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## James McMurdock Resigns Reform Whip Amid Covid Loan Questions

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Reform UK MP James McMurdock has temporarily stepped down from the party whip following questions about business loans taken during the COVID-19 pandemic. The South Basildon and East Thurrock MP says all his business dealings were lawful and fully compliant with regulations.

The move comes after *The Sunday Times* reported that two companies linked to Mr. McMurdock received a total of £70,000 in government-backed loans during the pandemic. In response, McMurdock posted a statement on X (formerly Twitter), confirming he had been contacted by a journalist about the claims and that he had acted within the law.

“I confirmed to the journalist that all my business dealings had always been conducted fully within the law and in compliance with all regulations,” he wrote. “Appropriately qualified professionals have reviewed all activity and confirmed the same.”

He added that, in the interest of protecting the party, he had voluntarily removed the party whip from himself while the matter was under review.

According to public records, McMurdock is currently listed as the director of Gym Live Health and Fitness Limited and was formerly a director of J A M Financial Limited, a role he stepped down from in 2021. Both companies reportedly have overdue accounts and are facing proposals to be struck off the official register, according to Companies House.

Reform UK’s Chief Whip, Lee Anderson, confirmed McMurdock’s decision and stated that the allegations relate to his business activity before he became an MP. “James has agreed to fully cooperate with any investigation,” Anderson said in a separate statement posted on Reform UK’s official X account.

McMurdock was elected to Parliament in July 2024, winning South Basildon and East Thurrock by a narrow margin of just 98 votes, taking the seat from the Conservative Party and beating Labour into second place.

The situation has sparked criticism from Labour, with the party’s chairwoman Ellie Reeves demanding answers. “The public deserves to know how public funds were used by Reform UK MPs, especially now that they’re claiming to investigate government efficiency,” she said.

The controversy marks the second time a Reform UK MP has faced serious allegations since the general election. Earlier this year, MP Rupert Lowe was suspended following unrelated misconduct allegations, which he denies.

As of now, Reform UK holds four seats in Parliament, after originally winning five. With McMurdock stepping back and another MP suspended, questions are growing about the party’s internal oversight as it tries to establish itself as a significant force in British politics.

For now, McMurdock insists he has nothing to hide and that the truth will bear that out.

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