

LIBERAL DEMOCRAT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEPs

Agreed at the Annual General Meeting of LDEPP on 15 July 2009, Strasbourg.

The Liberal Democrat European Parliamentary Party (LDEPP) is committed to the highest standards of public service and transparency in regard to the use of public funds.

Each of its Members undertakes to ensure strict observance of the Members' Statute¹, the Assistants' Statute², and the European Parliament's Rules governing the Payment of Expenses and Allowances to Members (PEAM).

In addition, they agree to meet a common measure of transparency in order to ensure their accountability to the electors, the European Parliament and the UK Liberal Democrats.

This Code of Conduct shall be appended to the Standing Orders of LDEPP.

Declaration of Interests

In their official Declarations of Financial Interests and on their websites, LDEPP Members will declare whether they remain members of the Parliament's Voluntary Pension Scheme.

Members will declare whether they employ as assistants, or contract as service providers or paying agents, members of their family or comparable partners. In such cases, the level of payment shall be shown within bands of €10,000.

General Expenditure Allowance

As specified in the Implementing Measures for the Members' Statute, the Allowance is a monthly lump sum intended to meet expenditure resulting from activities in their capacity as Members not covered by other allowances. Inter alia, the Allowance covers the following items:

- Hotel bills and ancillary expenses in the UK
- Office management and running costs
- Purchase or rental of office equipment
- Telephone and postage
- Office supplies
- Purchase of publications
- Internet and database charges

¹ OJ L 262 2005.

² OJ L 55 2009.

- IT hardware and software
- representation activities

The allowance may not be used to cover personal expenses or to finance subsidies or gifts of a political nature. It may not be used to contribute towards the residual Voluntary Pension Scheme. Payment of the General Expenditure Allowance will be made to an account other than that accredited with the Member's salary.

Parliamentary Assistance Allowance

The rules for the employment or engagement of assistants are laid down in the Members' Statute and the Assistants' Statute.

All staff employed by LDEPP Members must have a contract of employment in accordance with the law of a Member State or the Assistants' Statute.

The job titles of assistants and, with their consent, their names, should be published on each Member's website.

The names and functions of service providers should be published on Members' websites.

Travel Allowance

Members are entitled to an allowance to meet expenses incurred in connection with travel undertaken in the performance of their official duties. Members shall publish on their website the total travel expenses received in the preceding year.

Subsistence Allowance

Members are entitled to a subsistence allowance for the days or part days (of at least 4 hours) on which they are present in the Parliament. Members shall publish on their website the total subsistence allowance received in the preceding year.

Transparency

An annual account shall be made of Members' use of these allowances and their receipt of expenses. This account shall be verified by an independent, professionally qualified accountant, who shall have received a copy of this Code of Conduct, of the Implementing Measures for the Members' and Assistants' Statutes, and of the PEAM. The verification must demonstrate compliance with the Rules of the Parliament, and will be filed with the delegation's Whip. A summary of the account shall be published on each Member's website. In addition, Members will publish on their websites notice that receipts for all items of expenditure worth in excess of £25 in value will be made available on request: these receipts will be updated on a quarterly basis.