

## Independent Expert Panel

Email [independentexpertpanel@parliament.uk](mailto:independentexpertpanel@parliament.uk)

Website: <https://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-financial-interests/independent-expert-panel>

### Summary of guidance for those who have made a complaint

#### ICGS cases before the Independent Expert Panel (IEP)

- 1) This summary is for use by you the complainant in a case involving an MP or former MP. It is intended to help you understand what happens once the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards (the Commissioner) has investigated your complaint and made her decision (guidance on what happens before the Commissioner makes her decision is available [here](#)). At each stage of the IEP's process, you are advised to read the Panel's full guidance on our [webpages](#). You can request reasonable adjustments to our processes help you engage with us.

#### Appeals against a decision of the Commissioner

- 2) You can appeal the Commissioner's decision on your complaint within 20 working days of receiving it. If you would like to request an extension to that deadline, let us know as soon as possible.
- 3) We will appoint a sub-panel of three members to decide your appeal. The sub-panel will also decide any appeal made by the respondent (the person you have made a complaint about). Appeals will normally be decided based on submissions made in writing, but the panel may, exceptionally, decide to hold an oral hearing. You can ask the panel to consider holding an oral hearing.
- 4) If there is an appeal, we will decide it before considering any sanction.

#### Sanction

- 5) If the Commissioner sends your complaint to the Panel to decide a sanction, or if the sub-panel up-holds your complaint on appeal, we will decide what sanction should be imposed. Options the panel may consider are set out in Part D of our [full guidance](#), this can include suspending or expelling a sitting MP from the House.
- 6) We will give you the opportunity to express your views on sanction in writing. Your submission will normally be shared with the respondent. You can request that sensitive personal information not be given to the respondent.
- 7) The respondent will also be able to express their views in writing and in person and we may require them to provide a statement reflecting on their conduct.
- 8) In making our decision we will consider the views expressed by both you and the respondent, and any aggravating or mitigating circumstances.
- 9) Only the respondent can appeal the sub-panel's decision on sanction. We will let you know if they appeal, but you will not be told the outcome of the sanction decision until any appeal has concluded.

## Reports

- 10) We may publish a report on your case. We will do this in any case that requires the House to agree the sanction or where we require an apology to be made in the House. We will normally publish a report in other cases where a complaint has been upheld, or where a complaint has not been upheld but the allegations have already been given publicity. You can see our previous reports on our webpages [here](#).
- 11) We undertake to limit the information included in any published report in such a way as to keep your identity confidential so far as possible, unless you choose not to remain anonymous. We will discuss with you the approach to be taken in your case.

## Advice and support

- 12) The Panel is not a court. You do not need to put your case in legalistic language or have a lawyer to engage with the process. We aim to answer any questions you have about the process as quickly and helpfully as possible. You must normally make any submissions to the Panel yourself. Please let us know if you require any reasonable adjustments to help you engage with the Panel.
- 13) We recognise that you might wish to obtain advice and support from an Independent Sexual Misconduct Advisor (ISMA), your whip, your line manager, a trade union or staff representative or a lawyer. You can also seek support from a family member, friend or colleague. You may have more than one adviser or supporter, but the number of people you seek advice and support from should be kept to a minimum.
- 14) The support services through the ICGS Helpline continue to be available to you (0808 168 9281 or [support@ICGShelpine.org.uk](mailto:support@ICGShelpine.org.uk)). The Helpline can also guide you towards other sources of support.

## Confidentiality

- 15) You must not share any information about the case with anyone other than your adviser or supporter (see above). They must also maintain confidentiality. A breach of confidentiality may be taken into account in determining the appropriate sanction.

## Keeping you informed

- 16) We will keep you updated at each stage of the process and tell you what happens next in your case. If we need to ask you for further information, we will give you sufficient time to respond. Please keep an eye out for emails from us.

You can get in touch with us at [independentexpertpanel@parliament.uk](mailto:independentexpertpanel@parliament.uk) at any time to find out more, or visit our webpages [here](#).