

## **Bulletin 31 October 2019**

Following this week's vote in the House of Commons to hold an early General Election on 12 December 2019, IPSA will be providing advice and guidance to you leading up to and during the dissolution and General Election periods.

We recognise that the coming weeks will be a very demanding time for you. We will endeavour to provide you with quick and relevant advice on the rules that apply, and to process claims and respond to queries as quickly as we can.

This bulletin contains information on the following:

- General Election
- Annual Publication - Date Change
- Scheme Consultation
- IPSA Online Webinars and Training
- Confidentiality Clause Consultation
- UK Parliament Week
- Phone Line Closures

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### **General Election**

Our dissolution guidance can be found on the [General Election page on our website](#) as well as on Parliament's intranet. This will help you to understand the rules that apply during the dissolution period. It will also explain what rules and entitlements will apply in the event that an MP loses office, is newly elected, or is returned to Parliament. Our [campaigning guidance](#) is available to view on our website. It is vital that all MPs and staff, who plan on campaigning, read this.

We advise that you check our General Election page regularly for updates, FAQs, and other useful information. You can also call our information line on 020 7811 6400. A direct dial has been set up between the House of Commons and IPSA. If you are in the House of Commons you can dial 3600 to be connected to our phone lines.

We will be contacting those MPs who are standing down at the next election in the coming days to arrange a meeting with a member of IPSA's staff.

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## **Annual Publication**

Due to this week's General Election announcement, the scheduled publication, of annual data and claims processed on the old expenses system from March to July 2019, will not take place on 21 November 2019, as originally planned. This has now been rescheduled to take place in the week commencing 16 December 2019.

The annual data to be published will include details of the costs of staffing for each MP, and the aggregate spending on security and disability across all MPs.

Last week we emailed all MPs with updated details of what will be published, following the first set of data sent in the first week of October. Please ensure you check this data. Repayments must be received by **7 November**. If you have any questions or think a correction is needed, please let us know via email at [info@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:info@theipsa.org.uk) by **7 November**.

This publication will also include expenses data for all claims processed using the old expenses system from March to September 2019. These claims will be available on the IPSA Online Homepage for review, from tomorrow.

## **MP Commentary**

Once again, MPs will have an opportunity to include some comments of their own about their expenditure. This will be displayed alongside your aggregated data on IPSA's website. The purpose of this commentary is to add context to MPs' spending.

This is entirely voluntary. The deadline for submission is 7 November and should be submitted to us via email at [info@theipsa.org.uk](mailto:info@theipsa.org.uk).

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## **Changes to the Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses for 2020-21 Consultation**

Today we have launched a consultation on a number of changes to the Scheme of MPs' Business Costs and Expenses.

An updated Scheme is published for each financial year. For the most part, changes to the rules year-on-year are limited to adjustments to MPs' budgets and MPs' staff salary ranges, in order to provide a stable set of rules for MPs and their staff. We aim to conduct more comprehensive reviews of the Scheme about every five years. However, there are sometimes issues identified which we believe should be addressed more quickly.

The changes being consulted on relate to:

- MPs who sublet their constituency offices
- Clarification to the rules on security assistance

The proposed changes, if agreed, would come into effect on 1 April 2020. The consultation will run until 31 January 2020. Further details on how to respond can be found [here](#).

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## **IPSA Online Webinars**

We are currently running a series of webinars, providing guidance on specific aspects of IPSA Online. Each webinar will include a presentation from an MP Support Account Manager and an opportunity for you to ask questions.

We have three webinars planned during the General Election period. If there is sufficient demand these will be held on the dates below. If you no longer wish to attend, please let us know.

Click the links below to register for all or some of the webinars and let us know of any topics that you would like us to cover in the future. If you are not able to attend, the webinars will be recorded and circulated afterwards.

Wednesday 6 November at 10am: Payment Cards- [register here](#)

Wednesday 20 November at 10am: Leases- [register here](#)

Wednesday 4 December at 10am: Proxies- [register here](#)

We continue to run classroom training sessions for IPSA Online in our office on the Strand. These sessions are 1 hr 15 minutes long and are a good opportunity to learn more about IPSA Online.

[Click here to register for training](#)

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## **MPs' Staff Contracts Consultation - Confidentiality clause**

During September and October, we ran a [consultation](#) on potential changes to

the confidentiality clause in MPs' staff contracts, following Gemma White QC's [Bullying and Harassment of MPs' Parliamentary Staff Independent Inquiry Report](#). One of the recommendations in the report was that IPSA should consider amending the wording of the confidentiality clause in staff employment contracts to make it clear that the clause does not prevent employees from raising a complaint or bringing a claim of bullying and harassment against the MP or others.

The consultation has now closed. The results have shown that MPs and MPs' staff are in favour of implementing the change to the confidentiality clause of contracts for both current and new members of staff. The change to the clause will be made for all new starters from 2 December 2019. For current members of staff, we will now consider how to make this change.

We have provided an exit survey for members of staff when they leave an MP's employment. This can be found on our website [here](#).

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## **UK Parliament Week**

[UK Parliament Week](#) will take place between 2-8 November 2019 and IPSA will be hosting a talk on Thursday 7 November between 3-5pm.

The presentation will cover:

- Why IPSA was created
- IPSA's main functions
- How we regulate and support MPs
- A look back over the past 10 years
- Questions and answers

For further details [click here](#).

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## **Phone Line Closure**

Tomorrow, Friday 1 November, our phone lines will be opening at the later time of 10.30am.

Our phone lines will be closed on Friday 8 November due to staff training.

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If you have any queries about the information in this bulletin, please contact us  
on 020 7811 6400.

Remember to press 1 for MP Support Services or 2 for Payroll.