

Submitting of Claims and Receipts

When submitting a claim, or contacting us to check the progress of your claim, please ensure that you have sent us the appropriate hard copy evidence. All online claims must be supported as appropriate by hard copy receipts, bills, invoices or statements (the latter three should be signed by the MP, and dated). These can be posted to us at the address at the bottom of this Bulletin, or posted in the dropbox in the Members' Centre at Portcullis House. For more information on the evidence we will accept for each claim, please see the 'evidence requirements' on our website under 'The Expenses Rules'.

Hotel Stays When the House Sits Late

In the light of recent late sittings, a number of Members have asked us about the practicality of the rule permitting them to book overnight hotel stays if the House sits beyond 1am. The rule, at paragraph 7.34 of the Scheme, states:

Where any Member is required to be at the House of Commons because the House is sitting beyond 1am, they may claim for the cost of an overnight stay in a hotel if it would not be reasonable to return to any residence. This is subject to an upper limit of £130 per night.

We recognise that Members will need to book hotels in advance if they reasonably expect that on any particular day the House is likely to sit beyond 1am. They may therefore claim for this expense even if the House, in the event, rises before that time. If the House does rise earlier, Members should try to cancel the hotel booking, to reduce the cost to the public purse.

Where the House unexpectedly sits very late and it is not possible to find a hotel room for £130 or less, affected Members should find a hotel for the best available price and make a claim on the contingency budget, on the basis that it was not possible to find one for £130 or less in the circumstances.

All claims will, of course, be published in due course.

Removal Costs

We can confirm that MPs may claim removal costs when they are moving into accommodation for which they intend to claim accommodation expenses. Given the one-off nature of removal costs, MPs should make a claim for them through the contingency fund. Claims under the contingency fund may be made using the form available in the Miscellaneous category on the online expenses system.

Notification of Exception

As previously advised in these Bulletins, for those members of staff who were employed before 7 May, who you wish to be exceptions from the Scheme, you will need to fill out a 'notification of exception' form (available on our website), and return to us. Where these payments mean that you will exceed your staffing budget, you will still need to submit a request to the contingency fund, submitting evidence of staff numbers, the costs of each member of staff and their headline job descriptions, along with a description of why the particular staff complement is needed.

Update on Information Services

In the last week we have started a new service offering one-to-one help for those Members logging on and using the online system. Immediate feedback from these sessions indicates that Members have found them very useful. These can be arranged to take place at our documentation centre at 1 Parliament Street or at an MP's office in Westminster. To book, please phone our information line on 020 7811 6400.

Training for MPs' staff

To date, 405 members of staff have booked onto IPSA's training sessions, which run until 23 July.

Staff can book onto one of the sessions below by calling the IPSA training helpline on 020 3334 3377 or by emailing training@parliamentarystandards.org.uk. The training helpline is open daily from 09:00 to 17:00. If you leave an 'out of hours' message, it would be very helpful if you could provide the following information: staff member's name, name of MP, staff contact telephone number, staff email address.

The schedule for the remaining staff training sessions is as follows:

Thursday 22 July – London

One session at 13.15

Friday 23 July – London

One session at 13.15

Payment of Expenses and Salaries

IPSA's online expenses and finance systems have been set up to enable approved expenses to be paid into MPs' bank accounts **throughout** the month. This means that there is no monthly or weekly cut-off date. Please note, however, that the monthly cut-off date for IPSA's **salary** payroll is the 15th, or if this falls on a non-working day, the last working day before that.

IPSA Bulletins, Guidance and Frequently Asked Questions in the Members' Centre

Paper copies of these Bulletins, our latest Scheme guidance document and our frequently asked questions are now available in the Members' Centre in Portcullis House. Alternatively these can be found on our website.

Information for your Staff

A number of MPs' staff members have requested that we send these Bulletins directly to them, which we will be doing from today. If your staff would find this useful, please ask them to email our information line with the email address they would like to use for this. Please also pass this Bulletin to any colleagues who would find it useful.

Contacting IPSA

Phone: IPSA Information Line: 020 7811 6400
(Opening hours 8.00am to 6.00pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk

Post: IPSA, 7th floor, Portland House, Bressenden Place, London,
SW1E 5BH

Website: www.parliamentarystandards.org.uk