

GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF BAG SEARCHES UNDER COUNCIL'S MEETING PROCEDURE LOCAL LAW NO. 2/2019

Council's Meeting Procedure Local Law No. 2/2019 adopted by Port Phillip City Council at its meeting held on 18 September 2019, states under clause 65(2) that **"Council may, on some or all occasions, conduct bag searches of some or all people attending Council meetings. This is done for security and safety reasons and to ensure that all who attend Council meetings are able to attend and participate in a safe environment"**.

Legal requirement

- Port Phillip City Council has obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) to ensure that its premises are safe for anyone in attendance.

Who will conduct a bag search?

- A bag search will be conducted by a Council representative who is trained to conduct bag searches in a minimally intrusive way.
- A Council representative may be a Council employee or a security guard engaged by Council.

How is a bag search conducted?

- Council representatives will not touch the bags or belongings of members of the public.
- If an object obstructs the view into the bag, the Council representative may ask the relevant individual to remove the obstruction however the Council representative will not touch the obstruction themselves.
- Bag searches will be conducted in a non-discriminatory and uniform manner.

Why would a bag search be conducted?

- A bag search may be conducted for any of the following reasons:
 - If a member of the public wishes to bring into the Council meeting an unusually large bag or object.
 - If the Council representative reasonably suspects that a member of the public is carrying a suspicious and potentially dangerous item in their bag.
 - If a Councillor or member of Council staff has been threatened by a member of the public.
 - If the meeting agenda has topic(s) that is / are particularly contentious or controversial and large numbers of the public are expected to attend.

Notification to the public

- A copy of these guidelines will be placed on Council's website on the Council Meetings page.
- Due notice that Council may undertake a bag search will be given at the first public entry point to the Council offices for all Council meetings.