

Independent Expert Panel

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

Summary of guidance for the respondent to a complaint

ICGS cases before the Independent Expert Panel (IEP)

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

Appeals against a decision of the Commissioner

- 2) You can appeal the Commissioner's decision on the complaint against you 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 complainant. Appeals will normally be decided based on written submissions, 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 the appeal before considering any sanction.

Sanction

- 5) If the Commissioner has sent a complaint against you to the Panel for sanction, or a complaint has been upheld by the sub-panel 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 and in person and may require you to provide a statement reflecting on your conduct.
- 7) The complainant will also be able to express their views in writing.
- 8) In making our decision, we will take into account the views expressed by both you and the complainant and any aggravating or mitigating circumstances.

Appeals against sanction

- 9) You can appeal the sub-panel's decision on sanction within 10 working days. If you would like to request an extension to that deadline, let us know as soon as possible.

- 10) We will appoint a new sub-panel of three different members to decide your appeal.
- 11) We will give you the opportunity to express your views on the appeal in writing and in person.
- 12) An appeal against sanction may result in a different sanction being imposed.
- 13) Once the sub-panel has made its decision there is no further appeal.

Reports

- 14) We may publish a report on your case. We will do this in any case that requires the House to agree the sanction, or if 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](#).

Advice and support

- 15) The Panel is not a court, so you do not need to put your case in legalistic language, and you do not need a lawyer to engage with the process. We aim to answer any questions you have about the process as quickly and helpfully as possible.
- 16) We recognise that you might wish to obtain advice and support from your whip, 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.
- 17) The support services through the ICGS Helpline continue to be available to you (0808 168 9281 or support@ICGShelpine.org.uk). The Helpline can also guide you towards other sources of support.

Confidentiality

- 18) 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

- 19) 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.
- 20) You can get in touch with us at independentexpertpanel@parliament.uk at any time to find out more, or visit our webpages [here](#).