

Proxy voting guidance: November 2024

This guidance will apply from 25 November 2024

Contents

Who is eligible for proxy voting?	2
Parental proxy voting	2
Miscarriage, baby loss and fertility treatment.....	2
Serious long-term illness or injury proxy voting.....	2
Risk-based exclusion proxy voting.....	2
Separate guidance will be provided to Members eligible to apply for a proxy vote in cases of risk-based exclusion.	2
How long can a proxy voting arrangement last?	3
What types of votes can you have a proxy for?.....	4
How do you apply for the proxy voting scheme?	5
Applying for a parental proxy vote.....	5
Applying for proxy for miscarriage, baby loss, complications relating to childbirth or pregnancy, or for an extended absence for fertility treatment	6
Applying for a serious long-term illness or injury proxy vote	7
How do you change a proxy voting arrangement?	8
For serious long-term illness or injury proxy voting:	8
How to cast a proxy vote on behalf of another Member	10
If you are voting the other way from the Member/s for whom you are the nominated proxy	10

Who is eligible for proxy voting?

You can find the full proxy voting scheme [here](#).

Parental proxy voting

You are eligible to apply for the scheme if you are:

- a new biological mother of a baby
- the primary or secondary adopter of a baby or child
- a new biological father of a baby, or
- the partner of the person giving birth.

Miscarriage, baby loss and fertility treatment

You are eligible to apply for a proxy if you have experienced miscarriage or baby loss, complications relating to childbirth or pregnancy, or you require an extended absence for fertility treatment.

Serious long-term illness or injury proxy voting

You are eligible to apply for the scheme if you have a statement from a hospital consultant stating that, for reasons of serious long-term illness or injury, you are unable to vote in divisions for a period of one month or more. Your application will be assessed by the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service, who will then make a recommendation to the Speaker. The Speaker will make the decision about whether to grant the proxy voting arrangement.

These arrangements are in place until the end of the current Session.

Risk-based exclusion proxy voting

Separate guidance will be provided to Members eligible to apply for a proxy vote in cases of risk-based exclusion.

How long can a proxy voting arrangement last?

If you are the mother or father of a baby, the partner of a person giving birth, or an adoptive parent, you can have a proxy vote for a maximum of one month before the due date or adoption date and a maximum of six months after the due date or adoption date.

If you have experienced miscarriage or baby loss, complications relating to childbirth or pregnancy, or you require an extended absence for fertility treatment, you can apply for up to seven months in the first instance, with any extension subject to agreement by the Speaker.

A serious long-term illness or injury proxy voting arrangement can last for a minimum of one month and a maximum of seven months in the first instance. At the end of the seven-month period, the Speaker may grant a single, time-limited extension. You will need to submit a further statement from a hospital consultant to the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service.

Any period for which you suspend the proxy arrangement will count towards the maximum time for which the arrangement can apply.

What types of votes can you have a proxy for?

A Member acting as your proxy can cast a vote on your behalf for:

- a division in the House on public or private business
- a division in Committee of the whole House
- a deferred division, and
- a secret ballot for the election of a Speaker, Deputy Speaker or select committee chairs, including the Chair of the Backbench Business Committee.

Proxy votes will not count toward any calculation of the quorum of the House or toward a majority for moving a closure motion.

How do you apply for the proxy voting scheme?

There are different application processes depending on the reason for your proxy vote. Please follow the appropriate steps below.

Applying for a parental proxy vote

To apply for a parental proxy vote, take the following steps:

1. Establish with any Member who is eligible to vote in divisions that they are willing to be your proxy and to cast your vote as and when instructed by you.
2. Email pbohoc@parliament.uk providing the following:
 - A statement that you are eligible to apply for the parental leave proxy scheme.
 - The name of the Member who has agreed to be your proxy.
 - The dates on which you want your proxy voting period to start and end. You can have a proxy vote for up to one month before the due date or adoption date and up to six months after the due date or adoption date.
3. You must submit your application before the rise of the House on the sitting day before the date when you want the proxy to come into force, or by 3pm on the working day before, if the House is not sitting.
4. The Speaker will issue a certificate, which will appear in the Votes and Proceedings no later than the sitting day on which it takes effect. The certificate will show your name, the duration of the arrangement and the name of the Member you have chosen as your proxy.

Applying for proxy for miscarriage, baby loss, complications relating to childbirth or pregnancy, or for an extended absence for fertility treatment

To apply for a proxy under this category, take the following steps:

1. Establish with any Member who is eligible to vote in divisions that they are willing to be your proxy and to cast your vote as and when instructed by you.
2. Email pbohoc@parliament.uk providing the following:
 - A statement that you are eligible to apply for this aspect of the scheme (you do not have to be explicit about the precise reasons why you are eligible).
 - The name of the Member who has agreed to be your proxy.
 - The dates on which you want your proxy voting period to start and end. You can have a proxy vote for up to seven months.
3. You must submit your application before the rise of the House on the sitting day before the date when you want the proxy to come into force, or by 3pm on the working day before, if the House is not sitting.
4. The Speaker will issue a certificate, which will appear in the Votes and Proceedings no later than the sitting day on which it takes effect. The certificate will show your name, the duration of the arrangement and the name of the Member you have chosen as your proxy.

Applying for a serious long-term illness or injury proxy vote

To apply for a serious long-term illness or injury proxy vote, take the following steps:

1. Establish with any Member who is eligible to vote in divisions that they are willing to be your proxy and to cast your vote as and when instructed by you.
2. Email phws@parliament.uk and speakersoffice@parliament.uk with the subject line "Proxy vote application", providing the following:
 - A statement from a hospital consultant that you are, for reasons of serious long-term illness or injury, unable to attend divisions or elections in the House in person for a period of not less than one month. A proxy vote can only be initially granted for a period of seven months and the medical statement must cover the period being requested.
 - The name of the Member who has agreed to be your proxy.
 - The dates on which you wish your proxy voting arrangement to begin and end (which must be within the period specified in the hospital consultant's statement).
3. Members are generally expected not to be present on the Parliamentary Estate whilst holding a proxy vote. If, for exceptional reasons, you are intending to be present on the Estate, you should say so in your application email.
4. Your application will be assessed by the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service, who will complete a proforma for the Speaker about your eligibility for a proxy vote. They may also provide the Speaker with advice about whether, for exceptional reasons, you should hold the proxy vote whilst being present on the Parliamentary Estate.
5. The Speaker will then make a decision about whether to grant the proxy voting arrangement. If he does, he will issue a certificate, which will appear in the Votes and Proceedings no later than the sitting day on which the arrangement takes effect. The certificate will show your name, the duration of the arrangement and the name of the Member you have chosen as your proxy.

How do you change a proxy voting arrangement?

For serious long-term illness or injury proxy voting:

Changing proxy, suspending or ending proxy voting arrangement

You can change the Member who acts as your proxy, suspend your proxy voting arrangement or end your proxy voting period early.

1. You must email pbohoc@parliament.uk before the rise of the House on the sitting day before you want the change to take effect or by 3pm on the working day before, if the House is not sitting.
2. The Speaker will publish the changes by issuing a certificate, which will appear in the Votes and Proceedings no later than the sitting day on which it takes effect.

Extending a proxy voting arrangement

1. You can also apply to extend your proxy voting arrangement beyond seven months for a single time-limited period if you provide a further written statement from a hospital consultant. This statement should be emailed to phws@parliament.uk and speakersoffice@parliament.uk. The statement must specify the period of time for which the consultant considers an extension is required.
2. Members are generally expected not to be present on the Parliamentary Estate whilst holding a proxy vote. If, for exceptional reasons, you are intending to be present on the Estate, you should say so in your application email.
3. Your application will be assessed by the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service, who will complete a proforma for the Speaker about your eligibility for an extension. They may also provide the Speaker with advice about whether, for exceptional reasons, you should hold the proxy vote whilst being present on the Parliamentary Estate.
4. The Speaker will then make a decision about whether to grant the extension. If he grants it, he will issue a certificate, which will

appear in the Votes and Proceedings no later than the sitting day on which the extension takes effect.

For other forms of proxy:

For any other form of proxy, you can change the Member who acts as your proxy, suspend your proxy voting arrangement or end your proxy voting period early.

1. You must email pbohoc@parliament.uk before the rise of the House on the sitting day before you want the change to take effect, or by 3pm on the working day before, if the House is not sitting. (Any period for which you suspend the proxy arrangement will count towards the maximum time the arrangement can apply.)
2. The Speaker will publish the changes by issuing a certificate, which will appear in the Votes and Proceedings no later than the sitting day on which it takes effect.

How to cast a proxy vote on behalf of another Member

To cast a proxy vote on behalf of another Member, take these steps:

1. Before a vote is called, you must agree with the Member for whom you are a registered proxy how you will cast their vote. You must follow their instructions exactly.
2. If you are voting the same way as the Member/s whose proxy you hold, join the queue as normal. When you reach the pass reader in the relevant lobby, tap your pass on the reader in the usual way.
3. The pass reader terminal screen will display your name and the names of any Members whose proxy you hold. To record the name of any Member (i.e., yourself or one of the proxy Members listed) in that lobby tap the relevant Member's name on the screen and then tap the "Record name(s)" button. If you wish to record the names of all your proxies, along with your own name, tap "Select all". The screen will then confirm how many names have been recorded.
4. When you walk past the Tellers, let them know that you are also voting on behalf of the other Member/s whose proxy you hold. You should say "voting for myself and as proxy for {Member's name}" or "voting as proxy for {Member's name} only" as appropriate to avoid double counting.

If you are voting the other way from the Member(s) for whom you are the nominated proxy:

You need to walk through both lobbies. If you are concerned that you will not have time to do this, speak to a Doorkeeper in Members' Lobby, who will allow you to join the front of the queue.

Vote for yourself as usual, before going back through the Chamber to vote on behalf of the Member(s) for whom you are the nominated proxy.

When voting on behalf of the Member(s) for whom you are the nominated proxy in the other lobby, you will again need to tap your pass on the reader and select the names of the Members voting in that lobby. When you walk past the Tellers, you must be clear that you are only casting one or more proxy votes, not your own vote plus the proxy votes.