

5 November 2020

From today, [new COVID-19 restrictions](#) come into force in England. The House of Commons Commission agreed that MPs should not bring staff on to the parliamentary estate, except those supporting front bench duties.

Since March 2020, IPSA has made available a range of support for MPs and their staff to help with issues related to the coronavirus. We know that offices are keen to hear whether or not additional funding will be available in the next financial year. No decisions about this have been taken yet, but we will update all MPs and their staff as soon as this is known.

The current support available includes:

Contact Us

Our staff are working remotely and we remain on hand to offer support.

There is information available on the [IPSA website for MPs and staff](#) and up-to-date [Coronavirus FAQs](#) can be found on our website.

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

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

Office Costs Budget

We increased your office costs budget by £10,000. Any amount remaining from this additional funding has been added into your 2020-21 budget.

This is to cover any additional costs you may incur in working remotely. This extra budget will be available until March 2021.

Staffing Budget

Due to large increase in constituency office workloads, MPs may request an increase to their staffing budget for 2020-21 up to a maximum amount of £18,270 for London Area MPs and £16,480 for non-London Area MPs.

MPs can choose how best to meet the increased demand, whether by hiring a new fixed-term caseworker or other member of staff, by increasing the contracted hours of existing staff members, or by allowing existing staff to carry out overtime.

An MP can make multiple requests during this financial year, to respond to evolving needs, so long as the total amount requested does not exceed the maximum.

Homeworking allowance

We introduced an allowance of £26 per month for MPs' staff members who are working from home, to cover additional costs such as utilities and telephone costs. This is an alternative to making individual claims for the costs. The homeworking allowance will be administered on an 'opt-out' basis, meaning that all staff members will receive the allowance by default.

To start or stop receiving the homeworking allowance, the MP or Payroll Proxy should email payroll@theipsa.org.uk

Deadlines for submission of claims

We recognise that during this period, you may be delayed in submitting claims on IPSA Online. Therefore, for any 2020-21 claims, we have extended the normal deadline for submission of claims to 120 days after the cost was incurred.

Contingency Applications

We have put in place a streamlined process for [contingency fund applications](#) to cover the exceptional costs you may incur due to coronavirus.

For details on these measures can be found [here](#).

Best wishes

The IPSA Team

Upcoming Consultation

We will shortly publish a consultation on new arrangements for automatic salary increases for MPs' staff members. Further detail will be included in next week's bulletin.

Learning and Development

Staff Budget Report Webinars

If you would like to know more about the Staff Budget Report, please join one of our new monthly Staff Budget Report webinars. A member of the Payroll team will talk through the report including:

- How to run and view the Staff Budget Report
- How to understand the Staff Budget Report
- How to make amendments to the Staff Budget Report
- How year-end forms are incorporated
- How to view expenses made against the Staffing budget

The first webinar will take place on **Wednesday 11 November at 10.30am**. All subsequent webinars will take place on the first Tuesday of each month. To sign up for any of these webinars, [click here](#).

This session will not cover the COVID staffing budget. For queries related to the COVID staffing budget, please see our [Coronavirus FAQs](#) or [book a call](#) with a member of the Payroll team.

Property

An IPSA Account Manager will talk through the requirements for paying rent for MPs' offices and accommodation, including submitting forms and, importantly, the required supporting documentation so that your property amendment and property registration forms can be effectively processed. We're keen to help you register properties, make changes and arrange rent payments as quickly as we can.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the one-and-a-half hour webinar.

This webinar will take place on the second Tuesday of every month. The next will take place on **Tuesday 10 November at 10.30am**. To sign up for any of these webinars, [click here](#).

IPSA Online Training

IPSA Online training takes place every Tuesday and Thursday at 2pm using a virtual platform.

[Click here to sign up.](#)