



## BUDGET ESTIMATES 2025-2026

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Initial hearings

1. That the Budget Estimates and related papers for the financial year 2025-2026 presenting the amounts to be appropriated from the Consolidated Fund be referred to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report.
2. That, further to the resolution of the House of 12 November 2024 adopting the 2025 sitting calendar, the 2025-2026 initial budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

**Day One: Tuesday 19 August 2025**

PC 6 Roads, Regional Transport

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

**Day Two: Wednesday 20 August 2025**

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport, Jobs and Tourism

**Day Three: Thursday 21 August 2025**

PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast

PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

**Day Four: Friday 22 August 2025**

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth

PC 1 Treasurer

**Day Five: Monday 25 August 2025**

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC 8 Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building Corrections

**Day Six: Tuesday 26 August 2025**  
PC 8 Small Business, Recovery, North Coast  
PC 1 Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research

**Day Seven: Wednesday 27 August 2025**  
PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney  
PC 1 The Legislature

**Day Eight: Thursday 28 August 2025**  
PC 5 Attorney-General  
PC 6 Special Minister of State, Transport, the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy

**Day Nine: Friday 29 August 2025**  
PC 3 Skills, TAFE, Tertiary Education  
PC 7 Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage

**Day Ten: Monday 1 September 2025**  
PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety  
PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

**Day Eleven: Wednesday 3 September 2025**  
PC 8 Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice  
PC 5 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety

3. That for the purposes of the 2025-2026 initial budget estimates hearings:
  1. each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, and, if required, by Government members only from 10.45 am to 11.00 am, 12.45 pm to 1.00 pm, and 5.15 pm to 5.30 pm, and
  2. the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by opposition, crossbench and Government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.
4. That unless the committee decides otherwise:
  4. the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
    - (i) Roads, Regional Transport,
    - (ii) Premier,

- (iii) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast,
  - (iv) Treasurer,
  - (v) Planning and Public Spaces,
  - (vi) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, the Central Coast, Medical Research,
  - (vii) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney,
  - (viii) Special Minister of State, Transport, the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy,
  - (ix) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage,
  - (x) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety,
  - (xi) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources,
  - (xii) Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice,
- (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
- (i) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion,
  - (ii) Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport, Jobs and Tourism,
  - (iii) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault,
  - (iv) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth,
  - (v) Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections,
  - (vi) Small Business, Recovery, North Coast,
  - (vii) The Legislature,
  - (viii) Attorney-General,
  - (ix) Skills, TAFE, Tertiary Education,
  - (x) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales,
  - (xi) Local Government,
  - (xii) Police and Counter Terrorism, the Hunter.
5. That for the purposes of the 2025-2026 initial budget estimates hearings:
- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public,
  - (d) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure,
  - (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session,
  - (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions,
  - (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
  - (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.

6. That, as per the resolution of the House on 12 November 2024 adopting the 2025 sitting calendar, the 2025-2026 supplementary budget estimates hearings are to be held from 1 December to 5 December 2025, and are to be conducted under the same terms as the initial hearings, unless the committee decides otherwise.
7. That the committees report by 26 June 2026.<sup>1</sup>

### **Further initial hearings**

1. That this House notes that:
  - (a) on 26 June 2025, the House adopted a schedule of initial budget estimates hearings for 2025- 2026 over 12 working days from to 19 August 2025 to 3 September 2025,
  - (b) the following hearing was unable to be conducted as scheduled by Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service due to the unavailability of the Minister:

**Day Six:                    Tuesday 26 August 2025**  
PC 8                         Small Business, Recovery, North Coast, and

- (c) following this, that Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service rescheduled the original hearing to the following date:

**Day Thirteen:         Friday 5 September 2025**  
PC 2                         Small Business, Recovery, North Coast

2. That in view of the inability of Portfolio Committee No. 8 – Customer Service to conduct the original initial hearing, the House endorse the rescheduled hearing held on 5 September 2025.<sup>2</sup>

### **Additional hearings:**

1. That, further to the resolution of the House of 26 June 2025 referring Budget Estimates 2025-2026 to the Portfolio Committees for inquiry and report, and the resolution of the House of 21 October 2025 adopting the 2026 sitting calendar, the 2025-2026 additional budget estimates hearings be scheduled as follows:

**Day One:                 Tuesday 24 February 2026**  
PC 7                         Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage  
PC 8                         Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services,  
Youth Justice

**Day Two:                 Wednesday 25 February 2026**  
PC 1                         Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans,  
Medical Research, the Central Coast  
PC 3                         Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education

---

<sup>1</sup> *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 26 June 2025, pp 2533-2535.

<sup>2</sup> *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 10 September 2025, Item 14.

**Day Three: Thursday 26 February 2026**

PC 7 Planning and Public Spaces

PC 8 Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections

**Day Four: Friday 27 February 2026**

PC 8 Small Business, Recovery, the North Coast

PC 5 Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter

**Day Five: Monday 2 March 2026**

PC 2 Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast

PC 5 Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

**Day Six: Tuesday 3 March 2026**

PC 5 Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion

PC 1 The Legislature

**Day Seven: Wednesday 4 March 2026**

PC 1 Treasurer

PC 2 Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth

**Day Eight: Thursday 5 March 2026**

PC 1 Premier

PC 4 Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport, Jobs and Tourism

**Day Nine: Friday 6 March 2026**

PC 8 Local Government

PC 6 Special Minister of State, Transport, the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy

**Day Ten: Monday 9 March 2026**

PC 1 Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources

PC 4 Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales

**Day Eleven: Tuesday 10 March 2026**

PC 6 Roads, Regional Transport

PC 1 Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety

**Day Twelve: Wednesday 11 March 2026**

PC 5 Attorney General

PC 3 Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney

2. That for the purposes of the 2025-2026 additional budget estimates hearings:
  - (a) each portfolio, except The Legislature, be examined concurrently by opposition and crossbench members only from 9.15 am to 10.45 am, and from 11.15 am to 12.45 pm, then from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm and from 3.45 pm to 5.15 pm, with 15 minutes reserved for government questions at 10.45 am, 12.45 pm and 5.15 pm, and
  - (b) the portfolio of The Legislature be examined by opposition, crossbench and government members from 9.15 am to 11.00 am, and from 11.15 am to 1.00 pm.
3. That, unless the committee decides otherwise:
  - (a) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between opposition and crossbench members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:
    - (i) Climate Change, Energy, the Environment, Heritage,
    - (ii) Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Medical Research, the Central Coast,
    - (iii) Planning and Public Spaces,
    - (iv) Small Business, Recovery, the North Coast,
    - (v) Health, Regional Health, the Illawarra and the South Coast,
    - (vi) Families and Communities, Disability Inclusion,
    - (vii) Treasurer,
    - (viii) Premier,
    - (ix) Local Government,
    - (x) Finance, Domestic Manufacturing and Government Procurement, Natural Resources,
    - (xi) Roads, Regional Transport,
    - (xii) Attorney General,
  - (b) the sequence of questions to be asked at the hearings for the following portfolios alternate between crossbench and opposition members, in that order, with equal time allocated to each:

- (i) Customer Service and Digital Government, Emergency Services, Youth Justice,
- (ii) Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education,
- (iii) Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Industry and Trade, Innovation, Science and Technology, Building, Corrections,
- (iv) Police and Counter-terrorism, the Hunter,
- (v) Women, Seniors, Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault,
- (vi) The Legislature,
- (vii) Water, Housing, Homelessness, Mental Health, Youth,
- (viii) Lands and Property, Multiculturalism, Sport, Jobs and Tourism,
- (ix) Special Minister of State, Transport, the Arts, Music and the Night-time Economy,
- (x) Agriculture, Regional New South Wales, Western New South Wales,
- (xi) Industrial Relations, Work Health and Safety,
- (xii) Education and Early Learning, Western Sydney.

4. That for the purposes of the 2025-2026 additional budget estimates hearings:

- (a) the committees must hear evidence in public,
- (b) the committees may ask for explanations from ministers, parliamentary secretaries or officers of departments, statutory bodies or corporations, relating to the items of proposed expenditure,
- (c) ministers be invited to appear for the morning sessions only unless requested by committees to appear also for the afternoon session,
- (d) witnesses, including ministers, may not make an opening statement before a committee commences questions,
- (e) members may lodge supplementary questions with the committee clerk by 5.00 pm within two business days following the receipt of the hearing transcript, and
- (f) answers to questions on notice and supplementary questions are to be published, except those answers for which confidentiality is requested, after they have been circulated to committee members.

5. That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders, a meeting is not required to be convened for a budget estimates draft report to be considered, and instead, the committees may consider and agree to reports by email, unless a majority of members call for a meeting to adopt such reports.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 20 November 2025, Item 6.

## **Further additional hearings**

1. That this House notes that:
  - (a) on 20 November 2025, the House adopted a schedule of additional budget estimates hearings for 2025-2026 over 12 working days from 24 February 2026 to 11 March 2026, and
  - (b) the following is unable to be conducted as scheduled by Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education due to the unavailability of the Minister:

**Day Two:           Wednesday 25 February 2026**  
PC 3                 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education.

2. That in view of the inability of Portfolio Committee No. 3 – Education to conduct this hearing, the committee be authorised to undertake the hearing as follows under the same arrangements as originally agreed to by the House on 20 November 2025.

**Day Thirteen:    Thursday 12 March 2026**  
PC 3                 Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 4 February 2026, Item 9.