

Dissolution Guidance

Members standing

Guidance for Members and Members' staff

NOTE

This is a redacted version of the dissolution guidance for Members and Members' staff.

Information pertaining to security and contact details have been removed.

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Introduction



House Administration Guidance

This guidance is for Members who are standing at the next General Election and their staff working in Westminster and in the constituency. A separate version is available for Members and their offices where the Member has taken the decision to stand down at the next General Election.


The guidance is intended to be read by both current Members and any staff working for them, given the potential impacts on employment arrangements and the important role staff play in supporting Members' parliamentary and constituency duties.

There is additional supplementary guidance tailored specifically for Members' staff, which is intended to be read in conjunction with this core Dissolution Guidance.

The aim of this guidance from the House Administration is to outline the support available to Members and Members' staff before, during and after the next election, including what to expect during the dissolution period and the impacts of the boundary changes. It sets out actions all Members and Members' staff will need to consider, and an overview of changes to access, services and facilities during the period when Parliament is dissolved.

This guidance also includes a short section outlining how the House Administration, in collaboration with the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA), will support any Members who are not returned at the General Election and their staff through the winding-up process to ensure their departure from Parliament is as smooth as possible.

It is important that Members and their staff ensure they fully understand this guidance and the rules in place during dissolution.

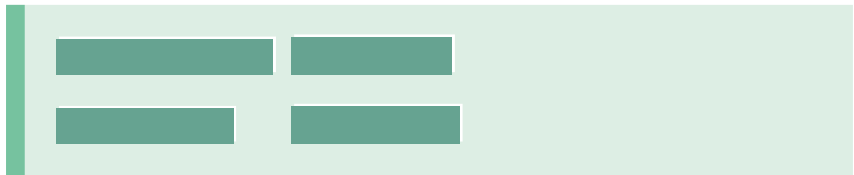


This guidance will be reviewed and updated as required. All information correct as of **March 2024**.

Wellbeing support

We recognise that this may be an uncertain and demanding time for Members and those working for a Member. In addition to professional HR Advice, Members and their staff will continue to have access to a range of health and wellbeing services throughout this period.

The Individual Assistance Programme (IAP) for Members and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for Members' staff remain available 24/7 for a period of 12 months from the date of dissolution. Our Assistance programmes are also available for an extended 12 month period from dissolution to family members who live at the same address (limited to partner or spouse, and young adults aged 16-24 in full-time education).



IPSA guidance

Dissolution guidance from the House Administration should be read alongside guidance from IPSA, which can be found at: ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/the-dissolution-period

Where relevant, guidance from IPSA is also referenced here, however please note this may be subject to further change by IPSA and therefore you should refer to the online guidance at the link above for the most up-to-date information.



A message from the Electoral Commission

The Electoral Commission provides advice and guidance for election candidates, and also monitors candidates' compliance with the financial rules.

Following the announcement of a General Election, the Electoral Commission will make available comprehensive guidance for candidates and agents, covering the entire process of standing for election, including the rules about candidates' election expenses and donations, which will all be available to download on the Commission's website: www.electoralcommission.org.uk.

Timetable

This table gives an overview of key dates and times:

<p style="text-align: center;">D-1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D - 1 working day</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">D</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Day of Dissolution</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">D+5</p> <p style="text-align: center;">D + 5 working days</p>
<p>Last 'normal' working day.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">00:01</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Dissolution period begins.</p> <p>There are no longer any Members of Parliament (MPs) and this title should not be used.</p> <p>Former Members, their staff or political advisors are strictly not permitted to work on the parliamentary estate from the point of dissolution.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">23:59</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passes deactivated Staff and spouse/partner of Members standing.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">5 working days after dissolution at 23:59</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passes will be deactivated for:</p> <p>Members standing.</p> <p>All staff and spouse/partner of Members not standing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Then, at 23:59 on the Friday of the following week after dissolution is called</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passes will be deactivated for:</p> <p>Members not standing.</p> <p>Members' Westminster offices will also be locked and will no longer be available to Members or their staff.</p>

P Polling Day	P+1 P + 1 working day	P+5 P + 5 working days
Polling Day	Passes reactivated inc. Members not returned and their staff. Departing Members Area available for non-returned Members.	23:59 Passes deactivated Members not returned and their staff.

The dissolution period

Key principles

From **00:01** on the day of dissolution there are no Members of Parliament (MPs) and this title should no longer be used.

Resources funded by the House Administration or IPSA **may only** be used for the purpose of carrying out parliamentary functions, such as urgent casework.

House and IPSA funded resources **must not** be used for party political or campaigning activities.

During the dissolution period most House Administration services are no longer available or very limited – please see the table at **page 34** for details.

Access to the parliamentary estate and Westminster offices

1. Members' passes will allow access until 23:59, five working days after dissolution to clear offices and collect items only. Members' staff and spouse/partner passes will be deactivated from 23:59 on the day of dissolution.
2. Individuals wishing to access the estate after their pass has been deactivated must first contact the Access Team [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
3. From the point of dissolution, Members, Members' staff and political advisors are strictly **not** permitted to work on the parliamentary estate. Five days after dissolution, Members' Westminster offices will be locked and will no longer be available to Members or their staff.

Clearing your Westminster office

4. Members and their staff will need to clear their Westminster office, as well as any separate staff offices, remove any essential items and collect or lock away any personal belongings.
5. All other parliamentary furniture, artworks and other fixtures and fittings (including desk accessories such as organisers) should remain in their original location for an assessment audit by the Heritage Collections team.
6. Leave any excess stationery in your office for collection.

7. Contact Service Delivery for advice on moving items from your Westminster office. [REDACTED]
8. If you are planning to drive onto the estate using your own car to collect any belongings, consult the Access Team and Parliamentary Security Department in advance. [REDACTED]
9. If you are using a self-hire vehicle or external removal firm, please be aware all vehicles will need to book in advance to go via the offsite security process before accessing the estate.

Mail forwarding

10. Contact the Royal Mail customer service manager to ask for your mail to either be held for collection at the Members' Lobby counter or forwarded to a nominated external address for the duration of the dissolution period. [REDACTED]

Digital

Network access

11. Members will continue to be able to access their parliamentary network account, including remote access, email access, and access to stored files and data during dissolution and the winding up period.
12. Parliamentary network access is **only** to be used for urgent casework and strictly not for election campaigning or political activities.

Equipment

13. You may pay a flat hire fee of £189 to use some parliamentary allowance-provided IT equipment (with a purple, or for some iPads black, asset tag) and/or broadband services for campaigning purposes. This must be declared as an election expense. Parliamentary email accounts may not be used for regulated political activities under any circumstances.
14. The House Administration cannot help with the packing or transporting of IT equipment should Members choose to remove this from the parliamentary estate ahead of the election and there will be no Digital Service desk support for set-up or troubleshooting. If equipment is damaged, Members will be charged replacement costs.

Hardware audit

15. The Parliamentary Digital Service (PDS) has implemented a new digital platform to consolidate data on hardware purchased by Members via the PDS portal using both their parliamentary allowance and IPSA budgets.
16. Since November 2023, Members have been contacted and asked to review the list of equipment recorded by PDS as being in their offices. This audit helps us maintain an up-to-date record of your IT equipment, which in turn helps us to provide a better service to you and your staff when you require assistance from us. Members can also check their IT asset list at any time through the Digital Service Online portal by clicking on their initials in the top right-hand corner and selecting 'My Owned Assets.'

Use of IPSA funded resources

17. Resources already funded by IPSA **may only** be used for the purpose of carrying out parliamentary functions, such as urgent casework. IPSA funded resources **must not** be used for party political or campaigning activities.

Claims

18. New claims should only be made where there is an exceptional need to support urgent casework and only for the amount which relates to parliamentary activities. This is at Members' individual discretion but as normal all claims will be subject to review.
19. Costs related to campaigning, party political or other electoral activity cannot be claimed for, except where an IT equipment hire fee is paid.
20. If you use your constituency office for campaigning activities, you may only claim from IPSA the proportion of rent and utilities which relate to parliamentary work.
21. You may pay a separate flat hire fee to use IPSA funded IT equipment (yellow asset tag) for campaigning activities. The fee amount will be communicated at the beginning of the dissolution period.

The fee amount, which will be communicated at the beginning of the dissolution period, covers the use of any IPSA-funded equipment during the dissolution period (for example, you do not need to pay the fee for each piece of equipment being used).

This sum will count towards your candidate spending limits and must be repaid to IPSA as soon as possible and no later than the 30 days after Polling Day.

22. Please refer to ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/the-dissolution-period for full dissolution guidance from IPSA.

Other claims

23. Staff who normally work in Westminster and need to work in the constituency during dissolution may claim for travel between Westminster and the constituency office. They may also claim for journeys between their home and the constituency office. If they need to stay overnight in the constituency they may claim for hotels and other subsistence and for journeys to the MP's constituency office.
24. Travel, rental accommodation, hotel accommodation or associated costs can be claimed in accordance with the normal rules of the scheme during dissolution in relation to the carrying out of parliamentary functions. No costs can be claimed in relation to campaigning or party-political purposes.

Guidance from IPSA is summarised in this section, however may be subject to further change. Please refer to ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/the-dissolution-period for the most up-to-date guidance.

Members' staff party-political campaigning

25. Members' staff undertaking any party-political campaigning activities cannot do so during working hours, and instead must:
- Take paid leave;
 - Take unpaid leave;
 - Use accrued Time Off In Lieu; or
 - Campaign outside their normal working hours.
26. You must inform IPSA no later than the 15th of the month if any staff are planning to take unpaid leave to campaign so pay can be adjusted.

Use of the title ‘Member of Parliament’ or ‘MP’

27. You may not use the Member of Parliament title or be referred to as an MP. Members and their offices should take all reasonable steps to either remove any references to an individual being an MP across all communications and channels, or to add a clear disclaimer for the dissolution period.
28. A default out of office message will automatically be added to Members’ parliamentary email accounts from 17:00 on the day of dissolution. Members and Members’ staff should also edit any email signatures and update any pre-recorded voicemail messages. You may wish to add alternative contact details for the dissolution period but must not edit the default text, which will be similar to the below:

“Parliament has now been dissolved until the General Election. Therefore there are currently no Members of Parliament. Incoming emails to this account may be received and read, however this email address is only being used to respond to urgent constituency casework.”

29. Any IPSA-funded websites (whether wholly or partially funded) must not be used for campaigning purposes. Any website with a URL referring to you as an MP (for example johnpeekmp.co.uk) should be frozen. This means the website may remain online, but no new content should be added except the disclaimer, contact details and/or a link to an alternative website.

30. Websites and social media accounts must carry a disclaimer to clarify that you are no longer a Member of Parliament. Social media accounts which include the handle 'Member of Parliament' or 'MP' may remain as they are, as long as a disclaimer is added.

Example disclaimer

Parliament has been dissolved until after the General Election and I am no longer an MP.

31. You should not be identified as an MP at any pre-arranged event; attendance should be in a private capacity or as an election candidate.
32. You must not use House of Commons stationery, emblems (including the crowned Portcullis) or other branding, or your Westminster address, in correspondence or across any other assets or platforms.

Handling casework

Casework

33. You may continue to deal with urgent, time-sensitive constituency casework but must ensure any correspondence makes clear you are not a current Member of Parliament, or working for one.
34. It is for Members to make a judgement on whether casework should be considered urgent. Urgent casework may include emergency social welfare or safeguarding cases, or ongoing cases with upcoming appeal deadlines.

Data Protection

35. Even after dissolution you will continue to hold personal data and therefore to be responsible for keeping it secure and for any decisions concerning this data. You should therefore continue to act as a controller, and abide by data protection legislation (UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018).
36. This continues to be the case if you are not returned.
37. The lawful basis for processing personal data may be considered more restricted during the dissolution period, with the exception of urgent constituency casework (such as cases with upcoming appeal deadlines, or emergency social welfare cases).
38. In the event you are not returned, the Data Protection Act ¹ enables you, acting as the controller, to process personal data and special category personal data (as defined in UK GDPR) where necessary as an “elected representative” until the end of the fourth day after the General Election. This authority depends on the processing being necessary and the individuals concerned being content for you to continue acting on their behalf. If in doubt, their agreement should be sought.
39. The proper disposal and handling of casework and records you hold in your capacity as a Member must be carefully considered when you cease to be a Member of Parliament following dissolution. This includes electronic as well as hard copy information.

¹. Data Protection Act 2018: Paragraph 23 of Schedule 1, sub-paragraph (4). This may be subject to change following the transition of the Data Protection and Digital Information (No.2) Bill through Parliament.

40. It is strongly recommended you continue to use parliamentary systems for any urgent casework. You are advised not to transfer personal data, or information that should be held securely for other reasons, from parliamentary systems onto other systems unless you are confident you are transferring it securely in line with your legal responsibilities as the controller, and that the systems you intend to use are suitably secure.
41. You are strongly discouraged from using free online email and document storage solutions for the processing of any personal data.
42. It is recommended you do not apply an auto-forward to your emails to help ensure the security of personal data.

Staff employment & wellbeing

Staff employment

43. No changes to Members' staff terms and conditions – including contractual terms such as pay and hours – may be made from the date an election is called until the end of the winding-up period.
44. Staff who have completed two years' continuous service with the same Member by the time they cease to be employed will receive a redundancy payment, based on the number of completed years of continuous service.
45. **Staff on non-IPSA contracts can move to an IPSA contract; however, they will not be eligible for a redundancy payment at double the statutory calculation unless the new IPSA contract is in place for at least six months before a General Election takes place. Notice periods, annual leave and pay will all need to be in line with IPSA contractual arrangements.**

46. See **page 44** for staff employment considerations in relation to seats affected by the boundary changes.

Finances

47. The Finance team will be reviewing all Members' debts before dissolution and writing to Members outlining the procedure that will be applied as of the date of dissolution, including the suspension of all credit facilities.
48. Members will receive a statement and once issued, the Finance team will contact Members directly to make any necessary arrangements with the aim of clearing all amounts by the date of dissolution.



Checklist of actions

Guidance from IPSA is summarised in this section, however may be subject to further change. Please refer to [ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/the-dissolution-period](https://www.ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/the-dissolution-period) for the most up-to-date guidance.

Before a General Election is called

There are a number of best practice steps that you can take now to ensure the days following the dissolution period are as smooth as possible for you and your office at what we know will be an incredibly busy time. In the event that you are not returned after the election, these steps will also ensure any winding-up period can be concluded as smoothly as possible for you and your staff.

Actions have been grouped under the following headings:

Members' HR and working arrangements

Casework and data management

Constituency boundary changes

Members' HR and working arrangements

As an employer, Members should consider their responsibilities to staff in both their Westminster and constituency offices during the dissolution period and in the event that they are not returned as a Member following the General Election.

The Members' HR Advice Service are available to provide one-to-one briefings and general advice to Members and their HR proxies on any HR, staffing and redundancy related issues.

You may wish to consider the following:

- Ensure all staff members are clear on their duties during the dissolution period, including how urgent casework will be handled.**
- Agree where staff who normally work in your parliamentary office will work during the dissolution period, including their access to digital devices.**
- Ensure staff know how to contact you and that you have up-to-date contact details for all staff, including alternate contact details for any staff members who will no longer have access to parliamentary devices.**
- Ensure staff annual leave records are up-to-date and discuss arrangements for taking any pre-booked or other leave, or calculating leave owed.**

- ❑ Ensure, as the employer, you are aware of the redundancy process in relation to specific staff contracts, and have started consulting staff on this possibility in the event you are not returned following the election.
- ❑ Contact any staff on maternity leave, long-term-sick leave or any other extended absence to ensure they are aware of any arrangements as set out above.
- ❑ If standing for a different constituency or a constituency affected by the boundary changes, familiarise yourself with the process for re-locating your constituency office and the impact on staff, if that is appropriate. This could involve informal consultation with staff, followed by formal consultation if necessary. See **page 44**.
- ❑ Review the terms of your constituency office lease, and the terms of any contracts for rented office equipment, should these need to be renegotiated or terminated early.
- ❑ Begin to clear any unwanted items from your office and securely dispose of any records you know you will no longer need.
- ❑ Keep all personnel documents securely for the current year plus the six years following any employee leaving your employment.
- ❑ Ensure staff are aware of the continued access to a range of health and wellbeing services.

Casework and data management

- ❑ Ensure all staff are aware of how dissolution will impact the handling of personal data, and where constituent agreement may be needed to continue with urgent casework.
- ❑ Save information of ongoing importance into your constituency SharePoint site. Remember, it is important staff do the same.
- ❑ For any hard copy material make sure this is appropriately filed; consider creating a log if you haven't already done so, to record what you hold and where it's stored.
- ❑ Sort and review all information you currently hold and dispose of any material that is no longer required. Remember to include any information held on personal devices in this process.
- ❑ Particularly if there is an increased likelihood of a change of Member, consider providing options for constituents with ongoing or likely to be reopened cases regarding what they want to happen to their casefile in the event that you are not returned. For further detail, please refer to the guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office.
- ❑ Update access permissions on your SharePoint site as required. Remove any individuals who no longer require access to the site.

□ Implement your own information management processes to ensure all the material you hold is managed appropriately. As well as from helping you to comply with your obligations, this will mean your office is better prepared for dissolution. This can include:

- Creating an information management policy for your office to comply with.
- Implementing a retention schedule to identify when information needs to be destroyed in line with key legislation.
- Develop procedures around saving, storing and handling information to maintain a consistent approach.

Constituency boundary changes

- **If you have constituents / casework affected by the incoming boundary changes, consider informing those constituents of the change and, where relevant, providing options for constituents to indicate what they would like to happen to their casefile. In other words, whether they would prefer this to be handed over to their new MP or not.**

It is important to note that you should not normally pass on constituency casework records to another Member, unless the constituent has indicated they are content for this to happen. For further detail, please refer to the **'Guidance for the use of personal data by elected representatives in carrying out constituency casework'** from the Information Commissioner's Office.

- **Keep a record of these constituents' preferences and the action you have taken concerning their casefiles.**

Dissolution checklist

The below actions should be completed as soon as possible and no later than 23:59 five working days after dissolution when your pass and access to the estate will be suspended. Please note Members' staff and spouse/partner passes will be deactivated from 23:59 on the day of dissolution.

Actions have been grouped under the following headings:

Clearing your office

Returning items and settling accounts

Forwarding details

Other

Clearing your office

- Clear your Westminster office, as well as any separate staff offices, remove any essential items and collect or lock away any personal belongings.**
- Securely remove or dispose of any sensitive, confidential or personal information.**
 - Retain any HR related documents as outlined on **pages 28-29.**
- Remove your car from the underground car park.**

Returning items and settling accounts

- Return all material on loan from the Library no later than 17:00 on the day of dissolution to avoid a replacement charge.**
- Contact the Central Accounts Receivable Team to arrange payment of the hire fee to use any parliamentary allowance provided IT equipment or broadband for campaigning purposes or political activity.**
- Settle all outstanding House of Commons catering and retail accounts in full.**

Forwarding Details

Arrange for mail to be redirected by Royal Mail.



Other

Review your online presence to remove or add a disclaimer to any references to you as a Member of Parliament.

Availability
of services
during the
dissolution
period

An overview of the availability of key services and the level of support which will be provided by the House Administration during dissolution can be found below.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you and your staff use any services or resources which remain available to you for parliamentary purposes only, such as dealing with urgent constituency casework. The House Administration reserves the right to withdraw the use of House-funded resources where there is evidence that these resources have been misused.

House Administration staff will be available in the Portcullis House Hub for a period of five working days after dissolution to answer any questions relating to the interpretation of this guidance.

Key:



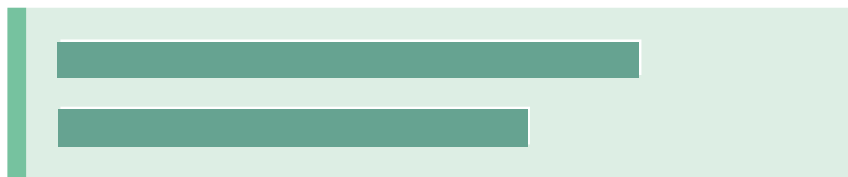
Available during dissolution



**Partially available/
changes to provision
during dissolution**



Unavailable during dissolution



Members' HR Advice Service

- + Available during dissolution to you or to your HR proxies, provided they have written authorisation (including by email) to act on your behalf.
- + The Members' Services Team is available to provide pastoral support and signposting to Members' staff.
- ✗ Regular engagement, including the weekly Members' Office Manager meeting, will pause during dissolution.
- ✗ Training for Members and Members' staff will pause during dissolution.

- + [Redacted]
- + [Redacted]
- [Redacted]



[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

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Support services, health and wellbeing

+ The Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service is available to advise on any health or wellbeing concerns

+ [Redacted]

+ The Individual Assistance Programme (IAP) for Members and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for Members' staff remain available 24/7 for a period of 12 months from the date of dissolution. Our Assistance programmes are also available for an extended 12 month period from dissolution to family members who live at the same address (limited to partner or spouse, and young adults aged 16-24 in full-time education).

The IAP/EAP is a confidential and independent support service run by Health Assured which can provide advice on any issue affecting you, whether it is work-related, health or a personal matter.

[Redacted]

Support services, health and wellbeing (continued)

+ The Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS) applies to Members and their staff during the dissolution and subsequent winding up period. The ICGS only applies to behaviour on the parliamentary estate, or elsewhere in connection with parliamentary activities. Party political campaigning is not parliamentary activity.

If you feel you have experienced, witnessed, been accused of or are supporting someone with bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, the Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS) Helpline can provide you with support and guidance on the options available to you and the processes involved. The Independent Complaints and Grievance Scheme (ICGS) Helpline is confidential, impartial and independent of Parliament.



Insurance services

- + Insurance policies arranged and funded by the House Administration will continue to provide cover during dissolution. This includes: travel and personal accident; employer and public liability; professional indemnity including defamation; and employment practices liability.

Digital Support

- + Continue to report any cyber-incidents to the Support Desk.
- Digital support will be available to Members and Members' staff during dissolution in accordance with dissolution guidelines.

Information Compliance Service

- + The Information Compliance Service will be available to Members and their staff as normal during dissolution. The team can provide advice and guidance on the responsibilities and obligations that Members have under data protection law.
- + Comprehensive written guidance is also available on the parliamentary intranet. This can be found on the 'Data Protection for Commons Members and their staff' page.

Library Services

- ⊕ Library research and statistics published before dissolution will remain publicly available at commonslibrary.parliament.uk.
- ⊗ The Library will not accept any new enquiries from 17:00 on the day before dissolution. Please contact the Library as early as possible before this deadline if you have any urgent outstanding requests and staff will use their best endeavours to complete outstanding work.
- ⊗ The Library Loans Service will be closed from 17:00 on the day of dissolution, please return all items and pay for any lost items by this date, no further items may be borrowed by Members or their staff.
- ⊗ Research service, online newspapers and databases will not be available to Members or Members' staff during dissolution.
- ⊗ Staff cannot assist with election related requests, including research commissioned before dissolution with an electoral focus.

Nursery

- ⊕ The nursery will remain open during dissolution and existing arrangements will continue.




Bicycles, vehicle access and parking

- ✘ All cars should be removed from the underground car park during dissolution except when visiting for short periods, e.g. to collect mail with prior permission from the Access Team.
- ✘ All bikes should be removed from bike racks.

Education and Engagement and Visitor Experience

- Sponsorship of democratic access tours during the dissolution period will be transferred to the Visitor Experience Team to be managed.
- Outreach school visits programme and community outreach will continue without the involvement of the former MP.
- School visits to the Education Centre will continue on the same basis as democratic access tours. Bookings already made for educational parties on days after the House re-assembles will stand.
- ✘ No escorting or sponsorship of tours on the Visitor Route by Members or Members' staff.

Other

- + The Parliamentary Recording Unit is open throughout the dissolution period. 
- The Switchboard will not connect any telephone calls for Members after dissolution but alternate contact details can be provided where supplied.

Other (continued)

- ✘ Vote Office, Select Committee Office, Table Office and the Public and Private Bill Offices
- ✘ House of Commons Shop next to Terrace Cafeteria (Jubilee Shop and Bridge Street shop remain open for public access)
- ✘ Access to catering venues (all Member bookings during the dissolution period will be cancelled)
- ✘ Access to meeting rooms
- ✘ Admission Order Office tickets (cancelled)
- ✘ Upper Waiting Hall exhibitions (cancelled)
- ✘ Travel Office services
- ✘ Gym membership - access to Westminster Gym suspended. Please contact the Gym to freeze your membership for this period or to find out about alternative facilities.
- ✘ On site hairdresser cannot be used by Members or their staff during dissolution.
- ✘ Press Galley – former MPs or others may not visit journalists’ offices on the estate.

Members impacted by boundary changes

Guidance from IPSA is summarised in this section, however may be subject to further change. Please refer to ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/returned-mps#boundary-changes for the most up-to-date guidance.

Member standing in a seat affected by the boundary changes, or in a different seat

It is recognised that some offices will be impacted by constituency boundary changes after the next election.

To ensure that IPSA is providing the right level of support to help offices through these changes, the IPSA Board has agreed on the following measures.

Constituency office moves

1. If an MP is re-elected, but their constituency office falls outside of the new constituency boundary, IPSA will provide a £6,000 start-up supplement to the office costs budget. This is to assist them in setting up a new office and is in line with the uplift provided to newly elected MPs.
2. If the constituency office still falls within the new boundary, but the MP wishes to move the office to a more suitable location following boundary changes – for example, to be more centrally located or more accessible to constituents – they can make an application for contingency funding up to a maximum of £6,000 to facilitate the move.
3. IPSA will ask for an explanation of the rationale, which the Contingency Panel will consider. We will provide more information and guidance on this in due course.
4. Under the Scheme of MPs' Staffing and Business Costs ('the Scheme') rules, for a constituency office to be funded by IPSA, it must be within the constituency, or within 20 miles of the boundary. If, after the boundary has changed, MPs need to move office to remain compliant with the Scheme, IPSA will allow a transition period of six months after the election for this to happen.

5. If you encounter any difficulties with moving or if there is a strong justification to delay moving beyond six months, please speak to your IPSA Account Manager.
6. In all cases where an MP moves their constituency office, they must ensure value for money, and the expectation is that wherever possible they will transfer equipment, furniture, signage, and other items to the new office.

Constituency accommodation

7. Similarly, under the Scheme rules, constituency accommodation must be within the constituency, or within 20 miles of the boundary, to be funded by IPSA.
8. If after the boundary has changed an MP needs to move their constituency accommodation to stay compliant with the Scheme, IPSA will allow a transition period of six months after the election for this to happen.
9. If you encounter any difficulties with moving or if there is a strong justification to delay moving for some time, please speak to your IPSA Account Manager.

Additional commuting costs

10. Staff who continue working for the same MP after the election may have a new work location because of a constituency office move. This may impact travel time and could lead to a more expensive commute.
11. To support staff through this transition, IPSA will allow claims for the additional costs for commuting that staff incur as a result of an office move – meaning the amount over and above what they were paying to commute to the previous office location – for three months following an office move. This could relate to additional mileage or public transport fares.

12. Any additional time spent commuting is considered to be personal time and not part of a staff member's contractual working hours. Claims for additional commuting costs would be taxable, meaning that tax will be deducted when the amount is reimbursed to the staff member.
13. IPSA will need to make some changes to their systems to facilitate these claims, and will provide further detailed guidance in due course.

Period of consultation

14. If the new constituency office is a significant distance away or is not as accessible, or there are contractual or other changes for you in the relocated office, it is likely that the Member will want to enter into a period of consultation with staff.
15. The initial discussions between the Member and staff will be informal and if staff members are willing to make the move and their job is deemed a legal alternative (not too far away and the job content broadly the same), then they will move to the new location at an agreed date and the employment will be continuous.
16. If the informal discussions lead to a conclusion that although the job is unlikely to be a legal alternative, the Member would like the staff member to try the job, and the staff member wants to try the new job, then the Member will offer the individual a trial period. The trial period can be up to three months and Members' staff could claim back any additional travel expenses through IPSA for that trial period – **see point 11** – however it should be noted that these expenses are taxed.
17. The details of the Members' staff original job coming to an end, the dates of any trial period and job content will be included in an outcome letter which will result from a formal meeting the Member or HR proxy will have with the staff member.

18. This is a meeting the staff member will have been given at least 48 hours notice (a week is good practice) about and they will have the right to be accompanied by a Members' and Peers' Staff Association (MAPSA) representative or a work colleague.
19. The staff member will be asked to sign and return a copy of the outcome letter to the Member. The letter is then scanned and shared with IPSA and you will then be authorised to claim any additional travel expenses for the duration of the trial period.
20. This process has to happen before the Members' staff original job comes to an end and the trial starts.
21. There will be regular progress catch-ups with the Member or HR proxy throughout the trial period so that the Members' staff know how they are doing. At any point in the trial, either the Member or Members' staff may decide that the trial is not working and bring it to an end.
22. If the trial is successful, after three months of the trial starting, any additional travel expenses will stop and Members' staff employment will be considered continuous from when they originally started working for the Member.
23. If the Member retains the staff member, then they will keep their continuous service, but they will not be entitled to redundancy pay.
24. If the Member changes party, then the normal rules apply and the Members' staff employment is not necessarily affected.
25. If the Member is re-elected, they will be treated as a returned MP and it will be business as usual.
26. If the Member stands in a different seat and is not elected, they will need to end the Members' staff employment in line with the process described in the section on Members not returned on **page 52**.
27. If the Member is forced to stand in a different seat due to the boundary changes or some other reason, this will not affect the Members' staff employment unless the Member decides to make changes to their staff arrangements or they are not re-elected.

Redundancy as a result of office relocation

28. Where a staff member's commute is extended beyond a 'reasonable distance' due to an office move, they may be entitled to redundancy.
29. What is considered to be a 'reasonable distance' could relate to additional time and/or cost, is not the same for everyone, and may be based on an individual's particular circumstances. However, in most cases, an additional 45 minutes on the journey is the benchmark considered in these circumstances.
30. MPs must seek advice from the Members' HR Advice Service to confirm whether a possible redundancy situation has arisen and to ensure they follow a legally correct process. **IPSA is unable to give employment advice.**
31. It is possible for staff members to agree to stay on, even where the office move extends their commute beyond a 'reasonable distance'. However, Members' HR advises MPs and staff to agree to a trial period of three months so both parties can try out the new arrangements.
32. The staff member could claim for the additional costs relating to their extended commute during the three months. Either party can decide to end the arrangement during or at the end of that trial period, and the staff member would retain the right to redundancy.
33. Any right to redundancy pay is calculated when their job was deemed potentially redundant and before any trial period starts.
34. If the Members' staff job is declared redundant during or at the end of a trial period, the terms and conditions of redundancy pay will be based on the length of service, hours of work, rate of pay etc. at the point their job was declared potentially redundant – that is, when their original job came to an end and before they started any trial period.

35. Not all office moves will result in a possible redundancy situation. If a staff member chooses to leave the Member's employment for other reasons – for example, to take another job – they will be considered to have resigned and will not be entitled to redundancy. **IPSA will only process redundancies that have been confirmed by Members' HR.**
36. In all cases, staff members must have at least two years' service with the same Member at the point their job is deemed redundant to qualify for a redundancy payment.
37. Where a returning Member makes a role redundant following the election, the relevant costs will be allocated to the staffing budget as normal under the Scheme rules. However, if the redundancy arose as a direct result of constituency boundary changes (for example due to office relocation), the Member can make an application to move these costs to the contingency budget. IPSA will ask for an explanation of the circumstances and how the redundancy was unavoidable.
38. IPSA will provide more information and guidance on this in due course at ipsaonline.org.uk/guidance/returned-mps#boundary-changes.

Continuity of service

39. Where a staff member remains employed with the same Member after constituency boundary changes and/or office relocation, they will retain continuity of service. They would not receive a redundancy payment, but any future redundancy entitlement would take into account the whole period of their employment with that Member.
40. However, when a staff member moves to a role with a different Member, they do not retain continuity of service. This is because, legally, each Member is an individual employer, and staff who move from one Member to another are moving from one employer

to a new one. Where a role is made redundant, a staff member with two years' service has a statutory (and contractual) right to a redundancy payment, but accordingly does not retain continuous service when moving to a new employer.

IPSA understand that this is an issue of concern for staff members. Continuous service is a concept set out in employment law, and as such IPSA is unable to 'grant' continuous service to staff. IPSA are, however, actively exploring whether there is a way for them to mitigate some of the negative impacts on staff which are due to the legal employment arrangements, for example through contractual terms.

Members' HR Advice Service have devised supplementary guidance to provide an overview of the upcoming boundary changes and the consequences of any impact those changes may have on the employment of Members' staff. The guide details the HR process we recommend Members and their HR proxies follow. The HR processes suggested are in line with ACAS guidance (and The Labour Relations Agency for Northern Ireland). You may also consider reviewing our Best Practice Guides on Restructures and Changing Terms and Conditions for supplementary information.

Members not
returned

Summary

If you are not returned at the next General Election, you will have four months – starting the day after Polling Day – to wind up your parliamentary affairs. This is known as the “winding-up period”.

The House Administration and IPSA will be available to support Members who are not returned, as well as their staff during this challenging time. This includes providing support throughout the winding-up process to ensure your departure from Parliament is as smooth as possible.

In the event that you lose your seat, **the House and IPSA will be in contact to discuss arrangements for winding up your office.**

The House and IPSA will be running a Departing Members’ Area within the parliamentary estate and staff will be available to assist you in arranging this meeting, which will be bookable in advance. There will also be an option to meet online should you prefer.

The Departing Members’ Area will be open for seven days including Saturday and Sunday, from the day after the General Election until the following Thursday evening. Following that, support for Departing Members will continue but will move online.

What to expect at your initial winding-up meeting

Staff from IPSA and the Members' HR Advice Service will be on-hand to talk through winding up your office and the process for making staff roles redundant. This will include templates to assist you with your obligations as an employer.

House Administration staff, including from the Digital Service and the Parliamentary Security Department, will be available to talk you through the practical steps you need to take to wind-up your office, including timeframes for actions to be completed.

Staff from the Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service will be available should Members or staff need any wellbeing support at what we know will be a challenging time.

Redundancy procedures for your staff

You will need to meet with each employee to discuss their job coming to an end. The Members' HR Advice Service will be able to provide an outline of the procedure to follow, as well as templates to use.

Support during the winding-up period

The Members' HR Advice team are available to support MPs and their HR proxies with the HR procedures.

In addition, the Individual Assistance Programme and Employee Assistance Programme will remain available 24/7 throughout the winding-up period for a total of 12 months from the date of the election, for both the former MP and their staff.

