

Last reviewed and updated: 31 May 2023

Industrial action dates for which the BMA has agreed to make the BMA Strike Fund available for:

Junior doctors in England strike – 11-15 April 2023 **(applications closed)**

Junior doctors in England strike – 14-17 June 2023

BMA Strike Fund – guidance for pre-approval claims

Members should read the following document carefully before making an application to the BMA Strike Fund. If further clarification is required, please contact strikefund@bma.org.uk.

This document sets out everything you need to know about the BMA Strike Fund, including eligibility, payment amounts, and how to submit claims to the fund.

About the BMA Strike Fund

The purpose of the BMA Strike Fund is to promote higher participation in industrial action, and therefore increase our ability to win disputes. The Strike Fund will be used to make payments to doctors who would not otherwise be able to afford to participate in industrial action due to loss of pay.

Currently the Strike Fund is very limited and we want to prioritise getting the funds to those who need it the most. Are you:

- a foundation year doctor who wouldn't be able to participate in industrial action without access to the fund?
- a doctor with caring responsibilities who wouldn't be able to participate in industrial action without access to the fund?
- a less than full time doctor who wouldn't be able to participate in industrial action without access to the fund?
- a doctor in precarious financial circumstances who wouldn't be able to participate in industrial action without access to the fund?

If you are not in these groups, please carefully consider whether you need to apply to the fund.

Please note that the BMA Strike Fund is not a hardship fund. Members needing financial assistance can find a list of organisations who may be able to help in the Finances section of our [sources of support page](#).

Eligibility

To be eligible to receive payment from the BMA Strike Fund, you need to:

- be a member of the BMA with up-to-date membership payments*
- have participated in authorised industrial action for which the BMA has agreed to make funds available
- be able to provide proof of deduction of pay due to your participation in industrial action, **after** the action has taken place.

**Please note that if you are in arrears in your membership payments, you might not be eligible to receive money from the BMA Strike Fund.*

Members who are not required to pay for their membership will still be eligible to claim from the BMA Strike Fund.

Payment

- The daily rate of strike pay is £50 per authorised day of strike action for which the BMA has agreed to make funds available. This amount will be kept under review and the BMA reserves the right to change it as appropriate.
- We cannot guarantee that payment can be made for all the days that you strike. The BMA can decide that the number of days for which strike pay is available is less than the total number of strike days, if necessary.
- We are aiming to pay two days of strike pay to each applicant if funds allow; if applications exceed our funds, then we may have to reduce the number of days paid per applicant, but where this is the case, this will be made clear to applicants before the strike days. This could be a prolonged dispute and we anticipate having to cover more days of strike yet to come with our funds.
- Evidence is required in the form of payslips showing deductions for participation in strike action and is essential to avoid liability for tax on the compensation paid.
- In no case can BMA Strike Fund payments exceed the member's actual loss.

The BMA Strike Fund is still in its infancy, and we may have limited funds for distribution. If you are in a financial situation where the strike pay will make the difference between you being able to strike or not strike, and you want to strike, please do apply.

How do I submit a claim for pre-approval?

To be eligible for pre-approval for the BMA Strike Fund, members must intend to participate in one or more days of strike action on days for which the BMA has agreed to make Strike Fund payments available.

There are two parts to the application process:

- 1) a pre-approval process before industrial action starts, and
- 2) a confirmation process once the pay has been deducted from your payslip.

Pre-approval process

To submit a claim for pre-approval, please complete the [online webform](#). You will need to provide your BMA membership number, contact details, and what days you intend to be on strike.

Applications for this round of strike action will be pre-approved on a first come (who meets eligibility criteria) first served basis. If applications exceed our funds, then we may need to reduce the number of days paid per applicant and use a criterion of random selection. You will be notified of the outcome of your claim for pre-approval once a decision has been made – this will be **before** the start of the industrial action. **Please note:** the Strike Fund is still in its infancy, and we may have limited funds. Members may be added as reserve applicants to be informed if funding becomes available.

Confirmation process

If your pre-approval is confirmed, we will contact you after strike action has taken place to complete your claim. You will then need to confirm how many days of strike pay you are claiming for, as well as provide your bank details and evidence of your deduction of pay. We will share a link to an online form for you to provide this information and the proof – for governance and auditing reasons, **we are unable to accept proof via email.**

Once your evidence has been received and verified, your name and bank details will be sent to the BMA Finance team to process your Strike Fund payments. Once the Finance team has processed your payment, you will be notified by the Strike Fund administration team.

Please note: You will not receive payment in excess of the number of days you were pre-approved.

Strike Fund FAQs

What evidence is needed to support my claim?

If pre-approved, we will contact you **after** strike action has taken place to complete your claim. After industrial action has taken place, you will be asked to provide proof of deduction of pay due to taking part in strike action. Proof must be provided **within 15 weeks** following the last date of industrial action – the deadline will be confirmed when we contact you. For governance and auditing purposes, this proof will need to be provided via an online form (the link to which will be provided) – **we will be unable to accept proof via email.**

You will need to provide **a copy of your payslip (unredacted)** that clearly shows a deduction of pay for the relevant date(s) that you participated in strike action.

Please note: Your employer should make clear on your payslip why you have had pay deducted. If your payslip does not clearly state that the deduction of pay is due to participating in industrial action (including the relevant date/s), **please also provide an email from your HR department** confirming the amount/reason for deduction – the date(s) you took part in the strike should be stated by your HR department in this email.

We will be unable to process your Strike Fund payment without sufficient proof of your deduction of pay.

Please note: Claims will not be paid without documentary evidence of the deduction of pay. This evidence is essential to avoid liability for tax on the compensation paid. All documents must be submitted in PDF format.

If you have any questions about documentary evidence before submitting your application, please contact us by emailing strikefund@bma.org.uk.

Do I have to take part in industrial action every day during the strike period to receive Strike Fund payments?

No. Members can choose to claim for the number of strike payments that reflect the number of days that they were on strike.

Please note: You will not receive payment in excess of the number of days you were pre-approved.

My employer has erroneously deducted pay for more days than I was participating in industrial action in. What do I do, and can I still claim from the BMA Strike Fund?

If your employer has erroneously deducted pay, please contact your BMA rep or the BMA first point of contact team can be contacted on 0300 123 1233, and we will support you to win back the pay you are owed by your employer.

You can still claim from the Strike Fund for the days that the employer has correctly deducted pay – please make sure you confirm the dates you participated in strike action when prompted to do so.

In what circumstances might claims be rejected?

Claims will not be paid if they:

- Are not accompanied by relevant or sufficient documentary evidence (as set out above) proving deduction of pay due to taking part in lawful, authorised industrial action
- Relate to strike action not authorised by the BMA
- Relate to days that the BMA has not authorised Strike Fund payments
- Are from non-members
- Are from members in arrears of their membership subscriptions

What if my BMA payments are in arrears?

Colleagues applying for the Strike Fund need to have up-to-date BMA membership payments. If you are struggling with this then please reach out to the BMA membership team (email membership@bma.org.uk or phone 0300 123 1233 Monday to Friday 8am-8pm, Saturday 9am-12pm).

What if my losses are less than the Strike Fund payments?

For tax reasons, Strike Fund payments cannot be more than the total pay deducted for participating in industrial action. Please email us at strikefund@bma.org.uk if you believe that your losses will be less than £50 a day.

What if I cannot provide proof of loss of pay?

Claims will not be paid without documentary evidence of the deduction of pay. This evidence is essential to avoid liability for tax on the compensation paid. If you have experienced loss of pay but are struggling to provide evidence, please email us at strikefund@bma.org.uk.

How will successful claims be paid?

Members will receive notification once documentation has been verified. Payment will be made as soon as possible, and you will be informed of when to expect payment. Payment will be made via bank transfer to the bank account you provide in your application.

Please note: we are only able to transfer Strike Fund payments to UK bank accounts in the name of the member making the claim.

We may not be able to recover any payment made to an incorrect bank account, so please check your details carefully before submitting your application – we may not be able to make a further payment from the Strike Fund to compensate for any errors.

Is this taxable income?

No – HMRC does not consider Strike Fund payments as earnings from employment so any payments you receive from the BMA Strike Fund will not be taxable.

Will I need to refund the BMA if my employer repays the deducted pay?

No, you will not need to repay any payment you receive from the Strike Fund. However, if your employer does repay you the deducted pay, we ask that you consider making a donation to the Strike Fund to help support members in future industrial action. You can make a donation [here](#).

My shift is overnight so it covers two days. Which day should I claim for? Can I claim two days of payments?

We aim to mirror the employers' approach to strike pay, i.e. each shift missed will count as one day of industrial action, and shifts that go overnight will be counted for the day that they start rather than the day that they end.

Can I submit my bank details and proof of deduction of pay via email?

No. For governance and auditing purposes, you need to submit your additional details and proof of your deduction of pay via an online form – we will send you the link to this form following the industrial action period.

Can I claim from the Strike Fund for the industrial action that took place in March?

No, the Strike Fund was not made available for the industrial action that took place in March.

I didn't apply for the pre-approval or register my interest for the Strike Fund for April industrial action, can I still apply?

No, applications can no longer be made to the Strike Fund for the industrial action that took place 11-15 April 2023, or any other retrospective action.

I was pre-approved to receive the Strike Fund payment, when and how do you need my proof of deduction?

Following the end of the industrial action you were pre-approved for, we will contact you to request your proof of deduction and bank details. This email will contain a link to an online form that you must complete and submit – the form will request the additional details we need from you as well as ask you to upload the proof of your deduction of pay due to participating in strike action. Proof of deduction will need to be provided within 15 weeks of the end of industrial action. Proof of deduction documents must be uploaded in PDF format.

Please note: For governance and auditing purposes, we will be unable to accept your proof of deduction via email.

I was pre-approved for X number of days but went on strike for more than that – please can I claim for the extra dates?

No, we are unable to pay you more than the days you were pre-approved.

I no longer need to access the Strike Fund or I do not need as much as I thought – what should I do?

If you no longer need to access the Strike Fund, or you feel you do not need the full amount that you were pre-approved, please contact us as soon as possible to let us know so that we can re-allocate your funds to a member on the reserve list.

I am on the reserve list, when will I know if I can access the Strike Fund?

Applicants on the reserve list will be contacted on a first come, first served basis when funds become available. We will get in touch when funds have become available, and we are able to offer you payment from the Strike Fund.

I applied for the Strike Fund for the last strike, do I need to re-apply for this industrial action?

Yes. Both pre-approved and reserve applicants wishing to access the Strike Fund again will need to re-apply for each new set of industrial action dates.

Confidentiality and data protection

All applications will be treated in the strictest of confidence and in line with GDPR regulations.

You can read our Privacy Policy [here](#).

Contacting us

If you need to contact us, please email us at strikefund@bma.org.uk and, where appropriate, quote your BMA membership number in the subject line and body of your email. Emails will be answered as quickly as possible.