

# **Guidance for MPs' Business Costs and Expenses**

*A day-to-day guide for MPs and their staff  
on managing budgets and employing staff, what to claim  
and how to claim*

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## Introduction

In performing their parliamentary functions, MPs incur a range of business costs and expenses. These include the costs of working both in Westminster and in their constituencies. MPs whose constituencies are outside the London Area need to travel between their constituency and Westminster. They need accommodation in one of these two places. All MPs need a constituency office and staff to run it. They are reimbursed for these essential costs, or in some cases, IPSA will pay the provider of the goods or services directly on the MP's behalf.

[The MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses](#) ('the Scheme') sets out the rules for meeting these costs. The Sixth Edition of the Scheme came into operation on 1 April 2014 for 2014-15. This guidance summarises key aspects of the Scheme and puts it into context for MPs so it's clearer how it applies to their day-to-day work. For further details of the rules, please refer to the Scheme.

This guidance concentrates on how MPs can make claims, pay costs directly, manage budgets and pay their staff. It also covers the process of how IPSA publishes claims, so that taxpayers can see how their money is spent in support of MPs' parliamentary functions.

Where more detailed information may be needed by MPs and their staff – for example, on [how to use the online claims system](#) – this can be found on the [IPSA website](#).

As well as helping MPs and their staff, we hope that this guidance will give members of the public an insight into the costs and processes involved in supporting MPs in the performance of their parliamentary functions.

This guidance will evolve as circumstances change and will be kept fully up to date.

You can contact IPSA's MP Support Team for further information. You can call us between 10am and 5pm, every working day, on 020 7811 6400 or email us at [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk).

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# What you can claim and how to go about it

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## 1 Accommodation

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Many MPs work from two locations when they are performing their parliamentary duties, and will therefore need accommodation. This is an area of expenditure that is often heavily scrutinised. The fact that MPs are allowed to claim for expenses ranging from annual rental payments to nightly hotel bills means that there are many factors to consider.

This section lays out the guidelines for rental properties, associated costs, hotel accommodation and the London Area Living Payment (LALP). Please read closely to find out who is eligible for what, what you can claim, what you can't claim and how you can pay and claim for accommodation expenses.

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### 1.1 Rental Accommodation

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Only non-London Area MPs are eligible to claim for accommodation and associated costs.

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#### 1.1.1 What you can claim

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- Rent and the associated costs for a registered property in the London Area or in your constituency (or within 20 miles of your constituency boundary)
- Costs associated with your accommodation only – this generally applies only to MPs who own the property in which they stay
- A loan for a deposit to be paid at the start of a tenancy. See section 1.1.4 of this document for further information
- Removal costs incurred when you move into rented accommodation - this must be claimed from the Contingency Fund (no pre-approval is needed)
- A supplement of up to £2,425 a year for each dependant you care for. You will need to certify that the dependant routinely lives with you. Please refer to paragraphs 4.22-4.24 of the Scheme for further information and eligibility.

The associated costs you can claim for are:

- utility bills (gas, electricity, other fuel and water)
  - council tax
  - ground rent and service charges
  - home contents insurance
  - buildings insurance (only for MPs who own the property where they live – claiming under 4.9c of the Scheme)
  - the purchase, installation and maintenance of routine security measures
  - the installation of a landline telephone, the line rental and the usage charges
  - the installation of a broadband connection and the usage charges
  - connection to a basic, free-to-air TV package
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- the purchase of a TV licence
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### 1.1.2 Budgets

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The annual budgets for rental accommodation and associated costs for 2014-15 are:

- London Area - £20,600 per year
- Constituencies outside the London Area - the budget varies depending on the constituency location, please refer to Annex B of the Scheme

You can live in a property where the annual rent exceeds these budgets but, if you do, you will have to pay the additional rent yourself.

Your rental budget is for rental payments and associated costs. Whether you rent in London or in your constituency, your budget includes £2,800 as a nominal amount to cover your associated expenditure. When looking for rental accommodation, MPs should consider whether the rental payment is at a suitable level to allow them to claim any associated expenditure. MPs who enter into less expensive rental agreements will have more funding within their budget to claim for associated expenditure compared to those MPs who enter into more costly rental agreements.

For MPs who own their own property and claim associated expenditure only, the annual Accommodation Expenditure budget is £8,850 for 2014-15.

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### 1.1.3 What you can't claim

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- London Area MPs or those who occupy 'grace and favour' accommodation cannot claim for rental accommodation and associated costs
  - You cannot claim for:
    - cleaning
    - gardening
    - purchase or maintenance of furniture
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### 1.1.4 How to pay and claim

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#### **Register your property**

You need to register your property on the online expenses system. For help, please see our [how to guides](#) on our website.

You also need to send us your rental agreement. This needs to show:

- details of all parties involved in the agreement
  - the address of the property to be let
  - deposit amount
  - the dates of the rental period
  - the date of the first rental payment
  - the amount payable
  - the name and address of the person or organisation to whom the rent is payable
  - signatures of all parties
-

- any other charges (e.g. service charges) included in your rent

### Apply for a loan for your deposit

You can apply to us for a loan to pay the deposit at the start of a tenancy.

So that we can approve a loan application you will need to send us:

- A draft of the rental agreement
- A signed hard copy of the [Rental Property Deposit Loan Agreement form](#)

Please allow five working days for us to process your application. The terms and conditions of the loan are explained in the Rental Property Deposit Loan Agreement form.

No MP may hold more than one loan for a deposit on residential accommodation at any one time, unless IPSA agrees otherwise.

When the tenancy ends, you must repay the deposit loan to us no later than one month after the date on which the tenancy comes to an end, or when you leave office, whichever happens first. You must repay the full deposit loan even if you do not receive the full deposit at the end of the tenancy.

### Registering dependants

Please refer to the Scheme (paragraphs 4.22 to 4.24 and paragraph 4.30) to determine eligibility for additional expenditure in relation to dependants.

You will need to complete the registration form for dependants on the online expenses system.

How to complete the form:

1. In the 'Details' field, type in the first name and surname of the dependant. Their date of birth should be added to the last box in dd/mm/yyyy format.
2. A barcode form will be generated.
3. Send us the barcode form and the supporting documentation shown in the table below:

<u>Type of dependant</u>	<u>Supporting documentation needed</u>
<b>Dependent child (A child up to the age of 21 who is in full time education)</b>	<p><b><u>We do not need original documents.</u></b></p> <p><b>Children up to age 18</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If registering <b>pre-birth</b>, an email or letter from you indicating the expected date of birth is sufficient. Please confirm the actual date of birth once the baby has arrived with documentation as outlined below.</li> <li>• <b>After birth</b>, a high quality scan or photocopy of any official document with the child's birth date is sufficient. This could be a letter/certificate from the hospital, passport, birth certificate etc.</li> </ul> <p><b>Looked after children up to age 18</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A high quality scan or photocopy of any official document with the child's birth date is sufficient. This could be a matching certificate, a letter from the court assigning parental responsibility, passport, birth certificate etc.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>For children aged 18-21</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You need to be the sole carer and the child needs to be in full time education and an email or letter from you confirming these facts is sufficient.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dependent family member</b> (A family member who is not in full time education, for whom you are the primary carer)</p>	<p><b><u>We do not need original documents.</u></b></p> <p>A high quality scan or photocopy of any official document confirming the receipt of the relevant benefit (under paragraph 4.24 of the Scheme) is sufficient.</p>
<p><b>Spouse or partner</b></p>	<p>Not applicable for accommodation claims</p>

We aim to process these registrations within three working days from the date we receive your supporting documentation. Once we have processed the registration, we will send you a confirmation email.

If you are expecting a child or are in the process of adoption and you wish to secure new accommodation as a result, please contact us and we will make appropriate arrangements.

### Decide how you want to pay your rent

There are three ways to pay your rent:

- We pay your rent directly to your landlord
- You pay your landlord and claim reimbursement from us
- You claim the rent as an advance from us and pay the landlord yourself

Here's how each of these methods work:

#### 1. We pay your rent directly to your landlord

If you would like us to do this, please complete the [Direct Rental Payments form](#). It will take us up to 28 days to set up. You will need to continue to pay your landlord yourself until we tell you we have started direct payments to your landlord.

#### 2. You pay your landlord and claim reimbursement

If you use this method, please claim reimbursement as normal.

#### 3. You claim the rent as an advance from us and pay the landlord yourself

You can claim an advance for invoices of £200 or more. To do this, log in to the online expenses system select "Yes, not yet Paid" under "Advance?" on a regular claim form and enter the invoice date as the transaction date. There is no need to send us a receipt.

### Negotiate a break clause

You are strongly advised to negotiate a break clause in your contract with two months' notice. This is so you are covered if your circumstances change suddenly, for example if you lose your seat in an election.

We will only pay accommodation costs for up to two months following the date that you leave Parliament.

### **How to pay your associated costs**

If you use your Payment Card, you will need to complete a reconciliation form once a month and send us your receipts. We will notify you when this is available for you to complete on the online expenses system.

If you don't already have a Payment Card and would like one, please call 0207 811 6400 or email [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk).

### **How to pay your service charges and other costs to your landlord**

If the service charge or other costs are detailed in the lease, and they are the same amount each month, we can pay them directly to the landlord.

We will only pay service charges to your landlord if they are mandatory and there is a contractual obligation in the rental agreement.

It is your responsibility to thoroughly check the terms and conditions of your rental contract prior to signing, including any incorporated service charges, penalty clauses or other clauses that may result in an undue burden on the taxpayer. You are strongly advised to check the council tax liability of the premises prior to signing a contract.

### **What to do if your rent increases or decreases**

If your rent changes, you will need to send us a copy of the letter or updated lease you received from your landlord, with a covering letter confirming that you'd like us to increase or decrease the payments we are making.

If the rental increase takes you above the current accommodation budget limit you will need to pay the excess yourself.

Please let us know about any changes at least two weeks before we are due to make the payment. If this is not possible, please make clear in your letter if you would like us to pay the balance owed to the landlord.

### **What to do if you leave Parliament**

MPs who leave Parliament may continue to claim accommodation-related expenses for up to two months.

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## **1.1.5 Supporting documentation you need to send with your accommodation claims**

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### **Items requiring specific documentation**

If you are claiming for one of the following items you will need to send in specific documentation detailed on the following pages:

- cancellation fees
- hotel
- internet installation and usage
- service charge
- TV connection
- utilities
- council tax
- insurance – building and contents
- security
- telephone
- TV licence

### **All other claims**

For all other claims you need to send us a receipt showing the:

- supplier's name and address
- date of purchase/service

- details of what it was
- address it was supplied to (services only)
- amount paid

Expense	Documentation you need to send to us
<b>Cancellation fees</b>	If you need to claim a cancellation fee because you have changed supplier, please provide the bill or receipt showing the charge and tell us why you needed to cancel the contract in the notes on your claim.
<b>Council tax</b>	<p>Please send us the yearly bill addressed to you showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount charged for the year</li> <li>• a monthly breakdown of the charges</li> <li>• the billing period which the bill relates to</li> <li>• the address of the property which the claim relates to</li> </ul> <p>If your rent includes council tax, the rental agreement you have registered with us should confirm this. Please submit your claim for the total rental charge as stated in your rental agreement. You will not need to submit any further documentation for your council tax if it is shown in your rental agreement.</p>
<b>Insurance – building and contents</b>	<p>Please send us a copy of the Annual Insurance Certificate showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property insured</li> <li>• type of insurance</li> <li>• the period of cover</li> <li>• the name and address of the insurance company</li> <li>• the details of payments or the payments schedule if you are paying monthly</li> </ul> <p>Please ensure you do not claim cover for non-standard items e.g. jewellery.</p>
<b>Internet installation and usage</b>	<p>Please send us the bill for connection, line rental and/or usage charges showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property</li> <li>• the billing period</li> <li>• details of the service provider</li> </ul> <p>We will pay for connection at your accommodation to a basic, free-to-air package (e.g. a Freeview box), internet and phone.</p>
<b>Security</b>	<p>For routine security measures such as locks for your IPSA supported accommodation, please send us the receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item which you are claiming for</li> <li>• date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>If you require additional security measures please refer to the Security section of this document.</p>
<b>Service charge</b>	<p>We will need a demand for the service charge, showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of the landlord</li> <li>• the address which the demand relates to</li> <li>• the amount charged</li> <li>• the billing period</li> </ul> <p>We may ask, if necessary, for copies of audited accounts from the landlord for the service</p>

	<p>charge year(s).</p> <p>Please contact us if you do not have documentation that shows all of the above points.</p>
<p><b>Telephone (landline only)</b></p> <p>landline hire usage purchase - installation</p>	<p>For telephone claims, please send us a fully itemised bill showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property (if landline)</li> <li>• the billing period</li> <li>• details of the service provider</li> </ul> <p>If you want to claim for part of the bill only please tell us the percentage of the bill that refers to parliamentary usage.</p> <p>If your staff incurred the expense, please state this in the notes.</p>
<p><b>TV connection</b> to a free-to-air TV broadcast package (e.g. a Freeview box), internet and phone</p>	<p>We will need a receipt showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount you paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• the name and address of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>TV licence</b></p>	<p>Please send us a copy of your TV licence or a receipt confirming payment showing the address of the property the licence is for.</p>
<p><b>Utilities</b></p>	<p>Please send us a fully itemised bill showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• address of the property</li> <li>• the billing period</li> <li>• the amount charged</li> <li>• details of the service provider</li> </ul>

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## 1.2 Hotel accommodation

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This section relates to using hotels as regular accommodation if you are not claiming rent. If you require a hotel because you are travelling outside London or your constituency please refer to the travel, subsistence and hotels section of this document.

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### 1.2.1 What you can claim

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You can claim for the cost of overnight hotel accommodation if you are a non-London Area MP and you have told us that you do not intend to claim for rental property, associated expenditure or the [London Area Living Payment \(LALP\)](#).

The limits on hotel expenditure (including VAT) are:

- London Area - £150 per night
  - Outside the London Area (but still in the UK) - £120 per night
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### 1.2.2 What you can't claim

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You cannot claim hotel accommodation expenditure:

- If you are a London Area MP
  - If you occupy 'grace and favour' accommodation
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### 1.2.3 How to pay and claim

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First, you must register on the online expenses system your intent to claim hotel accommodation in the London Area.

You can only claim up to the above limits.

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### 1.2.4 Supporting documentation you need to send with your hotel claims

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Please ensure that you supply the following documentation with your hotel accommodation claim:

<b>Hotel</b>	<p>Please send us the itemised hotel receipt showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the name and address of the hotel</li><li>• the date and length of the stay</li><li>• the amount you paid</li></ul> <p>Claims for breakfast charges will only be paid if the expense is covered in the overnight hotel rate. Separate charges for breakfast will not be paid. Please ensure these and other additional items are deducted from the total bill before submitting your claim.</p>
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## 1.3 London Area Living Payment (LALP)

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The London Area Living Payment (LALP) is intended to contribute towards the additional expenses of living in the London Area or of commuting regularly to the London Area.

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### 1.3.1 Eligibility

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The LALP is open to:

- London Area MPs
- Non-London Area MPs who have told IPSA they will not claim for accommodation

The LALP is not open to:

- Non-London Area MPs who are claiming Accommodation Expenditure
  - MPs who occupy 'grace and favour' accommodation
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### 1.3.2 What you can claim

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If you are eligible, you can claim:

- £3,760 per financial year, payable on a monthly basis with your salary
  - MPs representing certain constituencies (detailed in Schedule 3 of the Scheme) may claim an additional £1,330 per year
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### 1.3.3 How you can claim

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To claim, you need to register for LALP on the online expenses system. Complete the Accommodation Registration form and select LALP.

#### **Additional information:**

If you apply before the payroll deadline for the month, we will pay the LALP for that month in full. The payroll deadline is usually the 15th of the month (but will be earlier if the 15th falls on a bank holiday or a weekend). If you apply after the deadline, the LALP will not be paid until the following month.

LALP is payable from the date you register. We will not backdate payments.

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## 2 Travel, Subsistence and Hotels

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This section sets out the guidelines to help you and your staff understand what you can claim for, what you need to make that claim and the most appropriate way of paying for all your travel-related costs. This includes advice on travel, subsistence and hotel expenditure claims for both MPs and their staff. It applies to all MPs.

In the guidance below there are several references to what we consider to be parliamentary activities. The guidelines also refer to the practice of “working late” and the effect this has on expenditure claims for MPs and their staff. It is worth briefly defining these terms and see Chapter 3 of the Scheme for more details.

### **Parliamentary and non-parliamentary activities**

We do not consider the activities below to be parliamentary functions for MPs or their staff so we will not pay expenses claims relating to them.

- Attendance at political party conferences or meetings
- Work which is conducted for or at the behest of a political party
- Work relating to delegations to an international assembly
- Work relating to the performance of Ministerial functions
- Any other activities listed under paragraph 3.4 of the Scheme

### **Working late**

For the purposes of claiming for evening meals, the House of Commons is considered to be “sitting late” after 7.30pm. However, in terms of travelling home by taxi, MPs may use their discretion to determine what constitutes a late sitting of the House of Commons or a late finish to parliamentary business in the House of Commons. Similar discretion is encouraged when considering the need for overnight hotel accommodation. If in exceptional circumstances you are unable to find a hotel within the budget limit per night, you may submit a claim for the total cost providing you have evidence which shows why it was not possible to find a hotel within the budget.\*

\* *You may wish to look at [HMRC's guidance](#) on the tax status of claims for hotels and late-night taxis, which is available on our website.*

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## 2.1 Travel

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### 2.1.1 What you can claim - MPs

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You can only claim for travel that is necessary to perform your parliamentary functions. Your journey must fall into one of the categories below.

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#### 2.1.1 (a) Routine UK Travel

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MPs who are eligible for Accommodation Expenditure can claim journeys from any point in the constituency boundary, or a home or office within 20 miles of the constituency boundary, to Westminster or a London Area home. *Non-London Area MPs who choose to claim the London Area Living Payment (LALP) are not eligible to claim for these journeys.*

MPs who are not eligible for Accommodation Expenditure can claim journeys between their constituency office and Westminster. This is not intended to allow London Area MPs to claim for their daily commute by going into the constituency office every morning and evening. Instead, it is for MPs who need to travel between Westminster and their constituency office to conduct constituency business. Non-London Area MPs who claim LALP *are* eligible to claim for these journeys.

All MPs can claim for:

- Journeys within the constituency or within 20 miles of the constituency boundary
  - Taxi fares from the House of Commons to a London Area residence when the House of Commons is sitting late or your parliamentary duties require you to leave the House of Commons late. This is up to a maximum of £80
  - Extended UK travel under paragraph 9.3 of the *MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses*
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#### 2.1.1 (b) Extended UK Travel

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You can claim for extended UK travel if you can demonstrate that the journey undertaken was made for at least one of the following reasons (and if funding for the journey is not provided by another source).

- Journeys from Westminster or the constituency to anywhere in the UK if the journey was required for one of the following:
    - a matter currently before the House;
    - a matter currently before a Select Committee on which you serve;
    - a journey made as part of an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) if the journey has been expressly and formally requested by the APPG;
    - a constituent or general constituency matter; or
    - opposition front bench or shadow ministerial travel.
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- Journeys from Westminster to the constituency (or vice versa) that involved a diversion for a non-parliamentary purpose. The maximum claimable fare is the anytime standard open fare of the direct journey between Westminster and the constituency.
- Journeys necessarily incurred in the performance of your parliamentary functions from anywhere in the UK to Westminster or the constituency. The amount that can be claimed is the lesser of the anytime standard open fare of the direct journey between the constituency and Westminster, or the value of the claim from the starting location to the destination.

Pre-approval is not needed for extended travel claims but you must provide a reason in the 'Notes' field for your travel.

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### 2.1.1 (c) Travel outside the UK

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You can claim a maximum of three return journeys per year to the national parliaments of Council of Europe member states, or institutions and agencies of the European Union.

Other than journeys above, we do not fund foreign travel.

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### 2.1.2 What you can claim – MPs' staff and family

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#### **MPs' staff**

You can claim the cost of the following journeys made by members of your staff:

- Up to 96 single journeys each year (to be shared among all staff members), between (1) the constituency office and/or a home office (registered under 6.11 of the Scheme) and Westminster; and (2), for staff members who routinely work from a home office (registered under 6.11 of the Scheme), the home office and the constituency office.
- Unlimited travel within your constituency or within 20 miles of the constituency boundary
- Unlimited travel elsewhere within the UK for the purposes of relevant training, including attendance at conferences on subjects that are relevant to your parliamentary functions. This does not include attendance at a party political conference or meeting

MPs' staff may claim the cost of a railcard where it represents value for money on these parliamentary-related journeys.

#### **Family**

You can claim up to 30 single journeys for each of your dependants per year between your London Area residence and your constituency residence.

If you share caring responsibility with a spouse or partner, you may claim for the spouse or partner's travel in the course of performing that responsibility. This is limited to 30 single journeys per person per year between your London Area residence and your constituency residence.

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### 2.1.3 What you can't claim

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As previously mentioned, you can only claim travel costs when they are directly related to fulfilling your parliamentary functions. For the rules on the activities IPSA does not regard as forming part of your parliamentary functions please see chapter 9 of the Scheme.

MPs cannot claim for the following journeys:

- Journeys made on Party business
- Journeys related to a delegation to an international assembly
- Journeys made on Government business
- Journeys made for the purpose of electioneering
- Journeys for which funding is available from another source
- Daily commute to and from a place of work.

A commute includes journeys between:

- Westminster and an MP's residence in the London Area
- An MP's constituency residence and their constituency office

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### 2.1.4 How to pay and claim

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There are a number of ways in which an MP can pay and claim for travel-related expenses. MPs are free to use their discretion to determine which type is most appropriate for each expense. However, there are certain methods that are clearly suited to certain expenses.

#### **Trainline**

You can book tickets using your account on the Trainline website ([www.business.thetrainline.com](http://www.business.thetrainline.com)). Please let us know if you need your login details or any instructions. You don't need to enter any payment details as we pay them directly. You do not need to complete a claim form, reconcile the expense or send us any receipts/tickets – we get everything we need from the Trainline.

#### **Payment Card**

We pay Barclaycard directly for any tickets you buy using your Payment Card. Once a month, you will need to complete a reconciliation form and send us your receipts for your purchases on the card.

If you do not already have a Payment Card and would like one, please call us on 0207 811 6400 or email [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk)

#### **Mileage claims**

There are two ways to submit mileage claims:

- i. Monthly MP Mileage spreadsheet
- ii. Mileage claim form on the online expenses system

Before you fill in one of these claim forms, you must fill in a vehicle registration form on the online expenses system. Once we have approved your registration you will be able to submit claims. You do not need to send in a barcode form as you do with other registrations.

Please allow three working days for us to process your registration.

**i. Monthly MP Mileage spreadsheet**

You can submit your mileage on a monthly basis by using the [Mileage spreadsheet](#) (available on our website) and attaching it to a Monthly MP Mileage claim form on the online expenses system. This will enable you to complete your mileage claim faster. (Please note, this is for MPs' mileage only and cannot be used to claim staff mileage or reimburse staff directly).

For help, please our How to Guides available on [our website](#) .

Please make sure you use our most recent spreadsheet which can be found on the website to submit your mileage claims. If you use your own spreadsheet, it will not upload to the expenses system and we will not be able to process your claim.

**ii. Mileage claim form on the online expenses system**

Complete the mileage claim form on the online expenses system. This can be used to claim MP mileage or staff mileage, and to reimburse staff directly.

**Important information when filling in both forms**

- Show total mileage for each day on each line
- When you have made more than one journey type within a day (e.g. within constituency travel then to/from Westminster), please put each journey type on a new line.

**Value for money**

You should consider value for money when purchasing tickets which may need to be changed at short notice. You should use your discretion and balance low-cost, often inflexible tickets against the likelihood of cancellations and the charge for a new ticket.

The online expenses system will automatically check the cost of a standard open fare when you enter the details of your train journey.

You can claim for first class travel if it is less than the cost of a standard open fare.

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**2.1.5 Supporting documentation you need to send with your travel claims**

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Expense	Documentation you need to send to us
<b>Car hire and associated car insurance</b>	Please send us the receipt for hiring the car, with any insurance or other additional charges shown separately.  In your claim notes, please set out why car hire was necessary.

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<b>Car hire fuel</b>	Please send us all the individual fuel receipts, showing the date and amount paid.
<b>Congestion zone and road tolls</b>	<p>We will need receipts for all congestion zone charges and road tolls.</p> <p>We will pay the standard congestion charge (£10 maximum) but cannot reimburse penalty charges.</p> <p>If you cannot provide the receipt for one of these charges – e.g. because it was not issued at the time – please explain this in the notes on the claim form.</p>
<b>Oyster Card (TfL)</b>	<p>Please register your Oyster card online with TfL.</p> <p>We need receipts for top-ups and season tickets, but we do not require evidence of individual journeys. If your season ticket will not be used exclusively for claimable journeys in relation to your parliamentary work, then please clearly state on the claim the relevant proportion of the ticket you are claiming for.</p> <p>If you use your Payment Card for Oyster Card expenses, send us the receipt when you send us your reconciliation form.</p>
<b>Parking</b>	<p>Please send us a ticket or receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amount paid</li> <li>• date the vehicle was parked</li> </ul> <p>If you cannot send evidence (e.g. because the ticket machine did not return your ticket) please explain this in the claim notes.</p> <p>MPs can claim residential parking (at the property registered with us) and office parking.</p> <p>MPs' staff can also claim for parking costs if they are travelling around the constituency supporting the MP. However, they cannot claim parking costs for their daily commute.</p>
<b>Public transport – air</b>  For MPs, staff, dependants and spouse/partner	<p>Please send us your booking confirmation/invoice showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the name of the passenger</li> <li>• the time of travel</li> <li>• the airline</li> <li>• the ticket price</li> <li>• origin of journey and destination</li> </ul> <p>If you have paid for your flights using the Payment Card you do not need to submit any further evidence – we can use the Barclaycard statement to reconcile air travel.</p>
<b>Public transport – bus/coach, ferry, rail, underground or other</b>  For MPs, staff, dependants and spouse/partner	<p><b>Staff/dependant/spouse/partner travel</b> – please make sure that they are registered with us/on our payroll before you submit the claim. You will then be able to select their name from a drop down list on the relevant claim form.</p> <p><b>Booking through the Trainline</b> You do not need to send us evidence or complete a reconciliation form – we will pay the Trainline directly. It is important that you use your IPSA Trainline login.</p> <p><b>Booking through Chambers (the House of Commons travel provider)</b> If you use your Payment Card, you will need to complete a reconciliation form and submit your receipt to us.</p>

	<p>If you pay using a direct payment, you do not need to submit a receipt to us as we will get all the information directly from Chambers.</p> <p>If you pay Chambers yourself and wish to claim the expense from us, you will need to complete a claim for reimbursement using the online expenses system and send us your receipt in the usual way. You will need to provide details such as the type of journey.</p> <p>You will still need to declare that your travel was for parliamentary purposes.</p> <p><b>Other bookings:</b> Please send us a ticket and/or receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the date of travel</li> <li>• the cost of the ticket</li> <li>• where you were travelling from and to</li> </ul> <p>If the ticket does not show the cost of journey, please also send us the receipt.</p> <p>If your journey is not to a standard location, please also state in the notes why you were travelling. If your season ticket will not be used exclusively for claimable journeys in relation to your parliamentary work, then please clearly state on the claim the relevant proportion of the ticket you are claiming for.</p>
<b>Taxi</b>	<p>Please send us the receipt showing both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the cost</li> <li>• date of the journey</li> </ul> <p>When you submit your claim, explain in the notes why you had to use a taxi.</p> <p>Under section 9.16 of the Scheme, you can claim for a taxi where no other reasonable method of transport is available, or where alternative methods of transport are not practical because of pregnancy, disability, illness or injury of the MP or staff member.</p> <p>Under section 9.39 of the Scheme, you can also claim for a taxi when the House of Commons sits late or when MPs undertake parliamentary functions in the House of Commons until late at night. You can't claim more than £80 for each late-night taxi journey.</p>

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## 2.2 Subsistence

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### 2.2.1 What you can claim – MPs

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#### MPs can claim:

- £25 per night for food and non-alcoholic drinks when travelling outside of the London Area and their constituency in pursuit of parliamentary functions
- £15 per night for food and non-alcoholic drinks when the House of Commons sits beyond 7.30pm\*

\*You may choose to purchase a meal at or away from the parliamentary estate. Under [Section 292 of the Income Tax \(Earnings and Pensions\) Act 2003](#), meals are taxable if eaten away from the parliamentary estate but meals eaten on the parliamentary estate will remain untaxed.

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### 2.2.2 What you can claim – MPs' staff

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Up to £25 per night for food and non-alcoholic drinks, if the staff member necessarily stays overnight in a hotel when they have travelled in accordance with paragraph 9.20 of the Scheme.

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### 2.2.3 How to pay and claim

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Subsistence claims should be submitted for reimbursement only.

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### 2.2.4 Supporting documentation you need to send with your travel claims

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<b>Expense</b>	<b>Documentation you need to send to us</b>
<b>Food and non-alcoholic drink (staff)</b>	Before you submit food and drink claims for your staff, please make sure they are on our payroll.  We will need the itemised receipt showing the date and the items purchased.
<b>Food and non-alcoholic drink (MP)</b>	MPs can only claim for food and non-alcoholic drinks for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• an evening meal when the House of Commons sits beyond 7.30pm (up to £15)</li><li>• an overnight stay outside London and the MP's constituency (up to £25)</li></ul> Please send us itemised receipts showing the date and the items purchased.

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## 2.3 Hotels

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### 2.3.1 What you can claim – MPs and your staff

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MPs and their staff can claim for overnight accommodation when travelling outside the London area and their constituency in relation to parliamentary duties.

You can claim for accommodation and breakfast charges, provided they do not exceed the following:

- £150 per night inside the London Area
  - £120 per night outside the London Area but in the UK
  - £150 per night outside the UK
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### 2.3.2 What you can't claim

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You cannot claim for:

- Hotels for staff who are not undertaking claimable journeys and not directly supporting your parliamentary functions
  - Other hotel charges
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### 2.3.3 How to pay and claim

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You can only claim for hotel costs up to the limits set out above.

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### 2.3.4 Supporting documentation you need to send with your hotel claims

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<b>Expense</b>	<b>Documentation you need to send to us</b>
<b>Hotels – MPs and staff</b>	<p>We will need an itemised hotel receipt showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the name and address of the hotel</li><li>• the date and length of the stay</li><li>• the amount paid</li></ul> <p>You can claim for accommodation and breakfast charges provided they do not exceed the overall hotel limit. Please ensure any other items are deducted from the total bill before submitting your claim.</p> <p><b>MPs' staff</b></p> <p>We can only reimburse these costs directly to staff members if they are on our payroll. If staff are not on our payroll and they need to be reimbursed, the MP will need to claim and reimburse the staff member.</p>

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## 3 Office Costs

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This guide sets out what costs you can claim for running your offices in the constituency and where costs are not covered by the House of Commons in Westminster.

For the constituency office, costs include rent, business rates, utilities and general administration costs. You can claim for any expenditure you consider necessary to perform your parliamentary functions. We do not provide a prescriptive list of items you can claim for, but we do say what you can't claim for.

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### 3.1 Office Costs Expenditure (OCE) Budget

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The standard annual OCE budgets for 2014-15 are:

London Area MPs	£25,900
Non-London Area MPs	£23,250

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### 3.2 What you can claim

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You are entitled to exercise discretion over claims for items that meet the purposes of the OCE budget, provided the claims meet the general conditions of the Scheme and the conditions in Chapter 6.

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### 3.3 What you can't claim

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You can't claim for:

- any alcoholic drinks
  - stationery provided by the House of Commons
  - newsletters
  - any material, excluding websites, that contains a party political logo or emblem
  - personal accountancy or tax advice
  - costs for activities that are not considered necessary to perform your parliamentary functions, in accordance with the General Conditions of the Scheme.
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### 3.4 Constituency office matters

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#### 3.4.1 Start-up and winding up budgets

New MPs are eligible for a start-up budget of up to £6,000. Please refer to chapter 8 of the Scheme for further information.

Those who cease to be an MP are eligible for a winding-up budget to meet the cost of completing their outstanding parliamentary functions, such as paying staff salaries and removal costs. The budgets for 2014-15 are £57,150 for

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London Area MPs and £53,950 for non-London Area MPs for a maximum of two months after they cease to be MPs. For further details about winding up, please refer to the Scheme.

### **3.4.2 Sharing your office**

If you share a constituency office or surgery with another MP, Member of European Parliament, Member of Scottish Parliament, Member of the National Assembly for Wales or a Member of the Northern Ireland Assembly, OCE may be claimed only for your proportion of the rent and other office costs. You need to inform us of the proportion when registering the office. You should submit a claim for your proportion of the expenses using the online expenses system as usual. We will accept a copy of any invoices or receipts rather than the original.

If you are sharing an office, please send us a shared-cost agreement between all sharing parties confirming how the costs are split.

### **3.4.3 Sub-letting your office**

If you claim office rental expenses and you let someone else use the office or any part of it, you must charge that person a fee which reflects an appropriate proportion of the rent and other costs. You must pay this fee to us.

### **3.4.4 Negotiating the lease for your office**

When you negotiate the lease for your office it's a good idea to establish a break clause in your contract so that you can terminate the lease within two months. This is useful in case your circumstances change, for example, you lose your seat at a General Election.

It is your responsibility to thoroughly check the terms and conditions of your rental contract before signing, including any incorporated service charges, penalty clauses or other clauses that may result in an undue burden on the taxpayer. You are strongly advised to check the business rates liability of the premises prior to signing a contract.

### **3.4.5 Home offices and claiming associated costs**

If you have an office at home, you must be able to satisfy HMRC that this is a *de facto* office, and not that you occasionally work at home. We will reimburse associated expenditure according to the HMRC guidelines on working from home.

If you have a home office:

- we will not reimburse you for office costs in addition to accommodation costs for that property
- any journeys you make from your home office will be treated as journeys from home, and we will not reimburse your daily commute

If a you or a member of your staff needs to claim associated costs for a home office, you will need to:

- submit an office registration form on the online expenses system
- complete the Home Office Registration form on our website

### **3.4.6 Renting a constituency office from a political party or constituency association**

If you rent the constituency office from a political party or constituency association you must also provide a valuation of the market rate for the contract prepared by a valuer regulated by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The market rate must not be exceeded.

If the contract includes fixed charges other than rent, such as a service charge, the valuation should confirm that these charges, combined with the rent, are within the market rate. You can then claim these charges in the same way as rental payments without sending us further evidence. However, if the fixed charges are not part of the valuation, we will need invoices from suppliers to support your claims.

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## 3.5 How to pay and claim

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### 3.5.1 Before you claim for your office accommodation

Before you claim for office rent, please complete an online registration form on the online expenses system and send us your rental agreement showing:

- details of all parties to the agreement
- the address of the office
- details of any deposit
- dates of the rental period
- date of the first rental payment
- amount payable
- the name and address of the person or organisation to whom the rent is payable
- signatures of all parties
- any other charges included in your rent

### 3.5.2 Paying rent directly to your landlord

If you would like us to pay your landlord directly, please complete the [Direct Rental Payments form](#) on our website.

Please allow 28 days for payment to be set up. You will need to continue to pay your landlord until you receive confirmation from us that we will pay the landlord directly.

### 3.5.3 Change in rental payments made directly to your landlord

If your rent changes, you must send us a copy of the letter or updated lease you received from your landlord, with a covering letter confirming that you'd like us to make changes to the payments we are making.

Please let us know about any changes at least two weeks before we are due to make the payment. If this is not possible, please make clear in your letter if you would like us to pay the balance owed to the landlord.

### 3.5.4 Payment methods for office costs

You can use the Payment Card to pay for any expense allowable under the Scheme. Please make sure that you submit your online reconciliation form each month, and send us all the supporting evidence for your transactions as described in the relevant sections of the table below.

You can also use the following methods:

- advances
- deposit loans
- office supplies (Commercial Ltd, Banner and XMA Ltd)
- direct payments for rent
- direct payments for pooled staffing costs

See page 39 of this document for further information on payment methods available to you.

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## 3.6 Supporting documentation which needs to be sent with office costs claims

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If you are claiming one of the following items you will need to send in specific documentation detailed on the following pages:

- Advertising
- Business rates
- Cancellation fees
- Computers
- Contact cards
- Food – office supplies
- Food and non-alcoholic drinks (MP)
- Health and welfare (MP)
- Hospitality
- Insurance for building and contents
- Insurance for legal expenses
- Internet installation and usage
- Language services
- MP and staff training
- Newspapers
- Office equipment
- Office furniture
- Pooled services
- Postage
- Professional services
- Recruitment services
- Security (routine)
- Service charge
- Stationery
- Surgeries
- Telephones
- TV
- TV licence
- Utilities
- Venue hire
- Website design/  
Production/hosting

**For all other claims you need to send us a receipt showing:**

- the supplier’s name and address
- the date of purchase/service
- details of what it was
- the amount paid

<b><u>Expense</u></b>	<b><u>Documentation you need to send to us</u></b>
<b>Advertising</b>	<p>A receipt from the provider showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>We may ask you to send us a copy of the advertising material for audit purposes, but you do not need to provide it when you claim.</p>
<b>Business rates</b>	<p>A yearly bill showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount charged for the year</li> <li>• a monthly breakdown of the amount charged</li> <li>• the period to which the bill relates</li> <li>• your name and the address of the office</li> </ul> <p>If your rent includes business rates, the rental agreement you have registered with us should confirm this. Please submit your claim for the total rental charge as stated in your rental agreement; you will not need to submit any further documentation for your business rates if they are included in your rental agreement. It is your responsibility to check what is included in your rental fees.</p>
<b>Cancellation fees</b>	<p>If you need to claim for a cancellation fee, we will need a bill or receipt showing the charge. Please state in the notes on your claim why you needed to cancel the contract.</p>
<b>Cleaning of your office</b>	<p>For cleaning of your office, please send us a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul>

<p><b>Computers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Computer purchase</li> <li>- Hardware purchase</li> <li>- Software purchase</li> <li>- Computer hire</li> </ul>	<p>For computer, software and hardware purchases, please send us a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>For computer hire, we will need the hire agreement showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the item you hired</li> <li>• the date you entered into the agreement</li> <li>• the billing period if appropriate</li> <li>• the amount</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Contact cards</b></p>	<p>A receipt from the provider showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>We may ask you to send us a copy of a contact card for audit purposes, but you do not need to provide it when you claim.</p>
<p><b>Food – office supplies (tea, coffee etc)</b></p>	<p>We will need an itemised receipt showing the date and the items purchased.</p>
<p><b>Health and welfare (MP)</b></p>	<p>Health and welfare costs for MPs can be claimed from the OCE budget, using the expense type “Other”.</p> <p>We will need a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item or service you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hospitality</b></p>	<p>An itemised receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item or service you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul> <p>Please also tell us the nature and purpose of the event in the notes field when you submit the claim.</p>

<b>Insurance - building and contents</b>	<p>We will need a copy of the Annual Insurance Certificate showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property insured</li> <li>• the type of insurance</li> <li>• the period of the cover</li> <li>• the name and address of the insurance company</li> <li>• details of payments or the payments schedule if you are paying monthly</li> </ul> <p>Please ensure you do not claim cover for non-standard items.</p>
<b>Insurance - legal expenses (employment practice liability insurance)</b>	<p>A copy of the Annual Insurance Certificate showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the type of insurance</li> <li>• the period of the cover</li> <li>• the name and address of the insurance company</li> <li>• details of payments or the payments schedule if you are paying monthly</li> </ul>
<b>Internet installation and usage</b>	<p>The bill for connection, line rental or usage charges showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property</li> <li>• billing period</li> <li>• details of the service provider</li> </ul> <p>We will pay for connection at your accommodation to a basic, free to air package (e.g. a Freeview box), internet and phone.</p>
<b>Language services</b>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the translation or interpretation you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul>
<b>Training (MP and staff)</b>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the details and dates of the course</li> <li>• details of the training provider</li> </ul>
<b>Newspapers</b>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• the amount</li> </ul> <p>You may find it easier to submit these claims weekly rather than as single items.</p>

<p><b>Office equipment</b></p> <p><b>Hire/purchase and installation/maintenance</b></p> <p>Office furniture Photocopier/printer Shredder Scanner Fax</p>	<p>For purchase of equipment and installation/maintenance, we will need a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item/service you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul> <p>For hired equipment, we will need the hire agreement showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you entered into the agreement</li> <li>• the billing period</li> <li>• amount</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pooled services</b></p>	<p>A receipt or an agreement for the term of service showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount you paid</li> <li>• the service you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• the name and address of the person or organisation you paid</li> </ul> <p>If you send us an agreement for the term of service, it should show the proportion of the shared services for which you are paying.</p> <p>We can pay annual charges at the beginning of the financial year for the Parliamentary Resources Unit (PRU), Parliamentary Office of the Liberal Democrats (POLD), Parliamentary Research Service (PRS) and the European Research Group (ERG) on your behalf.</p>
<p><b>Postage</b></p>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount you paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Professional services</b></p>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the details of the service you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recruitment services</b></p>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• details of the service for which you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Security (routine security)</b></p>	<p>For routine security measures such as locks and alarms for your office, please send us a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount you paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider.</li> </ul> <p>If you require additional security measures please refer to the Security section of this document.</p>

<b>Service charge</b>	<p>We will need a demand for the service charge, showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details of the landlord</li> <li>• address of the property which the demand relates to</li> <li>• the amount charged</li> <li>• the period the demand relates to</li> </ul> <p>We may ask, if necessary, for copies of audited accounts from the landlord for the service charge year(s).</p> <p>Please contact us if you do not have documentation which shows everything above.</p>
<b>Stationery</b>	<p>If you purchase stationery from Commercial Ltd, Banner or XMA Ltd (printer supplies) using the log-in we sent you, you will not need to claim or submit any evidence, as they send us everything we need.</p> <p>Otherwise, please send us a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount you paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul>
<b>Surgeries</b>	<p>A receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the address of premises hired</li> <li>• the date of hire</li> <li>• the amount paid</li> </ul> <p>Please explain in your claim notes why you hired the premises.</p>
<b>Telephones</b>  (Landline and mobile) - landline Hire - usage - purchase - installation	<p>For telephone claims, please send us a fully itemised bill showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property (if landline)</li> <li>• the dates of the billing period</li> <li>• details of the service provider</li> </ul> <p>If you want to claim for part of the bill only, please tell us the percentage of the bill which is for parliamentary purposes, and which you wish us to reimburse.</p> <p>You should tell us in the claim notes if the expense was incurred by your staff.</p> <p>We will pay for connection at your accommodation to a basic, free to air package (e.g. a Freeview box), internet and phone.</p>
<b>TV</b> - purchase - hire - connection	<p>For TV purchases, please send us a receipt showing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>For TV hire, please submit the hire purchase agreement showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hired item you are claiming</li> <li>• the date you entered into the agreement</li> <li>• the billing period</li> <li>• the amount you are claiming</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul>
<b>TV licence</b>	We will need a copy of your TV licence or a receipt confirming payment showing the address of the property which the licence relates to.
<b>Utilities</b>	<p>We will need a fully itemised bill showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your name</li> <li>• the address of the property</li> <li>• the dates of the billing period</li> <li>• the amount charged</li> <li>• details of the service provider</li> </ul>
<b>Venue hire</b>	<p>We will need a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the amount you paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>Please explain in your claim notes why you hired the venue.</p>
<b>Website design/ production/hosting</b>	<p>We will need a receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• your website's URL</li> <li>• the amount paid</li> <li>• the item you are claiming for</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the provider</li> </ul> <p>We cannot fund websites that have party political content (except for party logos).</p>

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## 4 Staff

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You can claim for the direct costs of recruiting, employing and, in some instances, training the staff you need to help you perform your parliamentary duties. "Staff" in this document also covers apprentices, where these apprenticeships meet the standards of the National Apprenticeship Service, and employed interns who are workers (i.e. are eligible for the National Minimum Wage).

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### 4.1 Staffing budgets

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The standard annual staffing expenditure budgets for 2014-15 are:

London Area MPs	£145,500
Non-London Area MPs	£138,600

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### 4.2 What you can claim

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The Staffing expenditure can be used to meet the following costs:

- staff salaries, employers' contributions to National Insurance and employers' contributions to pension schemes
  - payments to pooled staffing resources
  - payments for bought-in services
  - overtime payments, to the extent that these are specified in staff terms and conditions
  - payments for childcare vouchers for staff or other payments by way of salary sacrifice schemes
  - modest reward and recognition payments for your staff (but these may not be claimed in respect of any connected parties)
  - one-off health and welfare costs associated with provision of staffing support, such as eyesight tests and occupational health assessments
  - costs associated with apprenticeships that meet the standards of the National Apprenticeship Service
  - the incidental expenses of volunteers (as set out in paragraph 7.12 of the Scheme)
  - where you expect the OCE to be exhausted, employment practice liability insurance and staff training costs.
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### 4.3 What you can't claim

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- Legal claims related to employment of staff including compromise agreements, settlement costs, damages or any insurable costs. We strongly advise you to take out insurance against employment disputes and other legal costs as we will not reimburse you for them. The cost of this insurance – legal expenses insurance or employment practice liability insurance – can be claimed from the OCE budget (or, where the OCE budget would be exhausted, employment practice liability insurance can be claimed from the staffing budget). See the 'Employment dispute and employment practice liability insurance' section.
- Rewards and recognition payments for people who are not employed by the MP
- Staff bonuses.

We will not accept any claims or requests for payments (including payment of overtime, increases in salary, addition of new staff members to payroll, or other changes to the staff complement) where these will take you over the relevant budget limit within the year.

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## 4.4 Parliamentary activities

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We have expanded the rules on the activities we do not regard as parliamentary. Except where set out in Chapter Nine of the Scheme, 'non-parliamentary' activities include:

- attendance at party conferences or meetings
- work which is conducted for or at the behest of a political party
- activities relating to reviews of parliamentary constituency boundaries
- activities which could be construed as campaign expenditure within the scope of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
- activities which could be construed as election expenses within the scope of the Representation of the People Act 1983
- work relating to delegations to an international assembly
- work relating to the performance of Ministerial functions

For the purpose of Chapter Seven of the Scheme (Staffing Expenditure), the above activities are not considered necessary to support the performance of parliamentary functions by your staff. Staff therefore should not carry out any of these activities while being paid by IPSA, unless they are on leave.

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## 4.5 Reward and recognition

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Reward and Recognition payments for staff are a means of acknowledging excellent performance or effort on a particular project or piece of work.

- The amount paid is left to your discretion, but should be modest.
- Connected parties are not eligible for these payments.
- The total amount claimed by each MP for reward and recognition payments and the amounts claimed for individual staff members will be published annually.
- The payment will come from your Staffing Expenditure budget.

### How to claim reward and recognition

- To claim for Reward and Recognition payments to staff you can either arrange for payment to be included in your staff members' salary or you can seek reimbursement from us for a modest gift, such as a voucher (advances are not available for these claims).
  - Expenditure on gifts should be claimed in the usual way using the online expenses system. Use the staffing form and select the Reward and Recognition option under 'Select an item'. For information on supporting documentation required, please see the 'Supporting Documentation' section below.
  - You can claim gifts, including vouchers, as reward and recognition for volunteers, but we cannot pay cash payments to volunteers, as they are not on our payroll.
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## 4.6 Connected parties

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Staffing Expenditure can only be claimed for the salary of one employee who is a connected party, unless you employed more than one connected party on 7 May 2010. In that case you may continue to employ these connected parties until they cease to be employed or otherwise provide staffing assistance.

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We define a connected party as:

- a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner of the member;
- parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of the member or of a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner of the member; or
- a body corporate, a firm or a trust with which the MP is connected as defined in section 252 of the [Companies Act 2006](#).

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#### 4.7 Employment dispute and employment practice liability insurance

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We strongly advise you to take out insurance against employment disputes and other legal costs. We will not reimburse claims for compromise agreements, settlement costs, damages or any insurable costs.

The cost of employment practice liability insurance can be claimed from the OCE budget (or, where the OCE budget would be exhausted, employment practice liability insurance can be claimed from the staffing budget). We enable you to buy this insurance for MPs from a central supplier. We do this once a year. If you choose to purchase this insurance through this scheme, the cost of the premium will be deducted from your OCE budget (or staffing budget, if appropriate).

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#### 4.8 Setting salaries

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When setting the pay for your staff, you should have regard to the terms of the wider public sector pay policy. Under the terms of this policy, public sector pay increases will be capped at an average of 1%.

In recognition of this, we do not expect to receive any requests for salary uplifts for MPs' staff that average in excess of 1%, except where the staff member in question has taken on significant extra responsibilities.

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#### 4.9 National Insurance

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Employers' National Insurance contributions will be paid by IPSA for all members of staff for whom salaries are paid. These will be deducted from your Staffing Expenditure budget. Employees' contributions will be deducted from salaries.

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#### 4.10 Pension scheme payments

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Employers' pension contributions will be paid by IPSA for all members of staff for whom salaries are paid. These will be deducted from your Staffing Expenditure budget. Employee contributions will be deducted from salaries.

If you request it, we will make contributions to a pension plan other than the Portcullis Pension Plan if it is established that this is what the staff member wants and if we already have an arrangement for payments to that plan.

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#### 4.11 Childcare vouchers

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You can ask us to arrange for your employees to have access to a [childcare voucher scheme](#) through salary sacrifice arrangements. We will administer payments from salaries. Any employer contributions will be deducted from your Staffing Expenditure budget.

For further information please contact our Payroll Team.

- payroll@parliamentarystandards.org.uk
- 0207 811 6400

#### 4.12 Staff replacement costs

Any necessary expenditure on replacement staff to cover employees on maternity, paternity and adoptive leave, as well as any necessary expenditure to cover staff on long-term sick leave, will be met centrally and will not be deducted from your Staffing Expenditure budget.

#### 4.13 Supporting documentation required for your staffing claims

The claims you make will need to be supported by the following documentation:

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Documentation you need to send to us</b>
<b>Bought-in services</b> <i>(e.g. hiring short term agency staff)</i>	We will need a receipt showing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• type of service</li> <li>• cost</li> <li>• date</li> <li>• name of the provider</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Welfare</b> <i>(e.g. eye tests, glasses, occupational health assessments)</i>  For staff on payroll	We can only reimburse these costs for staff on IPSA's payroll. When submitting the claim on the expenses system, please select the staff member's name from the drop-down list on the relevant claim form.  You can claim this expense using the expense type 'health and welfare costs' on the Staffing form.  Please send us the receipt showing the amount paid, the item being claimed, the date you paid, and the details of the provider.
<b>Pooled Services - including PRU, POLD, PRS and ERG (European Research Group)</b>	Please send us a receipt or an agreement for the term of service. This should show: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amount paid</li> <li>• service for which you are claiming</li> <li>• the date you paid</li> <li>• name and address of the person or organisation you paid</li> </ul> If you send us an agreement for the term of service, this also needs to show the proportion of the shared services for which you are paying. We can pay annual charges for PRU, POLD, PRS and ERG direct on your behalf at the start of the financial year. Please contact us if you would like more information.
<b>Reward and recognition</b>	<b>Salary payment (staff on IPSA payroll only)</b>  If you wish to reward your staff member with a modest payment, please complete and send us the  <a href="#">'Reward and Recognition Payment' form</a> from our

	<p>website.</p> <p>We will then arrange for your staff member to receive the payment in their salary. We can only pay modest cash rewards in accordance with paragraph 7.3f of the Scheme; we do not pay bonuses.</p> <p><b>Gifts</b></p> <p>If you have bought your staff member an item as modest reward and recognition, please claim reimbursement using the online expenses system and send us the receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amount paid</li> <li>• item for which you are claiming</li> <li>• date you paid</li> <li>• details of the provider</li> </ul> <p>In the notes field of the claim form, we need you to include the name of the staff member and the piece of work they are being rewarded for. Reward and recognition cannot be claimed as an advance.</p> <p>Details of reward and recognition payments to staff will be published annually.</p>
<p><b>Travel by volunteers</b></p>	<p>You can claim for incidental expenses for volunteers using the Travel and Subsistence form (and these will be deducted from your Staffing budget accordingly).</p> <p>Before you submit any travel claims for volunteers please ensure they are registered with us.</p> <p>You will then be able to select their name from a drop-down list on the relevant claim form.</p> <p>Please then send us the same evidence described under 'Public Transport'.</p> <p><b>Booking through the Trainline</b></p> <p>No evidence or reconciliation form required - we will pay the Trainline direct. It is important that you use your IPSA Trainline log-in.</p> <p><b>Booking through Chambers (the House of Commons travel provider)</b></p> <p>If you use your Payment Card, you will need to complete a reconciliation form and submit your receipt to us.</p> <p>If you pay using a direct payment, you do not need to submit a receipt to us as we will get all the information directly from Chambers.</p> <p>If you pay Chambers yourself and wish to claim the expense from IPSA, you will need to complete a claim for reimbursement using the online expenses system and send us your receipt in the usual way. You will also need to provide necessary details, such as the type of journey.</p> <p><b>Other bookings</b></p> <p>Please send us a ticket and/or receipt showing all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• date of travel</li> <li>• cost of the ticket</li> <li>• where they were travelling from and to</li> </ul> <p>Where the ticket does not show the cost of journey, please also send us the receipt.</p> <p>If the journey is not to a standard location, please also state in the notes why they were travelling.</p>

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## 5 Security

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We appreciate that some MPs require security measures that go above and beyond routine measures like burglar alarms. This section sets out what you need to do in order to claim the costs of these additional security measures, as well as what you are eligible to claim for and how to claim for it.

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### 5.1 What you can claim

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If you have been advised by the police or security services that you require additional security measures to perform your parliamentary functions safely, you can claim under this budget.

There are no specific budget limitations for these claims. We will assess each claim individually.

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### 5.2 What you can't claim

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You cannot claim for the cost of additional security measures on the parliamentary estate. You should talk to the House Administration about these.

Please note that routine security measures for your IPSA-supported accommodation or your constituency office, such as locks and alarms, should not be claimed through the process outlined below. These should be claimed from your accommodation or office expenditure budgets.

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### 5.3 Submitting your request

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If the police or security services have advised that you need additional security measures at your constituency office or IPSA supported accommodation then you will need to send us:

- a covering letter from you explaining your security needs
- a report from the police (a chief inspector or equivalent) or security services with a list of recommendations for the additional security measures that need to be implemented
- two separate quotations for the work required.

This documentation should be posted or emailed to [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk)

We would not ordinarily consider additional funding for security measures at your permanent home that you do not receive IPSA funding for, unless you have an identifiable and specific threat that has been corroborated by the police or security services.

Once we approve your request you will need to complete the 'Registration: Security need' registration form on the online expenses system. Once we've processed the form, you can submit your claim.

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### 5.4 Queries

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If you have any security queries, please email [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk).

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## 6 Disability

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Disability assistance is intended to ensure that disabilities do not affect your ability to perform your parliamentary functions. This section sets out what you can claim for and how to claim for the costs caused by a temporary or permanent disability.

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### 6.1 What you can claim

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You can claim disability assistance for costs you incur while performing your parliamentary duties, which can reasonably be attributed to a disability. This may be a temporary or permanent disability for you, a staff member, a job applicant or a constituent visiting the constituency office or surgery.

Disability assistance applies only to parliamentary duties conducted outside the parliamentary estate.

You can claim disability assistance to meet the costs of any “reasonable adjustments” required by the [Equality Act 2010](#). These “reasonable adjustments” can refer to you, a staff member, a job applicant or a constituent visiting the constituency office or surgery.

They include:

- additional staff and associated costs
- specialist IT and other equipment
- new or adapted office furniture
- necessary adjustments to office premises or accommodation
- necessary costs of securing larger office premises or accommodation
- necessary additional travel costs (including for carers and/or support staff where needed)

There are no specific budget limitations for these claims. We assess each claim individually.

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### 6.2 What you can't claim

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If you or your staff member has a temporary or minor injury which does not constitute a disability (for example a broken leg) then you can apply to the Contingency Fund for the cost of any additional assistance that you need.

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### 6.3 Disability assessments

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It will not always be necessary for you or your staff to have the condition assessed to determine what reasonable adjustments are required. In many cases, the individual will already know what is needed. However, if an assessment is needed, you can claim for the cost under disability assistance.

In some circumstances, especially if a large cost is involved, IPSA may ask for an independent assessment of the disability.

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## 6.4 Submitting your claim

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Before you are able to submit a claim, you will need to complete the Disability registration form on the online expenses system. Once your request and registration have been approved please follow the process outlined below.

We recommend that MPs seek prior approval before making any disability claims. If you require expensive specialist equipment, we will need to see a quote before we can grant prior approval.

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# Managing your business costs and expenses

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This section covers the ways you can manage your business costs including:

- how to claim for expenses
  - how to set-up direct payments
  - how to apply to IPSA for a cash advance or a loan to cover a rental deposit
  - applying for contingency funding
  - publication of your expenses
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## 7 Ways to pay and claim

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For help with submitting your claims, please see our [How to Guides](#) on our website.

Reimbursement is not the only way to claim your business costs and expenses. The following payment methods and loans are also available to help with cash-flow and reduce your administration:

- [direct payment for train travel from the Trainline](#)
- [direct payment for office supplies from Commercial Ltd, Banner and XMA](#)
- [direct payments for rent](#)
- [direct payments for pooled staffing costs](#)
- [direct payments for employment practice liability/legal expenses insurance](#)
- [the payment card](#) (for any expense under the Scheme)
- [advances](#) on unpaid invoices of £200 or more
- [deposit loans](#)
- [advance loans \(up to £4,000\)](#)

You can also arrange for your staff member to submit your claims for you as your proxy – see proxy submission of claims below.

### The Trainline

You can book tickets using your IPSA account on the [Trainline website](#). Please let us know if you need your login details or instructions. You don't need to enter any payment details as we pay the Trainline directly. You do not need to complete a claim or reconciliation form or send any receipts/tickets to us – we get everything we need from the Trainline.

### Office supplies (Commercial Ltd, Banner or XMA)

You can buy office supplies from the Commercial Ltd or Banner websites using your IPSA account. You do not need to enter any payment details as we pay these suppliers directly. You do not need to complete a claim or reconciliation form or send us any receipts – we get everything we need from Commercial Ltd or Banner when you order.

Please use this link to access the Banner website <http://www1.banner-online.biz/home.aspx>

Please use this link to access the Commercial website <http://online.commercial.co.uk/>

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## XMA toner and ink cartridges

You can buy printer supplies including cartridges and toner using an account we can create for you on the XMA Ltd website (we will email you log-in details as required). As with orders from Banner and Commercial, you do not need to pay upfront, make a claim or reconcile payments.

Please use this link to access the XMA Ltd website <http://www.xma.co.uk/>

## Direct rent payments

We can pay your accommodation and office rent directly to your landlord. If you would like us to do this, just register the property with us and complete the [Direct Rental Payments form](#) on our website.

## Direct payments for pooled staffing

We can pay your annual pooled staffing costs direct to the Parliamentary Resources Unit (PRU), Parliamentary Office of the Liberal Democrats (POLD), Parliamentary Research Service (PRS) and the European Research Group (ERG). You should allocate this cost to your staffing budget, unless you expect it to be exhausted, in which case you can allocate it to your OCE budget.

PRU, PRS, POLD and ERG send direct payment request forms to their MPs for each financial year.

## Direct payments for employment practice/legal expenses insurance

We can pay your employment practice liability insurance direct to the insurer annually. We contact all MPs about this each year.

The cost of legal expenses insurance or employment practice insurance can be claimed from the OCE budget or, where you expect your OCE budget to be exhausted, you can claim it from your staffing budget instead..

We enable you to buy this insurance for MPs from a central supplier. We do this once a year. If you choose to purchase this insurance through this scheme, the cost of the premium will be deducted from your OCE budget or your staffing budget, where appropriate.

## Payment card

You can use your Payment Card to pay for any expense allowable under the Scheme. We pay Barclaycard for your purchases directly. Once a month, you need to complete a reconciliation form and send us hard-copy evidence such as receipts for your purchases on the Payment Card.

If you don't have a Payment Card and would like one, please contact us on 020 7811 6400 or at [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk).

## Advances

You can claim an advance on unpaid invoices of £200 or more (except for mileage and reward and recognition payments), so you don't have to use your own money to pay up front. To claim an advance, log in to the online expenses system and select "Yes, not yet Paid" under "Advance?" on a regular claim form and enter the invoice date as the transaction date. When we have paid you, please complete a "Receipts: Supporting Invoice form" on the online expenses system. You will need to print the barcode form which is produced and send it to us with the receipt, within one month. If the supplier doesn't provide a receipt (i.e. for utility bills, telephone bills, council tax or business rates) you don't need to send us a receipt after we have paid you the advance.

## Deposit loans

You can apply to us for a loan to cover the cost of a deposit at the start of a tenancy.

So that we can approve a loan application, you will need to send us:

- A draft rental agreement
- A signed hard copy of the [Rental Property Deposit Loan Agreement form](#)

Please allow five working days for us to process your application. The full terms and conditions of the loan are in the Rental Property Deposit Loan Agreement form.

You cannot have more than one deposit loan at once, unless IPSA agrees otherwise.

When the tenancy ends, you must repay the deposit loan no later than one month after the date on which the tenancy comes to an end, or when you leave office, whichever is first. You must repay the full deposit loan even if you do not receive the full deposit at the end of the tenancy.

### **Advance loan (up to £4000)**

You can apply for an interest-free advance loan of up to £4,000 at any time. This is provided to cover any costs allowable under the Scheme for your parliamentary functions. You can get a loan by completing an [Advance Application and Agreement form](#). You will need to repay in full what you owe by the end of the parliament or, if you cease to be an MP before the end of the Parliament, on the date you leave office.

### **Proxy submission of claims**

If you would like a proxy to be able to make claims on your behalf, just fill out the proxy registration form on the online expenses system. If you do, you are still responsible for claims submitted by your proxy.

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## 8 Contingency

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You can apply for contingency funding if you incur expenditure or liability for expenditure related to the performance of your parliamentary functions, that is:

- not covered by any of the budgets set out in the Scheme; or
- covered by one or more of those budgets but it exceeds the financial limit that applies; and
- the expenditure is exceptional

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### 8.1 Considerations

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It is at our discretion whether we decide to accept or reject an application. The following factors will be taken into account:

- whether there are exceptional circumstances warranting additional support
- whether you could reasonably have been expected to take any action to avoid the circumstances which gave rise to the expenditure or liability
- whether your performance of parliamentary functions will be significantly impaired by a refusal of the claim

If you run out of funds at the end of the year when there is no exceptional reason why those funds have been exhausted, contingency funding will not be available to top up your budget.

#### Contingency applications for Staffing Expenditure budgets

For the 2014-15 financial year, it is IPSA's policy that we will not approve contingency applications for staffing budget uplifts to fund increased staff numbers to deal with increased casework taken on by MPs. We will continue to consider, on a case-by-case basis, contingency applications for additional funding where this is not based on increased casework. We will also allow contingency applications to maintain staffing commitments agreed in 2012-13 and 2013-14.

#### Example of a contingency claim which is likely to be accepted

If an MP were to ask for an extrication payment to cover the costs of ending an expensive printer lease, this is likely to be accepted where the MP can show that this would present good value to the taxpayer. It may be possible to show this where the costs of continuing the lease would be greater than the cost of ending it.

#### Example of a contingency claim which is likely to be rejected

If an MP were to ask for a contingency payment to cover the cost of replacing stolen contents from their constituency office this claim would be rejected. This is because the MP could have foreseen or prevented the expenditure or liability by claiming for contents insurance for their constituency office. It may be decided that the MP should have taken responsibility to ensure that the contents were insured, the cost of which was already claimable, and therefore should not receive any additional assistance.

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### 8.2 How to apply

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To apply for a contingency payment you need to complete the [Contingency Application form](#). All of the form must be completed for your application to be considered. You should set out clearly the exceptional circumstance that resulted in

the expenditure.

Please ensure that you attach the required evidence outlined in the Application Form. We may return forms that do not have the requisite evidence attached.

While it is understood that claims for contingency payments will vary in nature, it is expected that MPs should seek prior approval for claims. Except where specifically provided for in the Scheme, MPs should make an application to IPSA to claim from the contingency fund (including the 'Miscellaneous' budget). We will require an estimate of costs involved in order to grant prior approval.

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### 8.3 Staff redundancies

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Any necessary expenditure on staff redundancies will be met from the Contingency Fund; any payment in lieu of notice or holiday pay due to the staff member will be met from the MP's staffing budget.

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### 8.4 Temporary or minor injury

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If an MP sustains an injury which is minor or temporary in nature and which they can demonstrate will significantly affect their ability to perform their parliamentary functions, he or she may receive necessary additional financial assistance away from the parliamentary estate for the period for which the injury will affect him or her. This can be claimed as a contingency payment.

An example of this could be an MP who breaks his or her leg and who requires short-term additional financial assistance (away from the parliamentary estate). The MP must follow the normal procedure to apply for a contingency payment. The MP would also have to provide us with a note from his or her GP or the House of Commons Safety Health and Wellbeing Service setting out what the injury is and for how long it is likely to affect him or her, as well as any receipts which show the additional payments made. (Please note MPs are already able to claim for some journeys by taxi due to injury as under paragraph 9.16b of the Scheme).

In cases of claims for additional assistance as a result of a temporary or minor injury, we reserve the right to request a medical report if we feel the injury is more significant or permanent and therefore should be claimed through [Disability Assistance](#).

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## 9 Publication

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As part of our commitment to transparency, we publish the claims made by all MPs on our publication website [www.parliamentary-standards.org.uk](http://www.parliamentary-standards.org.uk). Our publication policy is available [here](#).

We publish claims which are paid and also those which are not.

We publish claims every two months – three months in arrears. In the week before publication, we email MPs to tell them what information we will be releasing, so they can familiarise themselves with the information and query of it.

Once a year we publish a summary of the total costs incurred by each MP during the previous financial year, including staffing costs and details of any “connected parties” (such as partners or relatives) they employ.

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# Employing your staff

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## 10 Employing staff for your offices

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This section covers those aspects of your role as an employer where IPSA has established rules and conditions. It also sets out arrangements for maternity, paternity and adoption leave and for long-term sickness absence. All staff who have been employed since 7 May 2010 must have contracts which follow one of the IPSA model contracts. The contracts of staff who were employed before that date are honoured, although MPs and their staff may agree to adapt to the IPSA model contracts and pay scales.

There are rules on the employment of “connected parties” (which includes family members), which are dealt with in paragraph 3.15 of the Scheme. Again, for staff employed before 7 May 2010, previous arrangements will be honoured.

Rules on activities which are not considered to be necessary for the conduct of MPs’ parliamentary functions are also dealt with in paragraph 3.4 of the Scheme. MPs’ staff should not undertake these activities as part of their publicly-funded employment.

### Connected parties

Staffing Expenditure can only be claimed for the salary of one employee who is a connected party at a time, unless you employed more than one connected party on 7 May 2010. In that case you may continue to employ these connected parties until their employment ceases.

We define a “connected party” as:

- a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner of the member
- a parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece of the MP, or of a spouse, civil partner or cohabiting partner of the member; or
- a body corporate, a firm or a trust with which the MP is connected as defined in [section 252 of the Companies Act 2006](#).

### Parliamentary activities

Except where set out in Chapter Nine, we have expanded our rules on the activities we do not regard as parliamentary to include:

- attendance at party conferences or meetings
- work which is conducted for or at the behest of a political party
- activities relating to reviews of parliamentary constituency boundaries
- activities which could be construed as campaign expenditure within the scope of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000
- activities which could be construed as election expenses within the scope of the Representation of the People Act 1983
- work relating to delegations to an international assembly
- work relating to the performance of Ministerial functions

For the purpose of Chapter Seven (staffing expenditure), the above activities are not considered as necessary for the support of the performance of parliamentary functions by MPs’ staff.

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## 10.1 Employing a new member of staff (including employed interns)

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When you employ a new member of staff, you need to complete the following steps:

1. Decide on the type of contract and job you are offering and ensure the salary is within the relevant range, see page 48 of this document for job descriptions and salary ranges.
2. You will need to send us the following documents:
  - Employee New Starter Form
  - P45 or P46
  - An IPSA Contract of Employment
  - An IPSA Job Description

Further information about these documents can be found below.

### Employee New Starter Form

There are three parts to this form which all need to be completed before the employee can be registered on the payroll. The form includes the Connected Party Declaration.

### P45/46

A P45 is a record of an employee's pay and the tax that has been deducted so far in the tax year. They will receive it from their previous employer after they leave. We need it to ensure the correct tax code is applied to their salary and that their tax calculations are correct.

In the absence of a P45, either because this is the employee's first job or because the former employer has not yet sent the P45, the employee needs to complete part 1 only of a P46.

The P46 form can be downloaded from the [HMRC website](#) and should be sent to us when the new employee has not got a P45.

In the absence of any documentation, the basic rate (BR) tax code will be used. This means that a 20% deduction for tax is made from the employee's salary.

### Contract of employment - type of contract

<b>Permanent</b>	Permanent employees are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employed on a permanent basis.</li><li>• Expected to work a fixed number of days or hours per week.</li><li>• Entitled to apply for a bicycle and season ticket loan once their probation period is complete</li></ul>
<b>Fixed term</b>	Fixed-term employees are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contracted for a specified time with an end date set in advance</li><li>• Entitled to apply for a bicycle and season ticket loan once their probation period is complete</li><li>• Can be kept on successive fixed-term contracts for up to four years. If the contract is renewed after four years the employee becomes permanent unless the MP can give a good reason why they should stay on a fixed-term contract.</li></ul>

	A renewed contract with less favourable terms than the original can be refused or accepted by the employee.
<b>Casual</b>	<p>Casual employees are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only paid for work done, on submission of online timesheets</li> <li>• engaged purely on an <i>ad hoc</i> basis. To avoid disputes, the MP should make it clear if they are employed continually between periods of work, or if there is a series of separate contracts</li> </ul> <p>The cut-off date for payroll is the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for payment that month (or the last working day before the 15<sup>th</sup> if it is a weekend or bank holiday). However, for online timesheets the cut-off date is the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month. Timesheets authorised after this date will not be paid until the following month.</p>
<b>Employed interns</b>	Depending on the nature of their work, employed interns should be either on a fixed term contract if their hours are fixed or if their work is more casual they should be employed on a casual contract.

### Employed interns

Employed interns are treated the same as other paid workers, the only difference is that their salary does not have to adhere to our pay scales but it must be at least the National Minimum Wage.

They will need:

- an [IPSA contract](#) – see above
- an [IPSA job description](#) (this should be adapted to reflect the reduced responsibilities of the employed intern)
- an [Employee Starter Form](#)
- a P45 or P46 – [download P46 form](#)

They do not need to:

- be registered on the online expenses system
- complete an IPSA Model Volunteer Arrangement form

For further guidance, please refer to Chapter 7 of the Scheme, and see the advice from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, which is available [here](#).

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## 10.2 Job descriptions and salary ranges

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The MP as the employer sets the salaries for his or her members of staff. IPSA publishes pay ranges, together with job descriptions and model contracts to be used by all MPs. The salary offered by the MP has to be within the range applicable to the specific job.

To find out the salary range for a particular member of staff, you should pick the job description which fits best. We now provide flexible job descriptions for staff members. You should select the appropriate salary range for the job, using the London Area or national ranges (given below) depending upon the work location of the staff member and his or her capability, skills and experience.

The London Area ranges apply to staff employed to work inside the London Area boundary, which is defined as the constituencies listed in Schedule 2 of the Scheme (this includes Westminster-based staff for any MP).

There is a minimum and a maximum figure on the salary for each job type. As of 1st April 2014, the salary ranges are:

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### 10.2.1 MP staff salary ranges: London Area (£ per year)

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JOB FAMILY	MINIMUM SALARY 2014-15	MAXIMUM SALARY 2014-15
<b>Administration 1</b> (previously Junior Secretary)	17,000	24,482
<b>Administration 2</b> (Senior Secretary)	21,000	30,603
<b>Administration 3</b> (Office Manager)	30,000	40,804
<b>Executive Support 1</b> (Caseworker)	19,000	28,563
<b>Executive Support 2</b> (Senior Caseworker)	23,000	31,623
<b>Research 2</b> (Parliamentary Assistant)	23,000	33,663
<b>Research 3</b> (Senior Parliamentary Assistant)	33,000	42,844

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### 10.2.2 MP staff salary ranges: National (excluding London area) (£ per year)

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JOB FAMILY	MINIMUM SALARY 2014-15	MAXIMUM SALARY 2014-15
<b>Administration 1</b> (previously Junior Secretary)	15,000	22,442
<b>Administration 2</b> (Previously Senior Secretary)	18,000	27,543
<b>Administration 3</b> (Office Manager)	26,000	37,744
<b>Executive 1</b> (Caseworker)	16,000	25,503
<b>Executive Support 2</b> (Senior Caseworker)	19,000	28,563
<b>Research 2</b> (Parliamentary Assistant)	20,000	30,603
<b>Research 3</b> (Senior Parliamentary Assistant)	30,000	39,784

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### 10.2.3 Choosing a salary level

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The top end of the salary range allows for experience and good performance to be rewarded, while the bottom end will be appropriate for a less experienced employee. We recommend that new staff with little relevant experience should be paid at or close to the bottom of the range, but you may want to pay a little more for a new employee with relevant experience.

In choosing a starting salary, please bear in mind equal pay legislation and the requirement for equal pay for work of equal value. Any differences in pay need to be objectively justifiable, for instance on grounds of experience or performance.

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### 10.2.4 Job descriptions

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The flexible job descriptions tool can be found on our website [here](#). An overview of all the roles and duties can be found on our website [here](#).

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## 10.3 Leavers

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When an employee leaves your employment you need to fully complete an [Employee Leaver form](#) and send it to us.

To ensure the employee's last salary is correctly adjusted, please ensure the Employee Leaver form reaches us before the monthly payroll cut-off date (15<sup>th</sup> of each month or the working day closest to the 15<sup>th</sup> if it falls on a weekend or bank holiday).

Please do ensure you complete the following:

- last day the employee was at work
- holiday entitlement left – either whether any holiday leave owed to the employee or if they have an excess
- any additional payments/deductions due

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### 10.3.1 Season ticket loans and bike loans

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- It is also important that you tick the box which identifies if the employee has an outstanding season ticket loan or bike loan with us.
- The amount of any outstanding loan will be deducted from the employee's final salary. If the employee's last salary is not enough to cover the full amount they owe us, they must send us a cheque. If this is the case, the employee should contact us before they leave to confirm the outstanding amount.

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### 10.3.2 Redundancy pay

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For MPs' staff on IPSA model contracts, any redundancy payments will be made at double the statutory entitlement.

For MPs' staff who are not on IPSA model contracts, any redundancy payments will be in line with the terms and conditions of employment in their contracts.

The amount depends on the age of the employee, the number of years in employment with the MP and their weekly average earnings.

If you need advice on managing redundancies or on calculations for redundancy pay, please contact the House of Commons Personnel Advisory Service (PAS) on 0207 219 2080.

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### 10.3.3 Payment in lieu of notice (PILON)

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PILON applies when an employee is made redundant but is not required to work their notice period but will still be paid for it. The notice period required by the MP and the employee is stated in the employee's contract.

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## 10.4 Volunteers

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Volunteers are not required to carry out specific duties for the MP, and they are assisting the MP with his or her duties on a voluntary basis. It is your responsibility, as the employer, to ensure that any volunteers are not in fact workers and therefore entitled to payment of a salary. For further guidance, please refer to Chapter 7 of the Scheme and see the advice from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-work-experience-and-internships>.

Volunteers do not receive a salary but can claim for incidental expenses such as lunch and travel to and from the place of work.

Incidental expenses are limited to reasonable:

- travel
- food
- non-alcoholic drinks

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### 10.4.1 How to claim

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Before these expenses can be claimed, we will need:

- an [IPSA Model Volunteer Arrangement](#). This is an arrangement between the volunteer and MP and provides us with the volunteer's bank details
- a volunteer registration form on the online expenses system – this enables claims to be made. A barcode form will be generated when you submit the registration online. Please send us the barcode form with the agreement form
- If mileage is going to be claimed, then the Vehicle Registration form needs to be completed on the online expenses system.

Please allow up to three working days for us to process registration forms.

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### 10.4.2 Claiming for incidental expenses

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- Once we have processed the volunteer's registration, their expenses can be submitted by the MP (or proxy if they have been given authority).
- If the volunteer has given us their bank details, they will be paid directly. If not, the MP will receive reimbursement and will need to pay the volunteer.
- Claims should be submitted using the Travel and Subsistence form. Once the volunteer is registered, the Volunteer options under 'select an item' will become available.
- We require receipts for all claims submitted.
- All expenses incurred must be submitted to us for reimbursement within 90 days of the date they were incurred.

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## 10.5 Maternity leave and pay for staff

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Maternity leave and pay enables you to take time off work before and after your baby is born. You are entitled to take up to a year off work. There are two types of maternity pay:

- statutory (SMP)
- contractual

Please refer to your contract of employment for details of your contractual maternity leave and pay.

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### 10.5.1 Maternity pay

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Providing the employee meets the qualifying criteria, they can expect to receive the following based on their contract of employment:

- 26 weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave on full contractual pay
  - 13 weeks of Additional Maternity Leave on SMP only
  - 13 weeks of Additional Maternity on nil pay
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### 10.5.2 Eligibility for Statutory Maternity Pay

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To be eligible for Statutory Maternity Pay both the following criteria need to be met:

- The employee must have been employed by the same MP continuously for at least 26 weeks prior to their qualifying week (the 15th week before the baby's due date)
- The employee's average earnings need to be equal or above the lower earnings limit which applies at the end of the qualifying week (payroll will calculate this)

If the employee does not meet the above criteria they may still be able to receive the Maternity Allowance through Jobcentre Plus. Payroll will give them an SMP 1 form on behalf of the MP explaining why they were not entitled to SMP.

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### 10.5.3 Claiming for maternity leave

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The employee must advise the MP:

- that she is pregnant - no later than the end of the qualifying week
- the baby's due date – the midwife can provide a Maternity Certificate (MAT B1 form) which will provide confirmation. The employee should give the form to the MP
- the date the employee wishes to start maternity leave – this needs to be in writing to the MP

The MP needs to send us:

- a letter confirming the employee's maternity leave start date
- the MAT B1 form

We need this documentation before we can start maternity payments.

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#### 10.5.4 Contingency payments to provide cover for maternity leave

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Contingency payments for maternity cover will automatically be granted. You do not need to make an application. However, we do need to know who will be providing the cover and the start and end date for the cover. If are employing a new member of staff for this purpose, the same rules of employment apply as for any other member of staff.

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## 10.6 Paternity leave and pay for staff

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Fathers-to-be can be entitled to take up to two consecutive weeks of paid leave.

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### 10.6.1 Eligibility for Statutory Paternity pay

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To be eligible for Statutory Paternity pay, all the following criteria must be met:

- The employee must have been employed by the same MP continuously for at least 26 weeks prior to their qualifying week (the 15th week before the baby's due date)
  - The employee's average earnings need to be equal to or above the lower earnings limit which applies at the end of the qualifying week (payroll will calculate this)
  - The employee must be the biological father of the child, or the mother's husband, partner or civil partner or have responsibility for the child's upbringing
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### 10.6.2 Statutory Paternity pay

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Providing the employee meets the qualifying criteria, they can expect to receive:

- A maximum of two consecutive weeks at the statutory paternity pay applicable at the time (HMRC guidelines); or
- 90 per cent of the employee's average weekly earnings if this is less

The leave taken must be continuous, and completed by the 56th day after the child has been born. Paternity Leave cannot be taken before the child is born. If the child is born early, the leave can be started any time between the actual date of birth and the end of an eight week period starting from the Sunday of the week the baby was originally due.

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### 10.6.3 Claiming for Statutory Paternity pay

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**The employee must:**

- tell the MP no later than the end of the qualifying week when they intend to take the leave
- complete an [SC3 form](#), to confirm their entitlement, and give it to the MP

**The MP needs to send us:**

- a letter confirming the employee's paternity leave start date
  - an [SC3 form](#) completed by the employee
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## 10.7 Adoption leave and pay for staff

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If you adopt a child you may qualify for Statutory Adoption Pay during your adoption leave from work.

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### 10.7.1 Eligibility for Statutory Adoption Pay

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To be eligible for statutory adoption pay all of the following criteria need to be met:

- The employee must be matched with a child for adoption by an adoption agency
  - The employee must have been employed by the same MP continuously for at least 26 weeks prior to their match date
  - The employee's average earnings need to be equal to or above the lower earnings limit (payroll will calculate this)
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### 10.7.2 Statutory Adoption Pay

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Providing the employee meets the qualifying criteria, they can expect to receive:

- 26 weeks of Ordinary Adoption Leave on full contractual pay
  - 13 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave on SAP only
  - 13 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave on nil pay
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### 10.7.3 Claiming for Statutory Adoption Pay

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The employee must advise the MP of:

- Their intention to take adoption leave no later than seven days after being notified by their adoption agency that they have been matched with a child for adoption.
- They will need to give the MP a copy of the Matching Certificate from the adoption agency

The MP needs to send us:

- a letter confirming the employee's adoption leave start date
  - a copy of the Matching Certificate
- 

### 10.7.4 Contingency payments to provide cover for adoption leave

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Contingency payments for adoption cover will automatically be granted. You do not need to make an application. However, we do need to know who will be providing the cover and the start and end date for the cover. If you are employing a new member of staff for this purpose, the same rules of employment apply as for any other member of staff.

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## 10.8 Sick leave and pay for staff

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If a member of staff is off sick we need all the original Statement of Fitness for Work certificates and self-certification forms.

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### 10.8.1 Contractual sick pay

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If the employee has been employed by the MP for less than one year, they will be entitled to one week's paid sick leave for every four weeks they have worked continuously.

Once the member of staff has completed one year's employment, they will receive the following as a maximum entitlement in any four year rolling period:

- Up to 26 weeks of sick leave at full pay during a twelve month rolling period
  - Up to a further 26 weeks of sick leave at half pay during a twelve month rolling period
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### 10.8.2 Statutory sick pay (SSP)

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If the member of staff is eligible, they will be paid SSP up to a maximum of 28 weeks in any linked period. (A linked period is a period of sickness which starts within 56 days of the previous one ending.)

If the staff member is receiving full or half pay at the time, the statutory sick pay will be offset against this.

More information about SSP can be found on [www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk).

Before we can pay SSP, we require all Fitness for Work statements and [self-certification forms](#). We also require these if you wish to claim for contingency funds to cover the employee's absence.

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### 10.8.3 Contingency payments to provide cover for sick leave

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Contingency payments for sick leave cover will automatically be granted. You do not need to make an application. However, we do need to know who will be providing the cover and the start and end date for the cover. If you are employing a new member of staff for this purpose, the same rules of employment apply as for any other member of staff.

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## IPSA Contact details

For further information please contact the MP Support Team:

Email: [info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk)

Phone: 0207 811 6400 (10am - 5pm, Monday to Friday)

For specific payroll queries please contact our Payroll Team:

Email: [payroll@parliamentarystandards.org.uk](mailto:payroll@parliamentarystandards.org.uk)

Phone: 0207 811 6400 (10am - 5pm, Monday to Friday) – please select the relevant option from the menu