



House of
Commons

Benefits and Support
Learn about the benefits available
to staff of the House of Commons.

www.parliament.uk/about/working/jobs



Contents

Employment 3

Annual Leave.....	3
House of Commons Pension	3
Loans.....	3
Cycle to work scheme	3
Hybrid Working.....	4
Pay and Remuneration, allowances and overtime.....	5
Trade Unions.....	5
Tickets to events (through ballots: State Opening, Heads of State Visits)	5
Late Night Transport	5
Christmas Advance Pay	6
Meals on duty (catering staff only).....	6
Service Charge, tips and gratuities (catering grade staff only).....	6
STAR.....	6

Career Development..... 7

Learning and Development Opportunities and Sponsorship for Professional Qualifications.....	7
Professional subscriptions.....	7
Reverse mentoring.....	7
Mentoring and Coaching.....	7
Inspiring the future	8
Ambassador Network	8
Secondments.....	8
House of Commons Library.....	8

Health and Community..... 9

Health and Wellbeing Service.....	9
Employee Assistance Programme	9
Disability and Workplace Adjustments	10
House of Commons Gym Membership	10
Eyesight test.....	10
MyLifestyle	10

London Mutual Credit Union	10
Workplace Equality Networks.....	11
Prayer/Contemplation Rooms.....	11
Parliamentary Guardians Scheme.....	11
Diversity and Inclusion Champions.....	12
Voice Champions	12
Civil Service Sports Council	12
Facilities	13
Catering Services	13
Post Office and Cash Dispensers	13
Car Parking.....	13
Travel Office.....	13
Souvenir Shops.....	13
Free Access to Westminster Abbey.....	14
Family.....	15
House of Commons Nursery	15
Caring Responsibilities.....	15
Family Visit.....	15
Career Break	15

Employment

Annual Leave

30 days annual leave, increasing to 35 days after the first full leave year, plus Bank Holidays (pro rata for anyone working part time).

Eligible staff may apply to buy or sell up to a maximum of five days leave during the annual leave year, subject to the terms and conditions set out in the scheme.

House of Commons Pension

You will be eligible for the [Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme \(PCSPS\)](#) from the day you join.

Loans

In order to support our staff, we offer the following House of Commons loans:

- Season ticket and/or bicycle loan for transport into work
- Rental deposit loan
- Welfare Loan

Cycle to work scheme

The Cycle to work scheme is a Government-supported initiative aimed at promoting healthier journeys to work and reducing environmental pollution. Not only does it help you reduce your carbon footprint and increase your fitness, it also allows you to spread out the cost of buying a new bike, as well as saving on Income Tax and National Insurance.

Hybrid Working

The House of Commons operates an Estate and Hybrid Working policy, which can be accessed by staff in roles that are suitable for an element of remote working. All roles in the House of Commons require some attendance on the Estate, but the level varies greatly depending on the role. There are many roles at Parliament, and almost all sit within three groups.

Estate-based

Around a third of staff work almost exclusively on the Estate, from Maintenance Technicians and Visitor Guides to the Chefs, Baristas and Security Officers who keep Members, staff and visitors fuelled and safe. For these staff, there may be limited opportunities to work remotely with the agreement of their team leaders, for example on specific training and development days.

Chamber-dependent

Another third of staff need to work on the Estate to run the Chambers, Committees and supporting services, and interact with Members when one or both Houses are sitting. They can include Clerks, Researchers, Doorkeepers and Hansard Reporters. Conversely, some staff need to be on the Estate when the Houses are not sitting, such as Engineers and Conservationists. Staff in this group can sometimes work remotely depending on the House sitting and recess periods, with the agreement of their managers.

Desk-based

The remaining third of staff who provide important supporting services but mostly in an office environment, such as Project Managers, Accountants and Researchers, can do a significant proportion of their work remotely. For those staff, minimum levels of time need to be spent on the Estate interacting with colleagues and others, and this is typically 2-3 days per week – measured on an annual basis to accommodate busy and quiet times.

General

The Parliamentary Estate in Westminster remains the contractual place of work for over 99% of staff in the House of Commons, and we must always be available for face-to-face meetings when Members and other customers wish. However, for most people in the last group there is often a great deal of flexibility, and patterns of home working are agreed with team managers.

Pay and Remuneration, allowances and overtime

Some posts in the House attract allowances or unsocial hours payments. These are contractual payments whose terms are outlined in your letter of appointment or in a subsequent variation to contract letter. Allowances may be paid for:

- Additional hours, e.g. to provide cover for work determined by the rise of the House
- Different working hours or pattern of attendance, for example shift payments
- Recruitment and retention pay flexibility in limited circumstances to address unacceptable business risks.
- On-Call commitments.

Allowances are updated after any necessary negotiations with the unions which will take account of alterations to basic salaries, hours of work and so forth.

Trade Unions

We have a long history of constructive Trade Union relations, and staff here are actively encouraged to join a trade union.

There are four trade unions representing staff in the House of Commons: FDA, Prospect, PCS and GMB.

Membership of a trade union provides you with the reassurance that you will not face uncertainty at work alone and will have access to professional advice and representation. There are also a range of benefits available to union members, mostly free of charge, including legal advice/representation, insurance, and helplines for bullying at work, mortgages, or cheap energy.

Tickets to events (through ballots: State Opening, Heads of State Visits)

You may be given the opportunity to apply for tickets for special events, for example the State Opening of Parliament and the King's Birthday Parade.

You may also have the opportunity to attend Prime Minister's Questions.

Late Night Transport

The House Service may pay for late night transport for a member of staff to work to a late hour and it is not reasonable for them to use public transport to get home.

Christmas Advance Pay

You can apply for an advance of up to £250, providing this amount does not exceed half of your net monthly pay, to be paid directly into your bank account on or around 15th December.

Meals on duty (catering staff only)

Catering staff are eligible for a meal allowance for free food and beverages during their shift.

Service Charge, tips and gratuities (catering grade staff only)

Staff working in Catering Services receive a share of the service charge, however gratuities and tips are dependent on which area/venue they work in.

STAR

Star is our staff recognition scheme – a way for excellent work to be recognised by teams and by the House Service as a whole. People who are nominated for going above and beyond will be recognised by senior management in each team, while the top nominations could receive a £50 gift card.

Career Development

Learning and Development Opportunities and Sponsorship for Professional Qualifications

All staff, managers and leaders can access development to help them thrive, perform and develop at work. From workshops, online resources, career coaching, study leave, apprenticeships and grants, everyone at the House of Commons has an opportunity for personal and career growth through learning.

We support professional qualifications and apprenticeships, including time off for study leave for certain qualifications.

Professional subscriptions

Our employees who are members of a professional body may reclaim the cost of one professional subscription to that body per year subject to the terms and conditions set out in our Staff Expenses Policy.

Reverse mentoring

Reverse mentoring allows staff from minority ethnic backgrounds to act as mentors to more senior staff. Mentors share their perspective and experiences and in so doing inform those making policy and leadership decisions.

Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring and Coaching encourages and supports staff to take control of their own learning and development in order to improve their skills, increase their performance and maximise their potential.

A network of career coaches are available to support staff who are driven to take advantage of the development opportunities within the House to progress their careers are also available to help staff progress in their careers.

Inspiring the future

You can pledge just one hour a year to volunteer in a state school or college near where you live or work to talk to young people about your job and career route. All House of Commons and Parliamentary Digital Service staff are eligible to volunteer with Inspiring the Future, including apprentices, interns and sandwich students.

Ambassador Network

The Ambassador Network brings together passionate UK Parliament staff who deliver talks to audiences across the UK. This could be something you do as part of your job role or in your spare time.

The Network is open to all House of Commons, House of Lords and Digital Service staff from all teams and all grades.

Secondments

Secondments are when a member of staff moves temporarily to a role in another department or even another organisation, such as one of the Government departments. This may be for a few weeks or a couple of years.

If you are interested in a secondment to another area you will need to discuss this first with your Line Manager. Some opportunities may be found on the Civil Service website.

House of Commons Library

The Library Loans Service is available to staff of the House (including staff of joint departments) in connection with their work or employer-sponsored courses.

Health and Community

Health and Wellbeing Service

Our in-house Parliamentary Health and Wellbeing Service provides advice and guidance to support good health at work.

Services available to staff and managers include:

- Occupational health
- Mental health and wellbeing support
- Clinical Nurse – drop-in clinic for ill health and minor treatment
- Access to an on-site GP. This service is available to all staff whether on the Estate or working remotely
- Annual flu vaccination clinic available to all staff
- Health and wellbeing annual programme of events
- On-Site support from our Parliamentary Mental Health First Aider network

Employee Assistance Programme

Our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) offers a 24/7 365 day per year confidential helpline to staff and their families.

EAP can give practical advice and guidance as well as online, telephone and face to face counselling and support on a broad range of issues such as:

- Stress and Anxiety
- Work advice
- Relationship Advice
- Gambling, Alcohol and Drug issues.
- Counselling
- Financial wellbeing
- Financial wellbeing
- Legal Information
- Family issues
- Childcare Support
- Medical Information

Disability and Workplace Adjustments

We support staff with a range of workplace adjustments, physical or otherwise, help with obstacles relating to mental health and physical or non-physical requirements.

Common adjustments include:

- assistive technology – such as software or hardware
- speech recognition software or large computer screens
- ergonomics – such as chairs and standing desks

House of Commons Gym Membership

Access to a subsidised gym located on the estate on a full membership or pay as you go basis, with a network of over 100 leisure centres across the UK.

Eyesight test

House of Commons staff who use display screen equipment (DSE), for more than 2 hours per day, are entitled to have an eyesight test free of charge.

MyLifestyle

MyLifestyle, an employee benefits scheme provides you with access to discounts with hundreds of brands and retailers through the MyLifestyle website and the Edenred Savings app.

London Mutual Credit Union

London Mutual Credit Union (LMCU) is a not-for-profit member owned financial co-operative. They offer a range of banking facilities with competitive savings rates and support for those with low credit ratings.

Workplace Equality Networks

We have established [Workplace Equality Networks](#) (WENs) to provide an opportunity for groups of people to discuss and consider issues relevant to their situation or of interest to them. There are currently six Workplace Equality Networks here at the House of Commons, which are:

[ParliREACH](#)

a support network relevant to race, ethnicity and cultural heritage issues

[ParliAble](#)

a support network relevant to disabilities

[ParliCare](#)

the Workplace Equality Network (WEN) for those with caring challenges.

[ParliGENDER](#)

the Workplace Equality Network (WEN) for gender equality in Parliament

[ParliOUT](#)

a support network relevant to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, (LGBT+) people

[ParliON](#)

the Parliament Opportunity Network to promote inclusion and equality of opportunity across Parliament, and to raise awareness of issues around socio-economic inclusion

Prayer/Contemplation Rooms

We have rooms dedicated to religious prayer of all faiths, known by us as the 'Multi-Faith Prayer Room'. These rooms are accessible to people of all faiths for individual contemplation and/or prayer.

Parliamentary Guardians Scheme

The Parliamentary Guardians Scheme provides an informal way for people to share their concerns about any unacceptable behaviour in the workplace with someone outside of the 'regular' reporting line or formal channels.

A Guardian is a trained member of staff who helps to embed the behaviours expected from everyone throughout the organisation, by acting as a sounding board for colleagues who have something that they might want to share, but are unsure about the best way of doing so.

Diversity and Inclusion Champions

Diversity and Inclusion Champions are volunteers appointed at departmental and directorate levels to ensure the House adopts a continuous improvement approach based on best practice and in line with the House's wider strategy and approach. This includes encouraging people to understand that we are all personally responsible for ensuring we act in an inclusive way, respecting difference and fostering a positive working environment.

Voice Champions

The House Service is proud of our organisational values; inclusive, courageous, trusted and collaborative. Our Voice Champions exemplify the values through their own behaviour and actions. They promote the values within their Team, explaining why they matter and what the organisation is doing to bring them to life.

Civil Service Sports Council

You can join the Civil Service Sports Council, a not-for-profit organisation, for a small monthly fee (£4.99 at the time of publication).

Civil Service Sports Club's facilities include extensive sports grounds at Duke Meadows, Chiswick and a recreation centre for indoor games such as snooker and table tennis at Monck Street, Westminster.

Other great benefits include: Free Tastecard, Free entry at over 300 English Heritage sites, Free entry to Historic Royal Palaces as well as great savings on many day-to-day activities such as restaurants, cinemas and theme parks. Find out more about the scheme on the [Civil Service Sports Council Website](#).

Facilities

Catering Services

You will have access to a range of cafés, bars and restaurants catering for all preferences and budgets in both traditional and contemporary surroundings.

Post Office and Cash Dispensers

There are two Post Offices in Parliament available for use by staff. There are also cash dispensers available in three locations on the Parliamentary Estate.

Car Parking

A limited amount of space for staff car parking is available in the Parliamentary Estate. Public transport should be used to travel to and from work where possible.

Travel Office

You can benefit from the Travel Office, making planning both domestic and international journeys an easy process. The office is operated by an external contractor who provides a comprehensive travel service and gives access to a range of substantial discounts on fares, in particular on air travel. They can assist in assessing travel patterns and identifying the most convenient and cost-effective way of travelling.

Souvenir Shops

There are a number of souvenir shops in Parliament.

Free Access to Westminster Abbey

Access to Westminster Abbey is free upon production of your permanent parliamentary pass. As well as entrance to the Abbey, the passholder is entitled to a complimentary audio guide.

This facility applies to the passholder only – their guests will have to pay the usual visitor fee.

St Margaret's Church, located in the grounds of Westminster Abbey, has been associated with Parliament for more than 400 years. All staff are welcome to attend its regular services, and the church is available to parliamentary pass holders for baptisms, weddings, and memorial services.

Family

House of Commons Nursery

The House of Commons Nursery is a modern, welcoming facility with capacity for 40 children aged from three months to five years.

Caring Responsibilities

A variety of leave options including:

- Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental and Adoption
- Caring leave
- Special Leave

Family Visit

As a House of Commons member of staff, you'll have the opportunity to bring visitors to the Palace of Westminster, give them a tour and take them to one of many of our cafés and restaurants.

Career Break

The Career Break Scheme allows you to take a break without leaving the employment of the House and having to start your career again.

You can apply for a career break lasting five years in total.

The primary purpose of a career break is to enable staff to meet family commitments or to undertake further education.

For example, you may be granted a career break to provide long-term care for a dependant, to accompany a partner to work in a distant area, to cope with domestic responsibilities or to undertake full-time study.