



HOUSE OF LORDS

House of Lords Commission

2nd Report of Session 2019–21

Access and use of facilities by retired Members

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House of Lords Commission

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Access and use of facilities by retired Members

SECOND REPORT OF SESSION 2019-21

Introduction

1. Members of the House who retire or resign before a report recommending their suspension or expulsion from the House is agreed can access the Parliamentary Estate and some of the facilities of the House. This report invites the House to agree that such privileges should be automatically removed.

Access to facilities and services

Retired Members

2. Members may retire or resign from the House by giving signed and witnessed written notice to the Clerk of the Parliaments.¹
3. Members who retire or resign from the House are entitled to a retired Members' pass, which allows access to the Estate, and enjoy access to certain facilities, including:
 - (a) use of the Library (but not its research facilities);
 - (b) use of the Peers' Guest Room, the Peers' Dining Room with up to five guests, the Barry Room with up to six guests, and the River Restaurant and Terrace with up to two guests;
 - (c) permission to sit on the steps of the Throne when the House is sitting;
 - (d) the ability to apply for two tickets for state visits, up to three years after retirement; and
 - (e) a central point of contact for queries and the option to continue to receive electronic communications from the Administration.²
4. The Commission may agree, on a case-by-case basis, to withdraw the access privileges of a Member following their retirement or resignation from the House.³

Members who are suspended or expelled

5. Members who lose their membership as a result of non-attendance or a sentence of imprisonment, or who are expelled or suspended from the House, do not have any access or other rights to the facilities of the House.⁴

1 House of Lords Reform Act 2014, [s.1](#)

2 House Committee, [Access and use of facilities by retired Members](#), (2nd Report, Session 2014–15, HL Paper 59); House of Lords Commission [minutes](#), 20 March 2019.

3 House Committee, [Access and use of facilities by retired Members](#), (1st Report, Session 2015–16, HL Paper 115)

4 House Committee, [Access and the use of facilities by members on leave of absence and disqualified members](#), (1st Report, Session 2014–15, HL Paper 104)

6. There are other practical consequences of expulsion or suspension from the House:
 - (a) the Member's pass and any sponsored passes (such as for a member of staff, spouse or partner) are de-activated;
 - (b) the Member may not enter the House of Lords Estate as the guest of another Member or otherwise;
 - (c) access to the Parliamentary network and any Parliamentary email account is stopped; and
 - (d) the Member may not receive any parliamentary papers or claim any expenses.
7. For Members who are suspended, the above restrictions last for the duration of their suspension.

Conduct Committee reports and retirement

8. Recommendations for the sanction of a Member are made to the Conduct Committee by the House of Lords Commissioner for Standards. The Conduct Committee considers the recommended sanction and reports to the House on their conclusion. The report and any motion giving effect to a sanction are put before the House for approval, without debate.⁵ If a Member retires before any report is published, or put before the House for approval, the House is invited to approve the report only: no motion to suspend or expel is tabled.
9. If a Member subject to such a recommendation retires, the default position is that they continue to have the privileges of a retired Member. The Commission has however removed these rights on a case-by-case basis.⁶

Proposed change

10. It is proposed that the removal of retired Member's rights should be automatic for Members in the following circumstances, rather than each case being considered by the Commission as it emerges:
 - (a) the Conduct Committee recommends that the House should suspend or expel a Member; and
 - (b) the Member retires or resigns before a motion giving effect to the sanction is approved by the House, or during the period of any suspension.
11. In such cases, subject to the House agreeing the Conduct Committee's report, the Member would not have the rights of a retired member to access the House of Lords Estate or the facilities of the House.
 - (a) In the case of a recommendation to **suspend**, the removal of rights would last for the duration of the proposed suspension, but the Commission may agree a longer period in exceptional circumstances; and

5 Standing Order 68A

6 House of Lords Commission [minutes](#), 18 December 2018; House of Lords Commission [minutes](#), 30 November 2020.

- (b) If the recommendation was to **expel** the Member, the removal of rights would be permanent.
12. In either case, the practical consequences, as set out in paragraph 6 would apply to such Members from the point that the Conduct Committee's report is agreed by the House.
 13. We understand that the Conduct Committee have discussed this change and support it. This would ensure a consistent approach and provide certainty to Members, staff and others on the Estate about the rights available to a Member whose retirement or resignation has been stimulated by being subject to a disciplinary process.
 14. **The House is invited to agree the proposed policy in paragraphs 10 to 12.**