

*These notes refer to the Human Trafficking and Exploitation  
(Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland)  
2015 (c.2) which received Royal Assent on 13 January 2015*

# Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

#### ***Section 19: Assistance and support for exiting prostitution***

Section 19 makes provision in respect of assistance and support for individuals wishing to leave prostitution.

Subsection (1) requires the Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) to prepare and publish a strategy, in conjunction with other Northern Ireland Departments, which will provide a programme of assistance and support to a person who wishes to leave prostitution. Each Department will be responsible for delivering the aspects of the programme which fall within their remit.

Subsection (2) requires the strategy to be published within 10 months of Royal Assent, and the programme to be in place on or before 1 April 2016.

Subsection (3) makes provision about how the support under this section is to be provided to the person, including that it:

- is not conditional on a person acting as a witness;
- shall be provided on the agreement of the person; and
- shall take due account of the needs of the person as regards safety and protection from harm.

Subsection (4) states that the assistance and support must be offered from a person of the same gender as the person who is wishing to exit prostitution.

Subsection (5) requires DHSSPS to review the strategy in conjunction with other Departments at least once every three years. This allows for more frequent review if necessary to reflect learning during the initial years of the programme.

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Subsection (6) clarifies that the strategy and programme of support under this section does not affect the individual's other existing rights to assistance. Subsection (7) defines prostitution.