



HOUSE OF COMMONS

DISSOLUTION GUIDANCE

For Members' staff

February 2015

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This booklet sets out the arrangements which will be in place during the period when Parliament is dissolved before a General Election.

It is not possible to deal with every eventuality in this short document. However, the principle which you should observe is that, during the dissolution period, House and IPSA funded resources may be used only for the purpose of carrying out parliamentary functions (e.g. residual casework) and for maintaining a small range of facilities. As Parliament is not in existence during this period, any such activities will inevitably be limited.

This booklet is divided into three sections:

- Part 1: Information for all Members' staff (pages 6 – 18).
- Part 2: Further information for staff of Members not standing at the General Election (pages 19 - 24).
- Part 3: Information for staff of Members not returned at the General Election (pages 25 – 31).

The Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) has produced its own guidance note for Members' staff which can be found at Annex B (pages 35 – 41).

This information is also available online at <http://intranet.parliament.uk/dissolution>.

If you have any queries regarding this guidance, please contact communicationsoc@parliament.uk or x6163.

Part 1 Information for all Members' staff

GENERAL INFORMATION

- 1.1** During the period when Parliament is dissolved before a General Election there are no Members of Parliament. Consequently your Member may not use that title during this period. From 5pm on the day of dissolution, many of the facilities that the House provides in Westminster during a Parliament will not be available to you or your Member.
- 1.2** If your Member is standing at the General Election, their security pass will allow them access to the Estate until midnight, five working days after dissolution, at which point it will be deactivated. Access is solely to enable them to collect items and post. Your staff security pass and that of your Member's spouse or partner will be deactivated at midnight on the day of dissolution.
- 1.3** If your Member is standing down at the General Election, your Member's security pass, along with your own and that of your Member's spouse or partner, will allow you access to the Estate until midnight, five working days after dissolution, giving you time to wind up your office.
- 1.4** If you have any questions about the arrangements during the dissolution period that are not answered here, please seek advice from the relevant staff – for a list of useful contacts see Annex A on page 32. In addition, a checklist of actions you may wish to consider can be found at Annex D on page 43.

ONLINE PRESENCE

- 1.5** All Members' websites, social media accounts and any other online presence must bear a clear disclaimer throughout the dissolution period which makes it clear that it was established while your Member was a Member of Parliament and that they

are, until re-elected, no longer a Member of Parliament. The disclaimer should read:

"This site/account was established while I was a Member of Parliament. As Parliament has been dissolved there are no Members of Parliament until after the Election on 07 May 2015".

Domain names, email addresses and other online accounts referring to MPs.

1.6

No one can use the title MP during dissolution and your Member should not use a website, email address or online account during dissolution if it suggests they are currently an MP. Any website that contains a URL referring an MP (e.g. johnpeekmp.co.uk) should be frozen. This means the website may remain online, but that no new content should be added except the disclaimer, contact details and/or a link to an alternative web site.

Social media accounts

1.7

Social media accounts referring to your Member as an MP do not need to be renamed as long as these accounts bear the disclaimer above. However, if you do wish to rename a Twitter account (whilst reserving the existing username) or a Facebook account, the Web and Intranet Service can provide advice on 020 7219 2010 or webmaster@parliament.uk.

ICT ACCESS, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPORT

Access to the Parliamentary Network and emails

1.8

Parliamentary Network (PN) accounts and email access, including access to stored files and data will be suspended from 5pm on the day of dissolution for staff of Members standing for re-election. If your Member is standing down, your Parliamentary Network and email accounts will be kept active until 5pm the day before the Election. You may wish to consider making a backup of your

Outlook contacts folder and Outlook personal folders. A facility to allow Members and their staff to redirect their emails from PN accounts to external accounts will be offered by PICT. When the service has been activated PICT will email all Members instructions on how to set up the automatic redirection of email.

1.9

For Members to use email redirection, they must have an alternative 3rd party email address. There are many providers, the most popular of which are free. If you need to use a paid-for service to help you discharge your parliamentary functions, the cost of this can be claimed from your IPSA budgets. Any private account must not redirect mail back to a parliamentary account.

Remote access

1.10

If your Member is standing, all remote access to accounts on the PN, whether via VPN or Citrix, will be withdrawn from 5pm on the day of dissolution. If your Member is not standing then your remote access will be kept active until 5pm the day before the Election.

Internet access

1.11

The ability to browse the internet via parliamentary-provided broadband will remain available for constituency related work only.

Equipment

1.12

Members cannot order equipment from their allowances in the six months leading up to an election. IPSA can provide guidance on what can be claimed from them. Laptops provided by the House may be taken off the estate but PCs supplied by the House as part of a Member's entitlement must not be removed. No loan machine provided by the House for parliamentary purposes may be used for party political purposes unless the appropriate rental is paid (see section 1.14 below).

Support

1.13

The service of the ICT Service Desk, the Telephone Operator Bureau and other PICT staff will not generally be available during dissolution, apart from assistance with the interpretation of this guidance. Where urgent casework is being conducted and a fault with House-provided equipment arises, essential support, sufficient to allow the urgent casework to continue, will be provided.

Rental of House-provided equipment and services for non-parliamentary purposes by Members seeking re-election

1.14

Members can rent their loaned ICT equipment (PC, laptop, iPad, printer etc.), provided by the House, to use for non-parliamentary purposes during an Election campaign; a schedule of costs, updated quarterly, is available on the intranet at <http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/computers-equipment/computer-services/dissolutioncharging-schedule-v5.pdf>. The charging calculator is provided to calculate the cost of equipment rental and is available at <http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/computers-equipment/Getting-setup/ChargingCalculator.xlsx>. This document will need to be attached to any payment submitted.

1.15

The schedule includes weekly equivalent costs for the use of parliamentary supplied personal computers, laptops, tablets, printers, iPads and internet access. Warranty support will remain available where it exists at the time of dissolution, but no other support will be offered for non-parliamentary work.

1.16

If full compliance with the guidance in section 1.12 is followed then no payment or declaration need be made.

1.17

It is each Member's responsibility to determine if a declaration is required and to ensure that an appropriate payment is made, according to this guidance.

Telephones

1.18 Telephone calls may not be made from the Parliamentary Estate during the period of dissolution, and telephones may not be diverted to external lines. Any existing divers to external lines will be automatically removed.

1.19 You are advised to switch off the power to any fax machine before vacating your office, but please leave the telephone and network lines plugged in.

Voicemail

1.20 Your voicemail will not receive messages from 5pm on the day of dissolution. You can record a simple message on your voicemail informing the caller that the office is closed and giving a number where you may be contacted, but there will be no facility for storing or retrieving messages or forwarding calls. More detailed guidance and advice is available on the intranet at <http://intranet.parliament.uk/documents/intranet/pict/assets/voicemailQuickReferenceGuide.pdf>.

1.21 Voicemails in constituency offices should be amended as appropriate, e.g. to say that the office is closed, or to make it clear that although your Member is no longer an MP, they are using the office and its facilities to deal with urgent casework etc.

Messages

1.22 The Operator Bureau will not connect any telephone calls or take any messages for your Member during dissolution. If requested, the Operator Bureau Supervisor will inform callers of your Member's contact details. This service will be provided for three months; contact the Operator Bureau Supervisor on 020 7219 6161 to pass on their contact details.

ACCOMMODATION IN WESTMINSTER

Access to your Member's office

- 1.23** Members are allowed access to the Estate until midnight, five working days after dissolution, but this is solely to enable them to collect items and post, or if standing down, to clear their office. They may not work here from the day following dissolution.
- 1.24** Your pass and that of your Member's spouse/partner will cease at 5pm on the day of dissolution if your Member is standing for re-election, or five working days after dissolution to clear the office if they are standing down. You may enter the precincts to collect papers, post, etc, but you will not be allowed to work in the precincts and your rooms will be locked. You may not make telephone calls or use other facilities on the precincts during the period of dissolution. The same arrangements apply to political advisers.
- 1.25** If you wish to access the Estate after your pass has been deactivated you should contact the Serjeant at Arms on 020 7219 3030 or email saaenquiries@parliament.uk to arrange this.
- 1.26** As Members are not allowed to work on the Estate during dissolution your office will be locked. To access your office in the Palace you should ask the nearest Security Officer, contact Accommodation Services on 020 7219 1319 or email accommodationservices@parliament.uk. In the outbuildings, the Service Delivery Co-ordinators on duty will open rooms on request.
- 1.27** If your Member is standing for re-election, you may leave personal belongings, papers and books in your office during the dissolution period, preferably locked away. Please ensure your desk is clear, both for security reasons and to enable your office to be thoroughly cleaned.

Car park

1.28

All cars should be removed from the underground car park during dissolution.

DATA PROTECTION AND HANDLING CASEWORK AND RECORDS

1.29

Members may continue to deal with constituency casework during a dissolution period but correspondence must not give the impression that they are a Member of Parliament.

1.30

If you use caseworker software that is reliant on the Parliamentary Network, you will not have access to this during dissolution if your Member is standing for re-election. If your Member is not standing, then you will be affected when your Parliamentary Network account is closed on the day before Polling Day. Please speak to your casework provider if you are not sure and to discuss transferring any data that you require. Externally-hosted (e.g. cloud) casework software will not be affected.

1.31

By law, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman cannot accept any new requests to investigate complaints about government or other public organisations which are sent to the Ombudsman during the period when Parliament is dissolved. However, the Ombudsman has developed procedures to minimise the impact this has on constituency casework. New complaints about the NHS in England are not affected as the Ombudsman will continue to accept these while Parliament is dissolved. If you need any advice, please call the Ombudsman's MP helpline on 0300 061 4953 or email MP@ombudsman.org.uk.

1.32

Further guidance if your Member is not returned is in later sections. The booklet giving advice for Members and their staff when dealing with personal information may also be of assistance. This is available on the intranet at <http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/people-offices/office-departments/DHRC/FOI/advice->

[for-members-offices.pdf](#) or can be obtained by contacting the Data Protection Officer on 020 7219 8805/4296 or iris@parliament.uk.

STATIONERY AND CORRESPONDENCE

- 1.33** You may not use House emblems, House stationery and pre-paid envelopes during the period of dissolution; this includes any use for casework undertaken during the period.
- 1.34** In correspondence, including emails, the title MP or the address of the House of Commons should not be used until the day after Polling Day.
- 1.35** Arrangements can be made with the Postmaster on 020 7219 4639 for your Member's mail either to be held for collection in the Members' post office or forwarded to a nominated external address for the duration of the dissolution period.

HOUSE OF COMMONS AND PICT SERVICES

Library

- 1.36** Library services, including the research service, online access to newspapers and databases, and the facilities in the Members' Library and Derby Gate Library, will not be available from 5pm on the day of dissolution. Services will resume on the day after Polling Day.
- 1.37** Books and audio-visual material on loan to your office from the Library should be returned to the Library Loans Service in the Oriel Room of the Members' Library or the book drop off point in the Members' Centre in Portcullis House no later than 5pm on the day of dissolution, whether or not your Member is standing for

re-election. Any items not returned will be counted as missing and may be subject to a replacement charge.

ICT Local Drop in centre

1.38

The ICT Local drop in centre will be open from 9am to 5pm in the week after the House dissolves on the ground floor of Portcullis House. PICT staff will be available to advise former Members not standing for re-election who are in the process of clearing their desks. Services will not be available to you if your Member is standing for re-election. The Centre will then close until the day after Polling Day.

Information Office

1.39

The House of Commons Information Office's services for the public will operate as usual. You may use the Office to obtain information about the work of the House of Commons, but only on the same basis as other members of the public.

Parliamentary Recording Unit

1.40

The Parliamentary Recording Unit is open throughout the dissolution period. Please contact the Director of Parliamentary Broadcasting on 020 7210 5849 or by email pru@parliament.uk if your Member requires advice on how broadcasting material may be used in Election literature, party political broadcasts and on your websites.

Vote Office

1.41

Members seeking re-election are not entitled to use the Vote Office during the dissolution period. Members standing down may order certain documents by calling 020 7219 3631 or by email vote_office@parliament.uk. The Vote Office is open daily from 8am to 4pm during the dissolution period.

House of Commons Shop

1.42

The House of Commons Shop will be open for reduced hours during the dissolution period. The Jubilee Shop and the Houses of Parliament Shop will be open as usual. All retail shops will serve you on the same basis as they serve members of the public. Copies of Parliamentary documents are available for purchase in the Houses of Parliament shop.

Chamber and committee services

1.43

The services of the Committee Office, Table Office and the Public and Private Bill Offices will not be available to you or your Member from dissolution until after Polling Day.

1.44

Membership of the UK delegations to international assemblies continues over the period of dissolution. Delegation members will be briefed by the European Section on the implications of the dissolution for their work at the assemblies.

Room bookings

1.45

Committee and meeting rooms are not available for use during dissolution; following Polling Day a number of Committee and meeting rooms will be being used as decant accommodation for new Members and will not be available immediately. It is expected that Portcullis House meeting rooms will become available two weeks after Polling Day. Other Committee and meeting rooms will gradually become available over the next few weeks as new Members move into their permanent offices. Contact the Events Team on 020 7219 3090 or by email hoceventsteam@parliament.uk about bookings that you may have made before your Member was returned and other facilities that may be available.

Gallery tickets

1.46

All bookings of Admission Order tickets, including the automatic allocation of seats in the Strangers' Gallery, will be cancelled as soon as Parliament is dissolved. Bookings already made for educational parties on days after the House re-assembles will stand. No further bookings for the galleries may be made until after the results of the General Election are known.

Tours

1.47

You or your Member cannot escort or sponsor anybody on the Visitor Route or to the Elizabeth Tower during the period of dissolution. You cannot make advance bookings with the Tours Office for Member tours or Elizabeth Tower tours during the period of dissolution; all Member tours will be suspended from Monday 30 March – Friday 8 May inclusive.

1.48

Upon return of the House after the Election the Tours Office will notify new Members of constituency groups booked in by their predecessors so that they may decide whether they wish to meet them. Please note, bookings for Elizabeth Tower tours can only be confirmed once your office has provided the necessary details for your visitors to obtain security clearance. If this information has not been submitted by 30 March the tour cannot be confirmed and will be cancelled.

1.49

The above arrangements do not apply to tours sponsored by the Education Service.

1.50

Newly elected Members may escort guests along the Visitor Route which is open the day after Polling Day but tours falling within the period of State Opening, including preparation time, will be curtailed or cancelled.

Exhibitions

1.51

All exhibition bookings for the Upper Waiting Hall will be automatically cancelled when Parliament is dissolved. New applications are required for all exhibitions following the Election.

Travel Office

- 1.52 The services of the Travel Office will not be available to you during dissolution.

Gymnasium

- 1.53 If you are a member of the Gymnasium, membership will be suspended for the period of dissolution until the day after Polling Day. The Gym can freeze membership for this period, and therefore not take payment, but notification by the 20th of the previous month is required.

Nursery

- 1.54 To ensure the continuity of childcare arrangements the nursery will remain open during dissolution and existing arrangements will continue.

Catering facilities

- 1.55 Members may not use the reserved catering facilities during the dissolution period. All functions booked during the period in the name of a Member are automatically cancelled. Functions booked by Members who are returned at the Election will stand from the day following the Election.

Personnel Advice Service

- 1.56 The Personnel Advice Service (PAS) provides HR advice to Members in their role as employers. PAS will be available during dissolution to Members, or Members' staff who have written authorisation to act on behalf of their Member, at 020 7219 2080 or pas@parliament.uk.

SUMS OWING TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

1.57

Please settle all outstanding House of Commons Catering and Retail accounts (including events and Parliamentary Recording Unit invoices) in full before dissolution. Accounts will be suspended during the dissolution period and your Member will not have access to any credit facilities. These will require reactivating following the Election if your Member is returned.

1.58

Any sums owing to the Department of Finance (for example, telephone calls, etc.) must also be repaid immediately. Similarly, any debts incurred under contracts held by the House of Commons (e.g. to an ICT supplier) must be settled immediately.

1.59

For information on methods of payment, please contact the Accounts Receivable Team on 020 7219 6308.

PART 2 Information for staff of Members not standing at the General Election

REDUNDANCY PROCEDURES

2.1

Members who are standing down at the Election will be provided with additional information regarding their contractual and legal responsibilities as your employer. Members should follow a fair redundancy process as required by law. They should keep you informed of your employment status and consult with you prior to any redundancies taking effect. They should explain what is likely to happen, how any payments will be calculated and how the office will be wound up, and you should be given an opportunity to contribute views and ask questions. You should be invited to a 1:1 consultation meeting, giving you five working days' notice of the meeting and allowing you to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or work colleague. Once consultation has been completed, you will be given a dismissal notice letter terminating your employment, the timing of which is dependent on your last day of employment and your notice period.

2.2

The dismissal notice letter:

- Gives you formal notice of termination of your contract of employment and your final day of service.
- Sets out your entitlements, including what you can expect to receive in the way of a redundancy payment and how it is calculated.
- The right to appeal your redundancy.

Notice period

2.3

Once you have been given a notice of dismissal letter, you should be given reasonable time off, with pay, to look for other work during your notice period.

2.4

You are normally expected to work until your final day of employment. If, exceptionally, there is no work for you to do, you should be given pay in lieu of notice (known as PILON).

Support

2.5

For support during this time, the Employee Assistance Program, managed by Health Assured, can provide confidential support services about both work and personal matters. They can be contacted on 0800 030 5182.

PENSIONS

2.6

You are advised to contact your stakeholder/personal pension administrator directly for details of your pension options.

PARLIAMENTARY ICT AND RELATED SERVICES

Access to the Parliamentary Network and email

2.7

Your Parliamentary Network and email account (including remote access) will be kept active until 5pm on the day before the Election to allow you to download any of your own personal records from these accounts. When you have vacated your room and left the Parliamentary Estate you will still be able to use your current remote access services until the day before Polling Day. At 5pm on the day before the Election your network account will be closed.

Equipment

2.8

All data should be removed from machines which will be returned to Parliament. For advice about Members' obligations when handling the personal information of staff and constituents, you

can access a booklet with further information at <http://intranet.parliament.uk/Documents/people-offices/office-departments/DHRC/FOI/advice-for-members-offices.pdf>. Alternatively, you may wish to contact the Information Rights Security team (IRIS) on 020 7219 8805/4296 or iris@parliament.uk; or contact the Information Commissioner's Office: www.ico.org.uk.

2.9

Data removal should be carried out within five working days after dissolution for equipment at Westminster and by the day before Polling Day for equipment at other locations. You should treat any personal information held on any equipment – whether purchased by Parliament, IPSA or privately – about staff, constituents or others, in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. This includes ensuring that personal data is properly deleted from electronic equipment if you no longer have a legitimate reason to hold it.

2.10

The software (for example, Microsoft Office suite) that was included with the laptop or PC remains the property of Parliament and, in accordance with the conditions of supply and the terms of the licensing agreement, will need to be removed. Instructions to do this will be supplied by PICT.

2.11

If you have a centrally provided mobile device, the SIM (and number) will cease to operate 28 days after the Election, unless you inform PICT that you wish to transfer it to a personal account. On the day before the Election, any connection to the Parliamentary Network will cease. Any data already on the device (e.g. old emails or photos) will remain but will not be updated. If you do not wish to keep your device, PICT will dispose of it for you in a secure and an environmentally responsible way.

2.12

Connections from parliamentary supplied iPads will be managed in the same way as mobile devices. They will be collected in line with arrangements for other loan equipment.

Telephones

- 2.13** Your telephone lines in your Westminster office will remain available until you vacate your room, but your voicemail accounts will be closed the day after dissolution. Any existing divers to external lines will be automatically removed.
- 2.14** No messages will be taken for Members after dissolution, but the Operator Bureau Supervisor will inform callers of your Member's contact details if requested. This service will be provided for three months. The Operator Bureau Supervisor can be contacted on 020 7219 6161.

ACCOMMODATION IN WESTMINSTER AND OTHER FACILITIES

- 2.15** During the period of dissolution, please clear any desks or filing cabinets that are allocated to you and all personal belongings as soon as possible after the Election is called and in any event no later than midnight, five working days after the House is formally dissolved. This applies even if you are seeking employment with another Member after the General Election. Any paper records stored in your office and remaining after five working days, or when the office has been vacated, will be destroyed. Any personal belongings remaining after this point may also be destroyed.
- 2.16** Please return all locker keys and keys of rooms, desks and filing cabinets to the Hallkeeper's Lodge or to the reception desk in the parliamentary outbuildings. Photo-identity passes and car parking permits should be returned to one of the two Pass Offices, at Black Rod's Garden or Canon Row, or to your Service Delivery Manager.
- 2.17** After this time, if you wish post to be re-directed please inform the Postmaster on 020 7219 4639. This service will be provided free of charge for three months. Otherwise it will be redirected to the Member who is returned at the General Election for the same constituency.

DATA PROTECTION AND HANDLING CASEWORK AND RECORDS

- 2.18** Members may continue with constituency casework during a dissolution period but correspondence must not give the impression they are a Member of Parliament.
- 2.19** If you use caseworker software that is reliant on the Parliamentary Network, you will not have access to this from the day before Polling Day. Please speak to your casework provider if you are not sure and to discuss transferring any data that you require. Externally-hosted (e.g. cloud) casework software will not be affected.
- 2.20** When your Member ceases to be an MP, the proper disposal and handling of casework and records must be carefully considered. This includes electronic as well as hard copy information. The Data Protection Act 1998 will apply to each Member as the data controller of information even if they cease to be a Member so they should ensure they are aware of their obligations in relation to this legislation.
- 2.21** It is recommended that the records held by your office, including those held off-site in the Iron Mountain facility, should be reviewed. In general, old records should be destroyed rather than passed on to the new Member even if the new Member is from the same party. However, exceptions may be needed for live casework or casework which is dormant but likely to become live again in the near future. Each case must be considered, taking account of the expectations of the person concerned. If the case involves sensitive personal data it is recommended that the explicit permission of the person(s) concerned is obtained. Government Departments are advised not to forward information about existing cases to a new Member without the constituent's explicit permission.

2.22

To cancel your Data Protection notification, your Member will need to write to the Information Commissioner to request for this to be done, quoting your security number which they would have been given when they notified. Further details can be found on www.ico.org.uk.

PART 3 Information for staff of Members not returned at the General Election

3.1

The House Service understands that if your Member is not returned following the General Election this may be a difficult time and we will try to help you as much as we can. Please appreciate, however, that we also have a duty to provide facilities for those who have been elected.

3.2

If your Member is not returned, we will write to them immediately after the Election to give information on how House staff from all Departments will be able to help with leaving the House. For a full list of useful contact numbers, please see Annex A on page 32.

REDUNDANCY PROCEDURES

3.3

If your Member is not returned at the Election they will be provided with information regarding their contractual and legal responsibilities as your employer. They should consult with you and follow the dismissal procedures for your redundancy. For support during this time, the Employee Assistance Program, managed by Health Assured, can provide confidential support services about both work and personal matters. They can be contacted on 0800 030 5182.

3.4

A fair redundancy procedure involves receiving a letter from your Member and preferably also a meeting, to which you have the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union Representative or a work colleague. Your Member should explain what is likely to happen, how any payments to you will be calculated, how the office will be wound up and they should also give you an opportunity to contribute views and ask questions. The letter will provide a formal notice of the termination of the contract of your employment, your final day of service and set out your redundancy payment. Further information on redundancy payments is available in Annex C on page 42.

PENSIONS

- 3.5** You are advised to contact your stakeholder/personal pension administrator directly for details of your pension arrangements.

PARLIAMENTARY ICT AND RELATED SERVICES

- 3.6** Parliamentary Network accounts for your Member and yourself will be re-enabled for five working days after Polling Day to allow you the opportunity to download any of your own personal records from your account.
- 3.7** After this time the network accounts will be disabled. PICT will arrange for a standard reply to be sent to any email directed to your Member's account which can include contact details if they wish. This service will extend for three months.
- 3.8** During the five working days after Polling Day you should also remove from the Estate any computers that have been purchased with IPSA budgets or personal funds. You should treat any personal information held on this equipment about constituents or others, in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. This includes ensuring that personal data is properly deleted from electronic equipment if you no longer have a legitimate reason to hold it.
- 3.9** At the end of the period of five working days after Polling Day, PICT will collect the machines on the Parliamentary Estate and make arrangements to collect any centrally provided machines from your Member's home or constituency office. All remaining data on the equipment will be securely wiped. ICT equipment in your Member's home or constituency office can continue to be used for winding up until 8 July.

3.10

PICT will arrange for the maintenance contracts for any machines that have been purchased with IPSA budgets or personal funds to be assigned to your Member. The software (for example, Microsoft Office suite) that was included with the laptop or PC remains the property of Parliament and, in accordance with the conditions of supply and the terms of the licensing agreement, will need to be removed. Instructions to do this will be supplied by PICT.

3.11

PICT will arrange for any centrally provided broadband services in your constituency office and/or Member's home to cease on 8 July unless otherwise requested. However, your Member will be responsible for the BT line and any ISDN services. Telephones will remain available until you vacate your office but must not be diverted to external numbers.

Mobile devices

3.12

If you have a centrally provided mobile device, the SIM (and number) will cease to operate 28 days after the Election, unless you inform PICT that you wish to transfer it to a personal account. Five working days after the Election, any connection to the Parliamentary Network will cease. Any data already on the device will remain (old email or photos) but will not be updated. If you do not wish to keep your device, PICT will dispose of it for you in a secure and an environmentally responsible way.

3.13

Connections from parliamentary supplied iPads will be managed in the same way as mobile devices. They will be collected in line with arrangements for other loan equipment.

TELEPHONE SERVICES

- 3.14** Voicemail accounts will have been turned off during dissolution but telephones will work as long as your pass remains active.
- 3.15** No messages will be taken for former Members after dissolution, but, if requested, the Operator Bureau Supervisor will inform callers of their contact details. This service will be provided for three months. The Operator Bureau Supervisor can be contacted on 020 7219 6161.

ACCOMMODATION IN WESTMINSTER AND OTHER FACILITIES

- 3.16** Your security pass will allow you access to the Parliamentary Estate on the morning after Polling Day. Your pass will be deactivated at midnight, five working days after Polling Day. Requests for access after this period and requests for vehicle access should be made to the Serjeant at Arms on 020 7219 3030 or by email saaenquiries@parliament.uk.
- 3.17** The Department of Facilities staff in your area stand ready to help if you have any issues or problems.
- 3.18** Help with packing Member's personal belongings, office and computer equipment, and transporting these items to their car can be arranged through the local Office Keeper or the Department of Facilities Accommodation Office (020 7219 1319). This should be completed by no later than five working days after Polling Day.
- 3.19** The Despatch Box will be open from 10.30am till 4.30pm on the Saturday and Sunday immediately following the Election to provide refreshments for those clearing their offices.
- 3.20** Please clear papers and belongings as soon as possible and in any case no later than five working days after Polling Day.

This will include:

- Clearing all personal papers, belongings and books from your room, desk, filing cabinets and lockers, including any office equipment which has been installed. Paper records stored in your office and remaining after five working days, or when you have vacated the office, will be destroyed. Personal belongings left in your office after this period may also be destroyed.
- Returning your locker keys and keys of rooms, desks and filing cabinets to the Hallkeeper's Lodge or to an outbuilding reception desk.
- Returning your photo-identity passes and any car parking permits to either of the two Pass Offices at Black Rod's Garden or Derby Gate or to your Service Delivery Manager.
- Removing your car from the precincts (if applicable).
- Returning all loaned books and audio-visual material to the Library Loans Service in the Oriel Room of the Members' Library or the book drop off point in the Members' Centre in Portcullis House.
- Issuing instructions about the disposal of any material you hold off-site in the off-site facility.

3.21

Post can be redirected to a specified address free of charge for three months. To use this service contact the Postmaster on 020 7219 4637.

DATA PROTECTION AND HANDLING CASEWORK AND RECORDS

3.22

When a Member ceases to be a Member of Parliament, the proper disposal and handling of casework and records must be carefully considered. This includes electronic as well as hard copy information. The Data Protection Act 1998 will apply to each Member as the data controller of this information even when they cease to be a Member so they should ensure they are aware of their obligations in relation to this legislation.

3.23

It is recommended that the records held by your office, including those held off-site in the Iron Mountain facility, should be reviewed. In general, old records should be destroyed rather than passed on to the new Member even if the new Member is from the same party. However, exceptions may be needed for live casework or casework which is dormant but likely to become live again in the near future. Each case must be considered, taking account of the expectations of the person concerned. If the case involves sensitive personal data it is recommended that the explicit permission of the person(s) concerned is obtained. Government Departments are advised not to forward information about existing cases to a new Member without the constituent's explicit permission.

3.24

Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that records containing personal data are securely destroyed.

3.25

Special provision for Members of Parliament was made under the Data Protection Act to allow them to act on behalf of their constituents and share and request sensitive personal data (as defined by the Act) without first needing to have evidence that their constituent had provided their explicit consent as required by the Data Protection Act. The Data Protection (Processing of Sensitive Personal Data) (Elected Representatives) Order 2002 was introduced to address concerns by elected representatives to ensure that the requirements of the Data Protection Act did not unduly hamper them in their casework duties. The

provisions of this Order will continue to apply to Members until the fourth day after a new Member is elected, provided that the individuals who requested that your Member take action are content for them to continue to do so. No special provision was made for Members in respect of the processing of non-sensitive personal data because explicit consent is not required under the Act when this information is processed, rather it can be implied from the circumstances. For more information on the Order go to the Information Commissioner's Office website at www.ico.org.uk.

3.26

To cancel their Data Protection notification, your Member will need to write to the Information Commissioner to request for this to be done, quoting the security number which they would have been given when they notified. Further details can be found on www.ico.org.uk.

Annex A: Useful contacts

USEFUL CONTACTS

House of Commons main switchboard x3000

Chamber & Committee Services

Table Office x3302/3303 tableoffice@parliament.uk	Broadcasting Unit x5511 pru@parliament.uk
Public Bill Office x6758 pbohoc@parliament.uk	Security Control x5311
Committee Office x3267	Serjeant at Arms x3030 saaenquiries@parliament.uk
Hansard enquiries x4786 hansard@parliament.uk	Pass Office x5920 passoffice@parliament.uk
Vote Office x3631 vote_office@parliament.uk	Members' Staff Verification Office x3468/4072 mso@parliament.uk

Facilities

Accommodation and Logistics Services (Members' offices) x3080 accommodationservices@parliament.uk
Events Team x3090 hoceventsteam@parliament.uk
Parliamentary Estates Help Desk (maintenance and cleaning) x4747 ped@parliament.uk
General catering enquiries x3686 csfeedback@parliament.uk

Finance

Accounts Receivable x6308

Members' Pensions x2106

pensionsmp@parliament.uk

Human Resources & Change

Information Rights Information Security team (IRIS) x8805/4296

iris@parliament.uk

Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service x4782/1484

shwsadmin@parliament.uk

Travel Office x4232

parliamentarytraveloffice@parliament.uk

Personnel Advice Service x2080

pas@parliament.uk

Information Services

Tours Office x3003

tours@parliament.uk

Big Ben Booking Office x6554

bigbentours@parliament.uk

Library – Enquiry and Research Services x3666

hclibrary@parliament.uk

Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology x8377

post@parliament.uk

House of Commons Information Office x4272

hcinfo@parliament.uk

Education Service x4496

education@parliament.uk

Parliamentary Outreach x1650

parliamentaryoutreach@parliament.uk

Web and Intranet Service x2010
internet: webmaster@parliament.uk
intranet: intranet@parliament.uk

PICT

ICT Service Desk x2001
pictservicedesk@parliament.uk
Customer Relations x3800
pictcustomerrelations@parliament.uk

Speaker's Office

General enquiries x5300
speakersoffice@parliament.uk

Office of the Chief Executive

General enquiries x1707
officeofthechiefexecutive@parliament.uk

Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA)

General enquiries 020 7811 6400
info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk

Information Commissioner's Office

www.ico.org.uk

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

General enquiries 0800 030 5182

Annex B: IPSA dissolution guidance for MPs' staff

Can I campaign during the dissolution period?

Yes, but it is important that it is not during paid work time.

You can:

- campaign outside your normal working hours (e.g. in the evenings and at weekends);
- take annual leave;
- take unpaid leave;
- use any time off in lieu you've accrued (for example, if you have done overtime for which you have not been paid)

This is because MPs are not allowed to use any taxpayer-funded business costs and expenses, including staff time, travel, and office equipment for any electoral purposes. To do so would be an illegal campaign donation under electoral law.

What casework can I do for my MP during the dissolution period?

You may continue to work on casework and other activities which are not connected with the election, but you may not campaign for your MP, the party or any other candidate on paid IPSA time or using IPSA-funded equipment and accommodation. It is for your MP to judge what work you may do, but you must be careful not to do anything that could be construed as electoral campaigning.

What happens to my salary during dissolution?

You will be paid your salary as normal (unless you take unpaid leave) on the last working day of the month. If you are taking unpaid leave, your MP will need to tell us in advance, so that your salary can be adjusted.

Can I claim travel during dissolution?

Yes, staff will be able to claim as normal during dissolution but only if the travel is for parliamentary purposes. IPSA will not fund any campaign costs.

If you are working at an office you are not usually based in when dissolution begins, you can claim an additional journey to get back to your usual place of work. This journey will not count as one of the 96 journeys per year which MPs can claim for their staff between the constituency and Westminster.

I help my MP manage his or her expenses; what do I need to know about the rules during the dissolution period?

MPs have received their own guidance about what they can and cannot do during dissolution. This can be found on our website. The overriding principle, as ever, is that MPs cannot claim for any funds to do with campaigning. All claims must be for expenditure required to carry out an MP's parliamentary functions and not for any electoral activity.

This means that if MPs use their IPSA-funded offices for any activities connected with the election, they may only claim from us that proportion of the rent, utilities and other costs which relate to their parliamentary activity. It is up to the MP to claim the correct amount from IPSA, either by changing the amount claimed by reimbursement, or by sending a cheque to IPSA to repay an amount that is not claimable. For example, if IPSA pays your MP's constituency office rent direct to the landlord and the MP uses the office for 25% of one month for campaigning purposes, your MP would need to repay to IPSA a quarter of that month's rent.

If I work in Westminster, what happens to me during dissolution?

Members of staff who work in Westminster will no longer be able to work there during dissolution (please see the House of Commons Dissolution guidance for details). If there is no urgent work for you to do, you may consider taking annual leave, as long as you have annual leave days available. If you are required to carry out parliamentary work, you can either:

- work from home; or
- work from the constituency office.

If you choose to work from home, you can claim the cost of your travel from London to the constituency and hotel costs to stay within the constituency if necessary. These costs should not be claimed if you will be campaigning in the election.

Who is my manager during the dissolution period?

There will be no change to your relationship with your MP during dissolution. Your MP will continue to be your employer.

What happens if my MP stands down at the Election, or loses his or her seat?

If your MP stands down or loses his or her seat, you will be made redundant. Your MP is your employer and he or she will need to follow the legal process for making someone redundant. This is a three stage process, requiring Members to: consult with you about the prospect of redundancy, issue you with a letter detailing your last day of service and any payments you will receive, and outlining your right to appeal against the redundancy.

For further details on the redundancy process, please see the earlier section in this guidance. Your Member will also be advised by the Personnel Advice Service (PAS) who provide HR

advice to MPs in their role as employers (pas@parliament.uk or 020 7219 2080). This helps ensure that Members are aware of their responsibilities as part of the redundancy process, and that you are provided with all the correct information about your entitlements. In some cases, Members also choose to bring a member of staff, such as an Office Manager, to meetings with PAS.

If I am made redundant, what will happen?

MPs first need to decide how many staff they need to help them wind up their parliamentary office and for how long. Your MP may ask you to work for up to two months after polling day, but it is likely that not every member of staff will be needed for the entire period. Your notice period is calculated based on your contract or your statutory entitlement (whichever is the higher). Statutory entitlement is a maximum of 12 weeks. You may be asked to work during your notice period but if this is not possible you will be paid for your notice period; this is called 'pay in lieu of notice' or PILON. If you work during your notice period, you are entitled to reasonable paid time off work to look for work or attend training.

If you have completed two years' service working for the same MP without a break, you will generally (some exclusions may apply) receive a redundancy payment, calculated on the number of completed years of continuous service, age and weekly salary. This is calculated using the statutory redundancy payment rules, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-redundancy-pay>. Members' staff on IPSA contracts of employment receive twice the statutory rate. PAS provide Members with redundancy calculations, which IPSA calculate. You will also be paid for any outstanding annual leave, calculated pro rata until your last day of service. A summary of the redundancy payment arrangements is in Annex C.

Members need to send IPSA a copy of the dismissal notice letter which they send you and an Employee Leaver Form (which can be found on the IPSA website). IPSA will then will pay your final salary and any additional payments which may be due (your redundancy pay, any pay in lieu of notice and pay for untaken annual leave on the last working day of the month). IPSA will send your P45 to you approximately a week after this final payment: please make sure we have an address to which to send it.

What happens to my pension if my MP stands down at the Election, or loses his or her seat?

If you leave your employment with your MP, IPSA will stop paying your pension contributions along with any life insurance benefits provided on behalf of your employer. If you intend to take your pension benefits you will need to contact your insurance provider to inform them. For the Portcullis Pension Plan, which the majority of staff belong to, you will need to contact one or both of the insurance companies:

- Aviva can be contacted on 0845 900 0817
- Friends Life (formerly AXA) can be contacted on 0845 300 3172

If my MP stands down or loses his or her seat, what do we do with the office equipment?

The MPs' Scheme of Business Costs and Expenses explains that MPs who leave Parliament should make arrangements to dispose of office equipment and furniture purchased with IPSA funds. They may choose to transfer these items to their successor or another MP, or donate equipment to a charity of their choice. If the MP makes a profit from disposing of equipment, they should refund this to IPSA. MPs should dispose of any equipment safely and securely, in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

What happens if I start working for a different MP after the Election?

If you work for a different MP after the Election (either in the same constituency or a different one) this counts as starting a new employment. This means you can receive a redundancy payment, if you are entitled to one, from your service with your 'old' MP (see question 9 above). However, you will not receive continuity of service benefits, i.e. the years you worked for the previous MP will not be included in a future redundancy calculation.

As set out the House of Commons guidance, strict data protection rules apply if you begin working for a new MP. You must not transfer any constituency case files that you hold from the previous MP to use with the new MP, unless the constituent has consented to your doing so.

Can I move from a non-IPSA contract to an IPSA contract before the election?

The deadline has now passed to move from a House of Commons contract of employment to an IPSA contract.

How will IPSA support me?

We will contact you again nearer the time and further information will also be on our website.

Our Information Line opening hours were extended in June; we are open from 10am to 5pm Monday to Friday to answer all your queries.

Please contact us on 020 7811 6400 or at info@parliamentarystandards.org.uk.

What other information and support is available?

Information about your pension is available direct from your **pension provider** (Aviva: 0845 900 0817, Friends Life: 0845 300 3172).

You may also like to contact the **National Careers Service** (www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk or 0800 100 900) or speak to your Trade Union representative if you are a member of **MAPSA or Unite**.

The **Employee Assistance Programme** (EAP) run by Health Assured are also available 24/7 to provide Members' staff and their immediate family members with free confidential support services about both work and personal matters. They can be contacted on 0800 030 5182, or through their online portal at www.healthassuredeap.co.uk (username: House, password: Commons).

REUNDANCY PAYMENTS

If you have completed two years' service with the same MP without a break, you will generally (some exclusions may apply) receive a redundancy payment, calculated on the number of completed years of continuous service, age and weekly salary. The amount depends on whether you are on an IPSA contract or not.

If you are not on an IPSA contract, your redundancy payment will be as stated in your non-IPSA contract. If redundancy is not specified in your contract, you will receive your statutory redundancy entitlement (see below).

If you are on an IPSA contract, you will be paid double your statutory entitlement.

Statutory entitlement

The statutory entitlement is:

- ½ week's pay (up to the weekly cap) for each full year of service if you are under 22 years of age;
- 1 week's pay (up to the weekly cap) for each full year of service if your age is 22 or above, but below 41; or
- 1½ weeks' pay (up to the weekly cap) for each full year of service where your age is 41 or above.

You can find the current weekly cap and calculate redundancy at <https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-redundancy-pay>

Annex D: Checklist of actions

FOR ALL MEMBERS' OFFICES

Before dissolution

- Consider how you will handle your ICT requirements during dissolution, including whether you want emails to be forwarded to a private email account.
- Consider the working arrangements of all staff in the office during the dissolution and discuss these with your Member. If the Election is in May 2015, please bear in mind that the cut-off date for notifying IPSA about unpaid leave taken in April will be 15 April 2015.

At dissolution

- Add a disclaimer (such as “This website was established while I was a Member of Parliament. As Parliament has been dissolved there are no Members of Parliament until after the Election on 7th May 2015”) to any website, webpages or social media accounts.
- Freeze any web or email domain which refers to your Member as a Member of Parliament e.g. www.johnpeekmp.org.uk.
- Remove any cars from the underground car park.
- Collect any purchased (not loaned) computers that you wish to remove, correspondence and papers from your lockers, filing cabinets and your office on the Parliamentary Estate.
- Clear your desk top so that the room can be cleaned effectively.

- Make arrangements with the Postmaster on 020 7219 4639 for your mail either to be held for collection in the Members' post office or forwarded to a nominated external address for the duration of the dissolution period.
- Return all books and audio-visual material on loan from the Library to the Library Loans Service in the Oriel Room of the Members' Library or the book drop off point in Portcullis House.
- Record an appropriate voicemail announcement in your Westminster and constituency offices.
- Contact the Telephone Operator Bureau Supervisor on 020 7219 6161 to pass on your Member's contact details.

During dissolution

- If you continue to deal with constituency casework during the dissolution period, ensure all correspondence is signed in such a way as to indicate that your Member is not a Member of Parliament.

FOR OFFICES WHERE MEMBERS ARE NOT STANDING AT THE GENERAL ELECTION

As soon as you know your Member is leaving

- Consult with your Member about their plans, the prospect of redundancy and discuss with them your last day of service and any payments you will receive.
- Agree with your Member time off work to look for other jobs or attend training.
- Start to dispose of unwanted records and other material from your office, taking appropriate measures to ensure that sensitive or personal records are destroyed securely. This includes reviewing any material you hold off-site in the Iron Mountain facility.

When you know the date of the General Election

- Members must advise the Department of HR and Change (020 7219 5732) of any new address or contact details. They will be circulated to IPSA and all relevant areas of the House Service.
- Contact the Department of Facilities on 020 7219 1319 to arrange clearing your Westminster office and to issue instructions about the secure disposal of any material you hold off-site in the Iron Mountain facility.
- Contact PICT on 020 7219 2001 to arrange return of House provided ICT equipment and cessation of broadband services.
- Contact the Postmaster on 020 7219 4639 to arrange forwarding post.

- Contact your stakeholder/personal pension administrator for details of your pension options.
- Contact the Telephone Operator Bureau Supervisor on 020 7219 6161 to pass on contact details.
- Be aware that your parliamentary pass will be deactivated at midnight, five working days after dissolution. Ensure all parliamentary passes (Member, staff and spouse/partner) are returned to one of the two Pass Offices at Black Rod's Garden or Derby Gate, or to your Office Keeper.

After the General Election

- Complete any casework and arrange for the secure disposal of paper records, plus any records stored on ICT equipment which is not loaned from the Houses of Parliament.
- Be aware that any records left in your Westminster office after five working days or when you have vacated the office, be it on paper or electronic files, will be destroyed without further notice.

FOR OFFICES WHERE MEMBERS ARE NOT RETURNED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION

- Contact your stakeholder/personal pension administrator for details of your pension options.
- Contact the Department of Facilities on 020 7219 1319 to arrange clearing your Westminster office and to issue instructions about the secure disposal of any material you hold off-site in the Iron Mountain facility.
- Contact PICT on 020 7219 2001 to arrange return of ICT equipment and forwarding information for emails.
- Contact the Postmaster on 020 7219 4639 to arrange mail-forwarding.
- Contact the Operator Bureau supervisor on 020 7219 6161 to pass on your Member's contact details.
- Complete any casework and arrange for the secure disposal of paper records, plus any records stored on ICT equipment which is not loaned from the Houses of Parliament.
- Be aware that any records left in your office after five working days, or when you have vacated the office, be it on paper or electronic files, will be destroyed without further notice.
- Ensure all parliamentary passes (Member, staff and spouse/partner) are returned to one of the two Pass Offices at Black Rod's Garden or Derby Gate, or to your Office Keeper.



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