discussed in the Standing Committee on Petitions. After the said discussion the Committee shall decide whether the petition shall be referred to a Standing Committee or to a Select Committee or whether a discussion should be held in the whole House. It shall also be possible for a petition to be referred to a Ministry, Department or Authority. It may be decided that no further action be taken on the petition or that the petition be laid on the Table of the House with or without comments by the Standing Committee on Petitions.

## **XII. The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and Deputy Chairman**

Presiding in the House.  
*Amended by: L.N. 46 of 1965.*

**151.** (1) There shall preside at any sitting of the House the Speaker or, in his absence, the Deputy Speaker or, in their absence, a member of the House (not being a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary) elected by the House for the sitting.

(2) References in this standing order to circumstances in which the Speaker or Deputy Speaker is absent include references to circumstances in which the office of Speaker or Deputy Speaker is vacant.

The Speaker relieved by the Deputy Speaker.

**152.** The Chairman of Committees shall take the Chair as Deputy Speaker whenever requested to do so by the Speaker for short intervals during a sitting of the House without any formal communication to the House.