

Kate Green MP
Chair, Committee on Standards
House of Commons

2 May 2019

Dear Kate

Disciplinary sanctions for MPs

We have discussed extending the range of sanctions¹ available to me as Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards. I have set out on the table attached a draft list of what I consider to be useful and meaningful sanctions for Members who are found to be in breach of the Code of Conduct for MPs. These include breaches of the Behaviour Code, which would be considered under the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme. These sanctions are arranged in, approximately, ascending order of seriousness.

As you know, under the rectification procedure set out in Standing Order no 150 I am already able to rectify less serious breaches of the Rules of Conduct without recourse to the Committee. In these cases I require MPs to apologise and if appropriate to repay the costs of any parliamentary resources they have misused. The Commissioner has been able to rectify cases involving misuse of facilities in this way since 2005.

It is now proposed to extend the Commissioner's powers to enable me to impose sanctions in cases (also at the less serious end of the scale) brought under the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS), without recourse to the Committee or the House. But these must still have the effect of providing sanction to the Member and a sense of fairness to the complainant. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with, and to take advice from, the Committee on Standards.

I welcome the Committee's recent report on the appeals process in ICGS cases, and hope we can consider together how to promote this.

¹ For ease of reference I have used the term "sanctions". The ICGS delivery report uses "remedies", "penalties" and "sanctions" interchangeably.

I look forward to hearing your views.

Best wishes

Kathryn Stone OBE
Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards

Possible sanctions for MPs who have been found in breach of the Code of Conduct for MPs

Possible sanction or remedy ¹	Notes	Decision making body
Words of advice or warnings given by Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards or others	Warnings to remain active for twelve months	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
Requirement to attend training Training courses include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality and Diversity • Dignity in the workplace • Good employer • Anger Management Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to be able to require MP to attend other bespoke training or coaching as decided	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to receive report from provider of training on attendance and engagement of MP, and to follow up one year after training completed.	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
Letter of apology to complainant (ICGS only) or to Committee	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to approve text in ICGS cases	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
Apology on point of order or by personal statement (formal apology in the Chamber) which (in ICGS cases) might be in conjunction with letter of apology to complainant	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to approve text of letter Committee on Standards to require personal statement apology	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards/ Committee on Standards
Withdrawal of services / access from MP (not from office or constituents), for example exclusion from catering facilities or library Services. (Could be used in ICGS cases)	In conjunction with security team / catering staff / library staff Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to decide on length of exclusion	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards
MP not to be permitted to serve on Select Committee	Committee on Standards to decide on length of exclusion	Committee on Standards
MP not to be permitted to travel abroad on parliamentary business	Committee on Standards to decide on length of exclusion	Committee on Standards
MP to repay part or all of cost of investigation	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to decide/advise on the sum to be repaid	Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards /

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Possible sanctions for MPs who have been found in breach of the Code of Conduct for MPs

		Committee on Standards
MP to be suspended from service of the House, without pay		House of Commons, on recommendation from Committee on Standards
MP to be expelled		House of Commons, on recommendation from Committee on Standards

Sanctions available to the Commissioner would also be available to the Committee on Standards.