

MP's Expenses Consultation
Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority
Steel House
11 Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9LH

11 February 2010

Dear Sir,

Request to review current staff redundancy arrangements

I am employed as a researcher/office manager within the constituency office and have held this post for approximately 11 years. During this time my employer (The Member) has always had the right to set my salary and sanction the payment of expenses such as travel and telephone costs incurred in carrying out my job.

The Green Book currently provides that I will be paid statutory redundancy pay and that my employer may make a discretionary payment from winding up allowance, but that this will not exceed the sum paid in statutory redundancy. However, this limit being placed upon the amount of discretionary payment seems arbitrary given that the House is not my employer and ultimately up until that point my employer is given total discretion in setting salaries etc.

I understand that Unite union have been campaigning to improve the current staff redundancy package and in particular has received a legal opinion which challenges the validity of this limitation. In particular the House is taking up the role of employer and accordingly in such circumstances I should be treated equally as their employee and be able to pay into the CSPA which I am currently prevented from doing. I have enclosed a copy of an email received from the Fees Office which highlights the disparity of payments made on redundancy to House staff and MPs staff, a difference which is obviously deeply prejudicial to Members staff.

As an employee of a Member of Parliament I do not obviously enjoy the benefit of security of employment and it seems we are further compromised by the poor redundancy arrangements. I do hope that every effort is taken to improve our current position as there certainly has been no motivation to do so from within the House itself to date.

Yours sincerely,

Caroline Erickson
Researcher to Mohammad Sarwar MP