



18 March 2021

Today we have published our new Scheme for 2021-22. There are several changes to this year's Scheme and you can find more details below.

Last week we announced the updated MP Staff pay ranges for 2021-22. If you are an MP or a Proxy responsible for staffing matters in your office, please ensure that you read the guidance in today's bulletin on the new staff pay ranges, the automated 1% pay increase and the COVID-19 Staffing Budget supplement.

This bulletin contains new information on the following:

- New Scheme for 2021-22
- MP Staff Pay Ranges for 2021-22 and Automated Payment of Salary Increases
- COVID-19 Staffing Budget Supplement for 2021-22
- Kickstart Scheme

Important information you should still be aware of includes:

- Year-end 2020-21
- Compliance Officer Procedures Consultation
- Training and Development
- Contacting us

With best wishes

The IPSA Team

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## New Scheme for 2021-22

The Thirteenth Edition of the Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs ('the Scheme') will come into effect from 1 April 2021 for the duration of the 2021-22 financial year. The new edition of the Scheme can be viewed on our website [here](#). All information in the Scheme is also broken down into various topics on our [information site](#). You can navigate the website by topic or use the search function to find the information you are looking for.

The new adjusted budgets and staff salary ranges can be found at the end in annexes A and B, and are also available on our [website](#).

There are a number of changes to the Scheme for you to be aware of. These are listed below, and more information can be found in our guidance [here](#). All changes will be made on our information website from 1 April. The changes are:

- **Deadline for the submission of claims** - the deadline will revert to 90 days, following last year's extension in light of difficulties some offices faced in obtaining invoices and other documents.

- **Requirement to provide supporting evidence with claims** - we will revert to the normal requirement to provide supporting evidence when submitting a claim, rather than at a later date. This also follows last year's change to enable offices to submit claims without supporting evidence due to the pandemic.
- **Homeworking allowance for staff** - staff members working from home as a result of the pandemic are eligible to receive allowance of £26 per month to cover homeworking expenses – such as telephone, internet, electricity and gas usage – that are additional to the normal costs of living in the home. While in receipt of the allowance, staff members must not claim separately for such costs. This was implemented on an opt-out basis in July 2020, with payments backdated to April 2020 and will continue in the 2021-22 financial year, until further notice.
- **Additional staffing funding for coronavirus-related workload** - in response to a rise in workloads because of coronavirus, from April 2021, MPs will have up to £27,680 (London Area) or £24,970 (non-London Area) on top of their normal staffing budgets to cover additional staffing costs. This funding will be available until 31 March 2022.
- **Automatic annual pay increases for staff** - Following a consultation in late 2020, where additional funding is provided for staff pay via the staffing budget, IPSA will automatically apply an increase to all staff members' salaries unless they have been opted out by their employing MP.
- **Paid leave for armed forces reservists** - To avoid an impact on an MPs' Staffing budget, where MPs' staff who are armed forces reservists take paid special leave for mandatory training, the salary costs will now be allocated to the centrally held Staff Absence budget.
- **Cover for MP parental leave** - MPs who wish to take a period of leave following the birth or adoption of a child are eligible for funding to put cover arrangements in place during their absence. Following a

consultation, funding arrangements are now formalised with the creation of a 'MP parental leave cover fund' and associated rules which set out MPs' eligibility for funding and how IPSA will provide it.

We are proposing to undertake a more fundamental review of the Scheme over the coming year. We will announce more in due course.

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## MP Staff Pay Ranges for 2021-22 and Automated Payment of Salary Increases

Last week we published the MP staff pay ranges for 2021-22. You can find these on our website [here](#).

A small number of pay range minimums are increasing in 2021-22. Staff members whose current salaries fall below those new minimums will receive an increase if needed to ensure they remain within the range. This relates to the **Administrative 1 (non-London area) range**, where the minimum is increasing to match the new UK 'real Living Wage' (as set by the Living Wage Foundation); and to the **Employed Intern (London area/non-London area) range**, where the minimum is increasing to match the new National Minimum Wage for 21-22 year olds which will come into effect in April 2021.

As we announced on 25 February, we will automatically adjust MPs' staff salaries. For the next financial year, 2021-22, the IPSA Board has agreed a figure of 1% which will be paid to all MPs' staff unless their employing MP has opted out. If you are an MP, an opt out should only be requested if you are awarding no pay increase. **You do not have to take any action for the 1% pay increase to be implemented.**

For some staff, the automatically applied 1% increase will bring them into the updated pay range. For those staff where this is not the case, we will apply a further increase so that their salaries meet the revised minimum of their pay range. Pay increases will take place in the May payroll and will be backdated to 1 April 2021. If an MPs' staff member leaves their employment in April 2021, their pay increase will still be processed in May and they will receive the payment after they have left.

MPs are still able to award a further increase above the 1% if they wish and if affordable within the overall budget. In this case, when submitting a contractual changes form, please state clearly what the overall change in salary should be using the description field (for example, an additional 1% on top of the automatic 1%, or state the final salary amount). This will help to ensure that any additional changes are processed correctly.

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## COVID-19 Staffing Budget Supplement for 2021-22

We wrote to you at the end of last year to say we have extended the COVID related Staffing Budget supplement into the 2021-22 financial year. An additional **£24,970** will be available for MP staffing budgets outside of the London area and **£27,680** for London area MPs, until the end of March 2022.

We appreciate that each MP's office is different and the discretion on how to deploy this staffing resource is a matter for you to decide locally. But the additional budget could fund, as examples:

- Recruitment of an additional full-time member of staff (or retention of a current fixed term appointment) until the end of 2021;
- Two full time appointments from April to July; or

- One part-time appointment working 3.5 days per week for the full financial year
- Overtime payments or contract extensions for your existing staff

Please use the COVID-19 supplement with caution when deciding whether to hire a new permanent staff member or making a fixed-term contract permanent, as opposed to hiring a new fixed-term staff member. You should consider the implications that a new permanent staff member would have on your Staffing budget in the future. We strongly advise you use the example set out above.

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## Kickstart Scheme

Last year we wrote to all MPs about the Kickstart Scheme, which provides funding to employers to create job placements for 16-24 year-olds on Universal Credit, as part of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. A minimum number of 30 placements was required and we did not receive enough expressions of interest for us to consider this scheme.

Whilst the rules have now changed to lower this threshold, we are concerned at taking on additional policy and payroll responsibilities for this scheme at a time when we are focussed on and working hard to improve our core services to better support MPs and their staff.

The House's Members' HR Service has advised that the scheme would add significant responsibilities to MPs' offices, including regular inspections that those on the scheme are receiving the training and development they require. Further, Kickstart rules would not allow offices to fill existing roles with the scheme and this provides uncertainty as to how the scheme would work for an MP's office.

Whilst we will not be offering the Kickstart Scheme to MPs' offices, this [document](#) from the DWP outlines alternatives to how the scheme could be supported. MPs may wish to contact their local Kickstart co-ordinators to discuss further options. Additionally, Members' HR are available to talk to about the requirements of the Kickstart Scheme and outline the other ways currently available to help get disadvantaged young people to work with you. They can be contacted via email at [membershr@parliament.uk](mailto:membershr@parliament.uk).

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## Year-end 2020-21

To make sure your claims are paid from your 2020-21 budgets, you must submit them by **31 March 2021**.

If you can't submit all claims for 2020-21 by 31 March 2021, complete a year-end form and submit it to [info@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:info@theipsa.org.uk) no later than **15 April 2021**.



Our year-end guidance is available to help you manage your finances across the end of financial year 2020-21. All MPs should check their financial position for this financial year and complete a year-end form to make sure spending is allocated to the correct financial year.

Please refer to the guidance we provided [here](#), which includes FAQs and helpful tips. The correct submission of documentation is your responsibility and it is therefore vital all MPs and staff understand the deadlines and what you

need to submit to IPSA.

If you need to complete a year-end form please do so and submit it, along with the necessary supporting evidence on IPSA Online, to [info@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:info@theipsa.org.uk) by 23:59 on Thursday 15 April 2021.

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## **Consultation - Amendments to procedures for Compliance Officer Investigations**

The Compliance Officer for IPSA is carrying out a consultation into amendments to procedures for investigations.

The consultation proposes a number of changes to the Investigation Procedures and the accompanying guidance.

This consultation will close this Friday, 19 March 2021. For further information visit the [Consultations page](#) of our website.

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## **Training and Development**

We currently have a programme of training sessions on a range of subjects. These explain our rules, demonstrate processes and answer other questions you may have. Our current programme of sessions includes:

- Year-end 2020-21
- Budget Management: Claims, Debt and Spend
- Reconciling your Payment Card
- Staffing Budget Report



- Property Registration, Management and Amendment
- IPSA Online Training

[Click here for more details and to register](#)

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## Contacting us

There is information available on the [IPSA website for MPs and staff](#).

Queries or documents can be submitted to IPSA teams by emailing the MP Support ([info@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:info@theipsa.org.uk)) or Payroll teams ([payroll@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:payroll@theipsa.org.uk)). We accept scanned documents and forms on IPSA Online. Please do not mail documents to our office.

You can arrange to speak with a member of our MP Support or Payroll teams. Our call booking service can be found [here](#).

If you are submitting a New Starter form, please include their parliamentary email address so that we can set up their IPSA Online account with this email.

If you are repaying money to IPSA, please make a BACS payment and email a completed [repayment form](#) to [info@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:info@theipsa.org.uk). Our bank details can be found on the repayment form.