

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO

Healthy Start Scheme and Day Care Food Scheme (Amendment) Regulations

SR 2013 No. 178

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the the Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety to accompany the Statutory Rule (details above) which is laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly.
- 1.2. The Statutory Rule is made under Article 13(1), (3)(i) and (6) of the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1988(b) and section 171(2) to(5) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992(c) and is subject to the negative resolution procedure.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. These Regulations insert a provision in the principal Regulations, providing for the Department, by instrument in writing, under seal, to delegate its functions under Parts III to VII of the principal Regulations. A provision has also been inserted rewording Schedule 5 of the Regulations relating to the sharing of information as suggested by the Examiner of Statutory Rules in October 2011.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Healthy Start Scheme provides a nutritional safety net to low-income families supporting around 14,000 households in Northern Ireland. Eligibility to Healthy Start vouchers is means tested and therefore income such as Job Seekers Allowance or Tax Credits needs to be verified. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Health (London), DHSSPS, HMRC, DWP and NI Social Security Agency sets out the procedures for data sharing to enable the administration and distribution of Healthy Start vouchers. The information is provided directly to the Healthy Start Issuing Unit which is contracted by DH(L) for the issue of vouchers to the whole of the UK.

4. Consultation

- 4.1. No consultation required - The Healthy Start Scheme was devolved by the Department to the RBSO at the organisation's inception in April 2009. This amendment is the first step in the process to provide the necessary statutory underpinning.

5. Equality Impact

- 5.1. The Department is satisfied that the proposed amendments have no impact on equality issues.

6. Regulatory Impact

- 6.1. Regulatory Impact Assessment not necessary - The Regulations do not require a Regulatory Impact Assessment as they will not impose any additional costs on business, charities or voluntary bodies.

7. Financial Implications

7.1. None

8. Section 24 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

8.1. Departmental Solicitor has verified that the Regulations are in correct form and within the power of the Department to make.

9. EU Implications

9.1. Not applicable.

10. Parity or Replicatory Measure

10.1. Not applicable.

11. Additional Information

11.1. Not applicable.