

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO**  
**THE JURIES (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS (NORTHERN IRELAND)**  
**2010**

**2010 No. 90**

1. This explanatory memorandum has been prepared by the Ministry of Justice (Northern Ireland Court Service) and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.

**2. Purpose of the instrument**

2.1 These Regulations amend forms used in relation to jury notices and jury summonses, which are issued to members of the public who have been selected for jury service in Northern Ireland. The amendments are aimed at ensuring the completion of jury forms, facilitating administrative improvements, and updating the lists of ineligible and excusable persons so that they correspond with the relevant Schedules to the Juries (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. The Regulations come into force on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2010 and are subject to negative resolution.

**3. Matters of Special Interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments**

3.1 None

**4. Legislative Context**

4.1 The Juries (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (“the Order”) sets out the law relating to qualification for jury service and the empanelling, summoning and balloting of jurors. Under the Order, the Lord Chancellor may make regulations for the purposes of the Order, particularly in relation to the issuing of jury notices and summonses, and the forms relating to these.

4.2 The Juries Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 prescribe such forms.

**5. Territorial Extent and Application**

5.1 This instrument applies to Northern Ireland.

## **6. European Convention on Human Rights**

- 6.1 As the Rules are subject to negative resolution procedure, and do not amend primary legislation, no statement is required.

## **7. Policy background**

- 7.1 The Juries Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 have been operational since 1996 and have not been amended. The Regulations provide forms in relation to jury notices and jury summonses. Jury notices give notice to persons selected for jury service that they may be summoned for jury service during the forthcoming year, and require such persons to advise the Northern Ireland Court Service if they are disqualified or ineligible for jury service or excusable as of right from jury service. Jury summonses summon persons to attend a courthouse at a particular time for the purpose of undertaking jury service.
- 7.2 The Court Service has identified over time a need to make various improvements and tidy-up amendments to the forms provided in the Regulations. These are aimed at making clear the requirement that persons given notice of jury service must fully complete the return form; facilitating administrative improvements, such as a facility for the online return of forms; making some minor corrections; and updating the categories of person disqualified and ineligible for jury service and excusable from jury service as of right, so that they correspond to the categories provided in the Juries (Northern Ireland) Order 1996. The forms have previously been amended administratively to take account of amendments to these categories in the Order, but it is appropriate that statutory amendments to the Regulations are also made.

## **8. Consultation outcome**

- 8.1 The Regulations are administrative in nature and the amendments are routine and uncontroversial. It was not considered necessary or appropriate to undertake a consultation exercise.

## **9. Guidance**

- 9.1 These Regulations will be published on the Northern Ireland Court Service website. There is no requirement to provide guidance on their operation, as the purpose of the forms themselves is partly to provide guidance to those selected for jury service.

## **10. Impact**

These Regulations are administrative and do not have any impact on business, charities or voluntary bodies. Therefore, an impact assessment of the Regulations was not considered necessary.

**11. Regulating small business**

11.1 The legislation does not apply to small business.

**12. Monitoring & review**

12.1 The operation of the Regulations will be kept under review by the Northern Ireland Court Service.

**13. Contact**

13.1 Martin Moore of the Northern Ireland Court Service (tel: 028 9041 2256 or email [martinmoore@courtsni.gov.uk](mailto:martinmoore@courtsni.gov.uk)) can answer any queries regarding this instrument.