



# Abortion Act 1967

## 1967 CHAPTER 87

### 1 Medical termination of pregnancy.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, a person shall not be guilty of an offence under the law relating to abortion when a pregnancy is terminated by a registered medical practitioner if two registered medical practitioners are of the opinion, formed in good faith—
- [<sup>F1</sup>(a) that the pregnancy has not exceeded its twenty-fourth week and that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman or any existing children of her family; or
  - (b) that the termination is necessary to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman; or
  - (c) that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated; or
  - (d) that there is a substantial risk that if the child were born it would suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped.]
- (2) In determining whether the continuance of a pregnancy would involve such risk of injury to health as is mentioned in paragraph (a) [<sup>F2</sup>or (b)] of subsection (1) of this section, account may be taken of the pregnant woman's actual or reasonably foreseeable environment.
- (3) Except as provided by subsection (4) of this section, any treatment for the termination of pregnancy must be carried out in a hospital vested in [<sup>F3</sup>the Secretary of State for the purposes of his functions under the [<sup>F4</sup>National Health Service Act 2006] or the National Health Service (Scotland) Act 1978 [<sup>F5</sup>or in a hospital vested in <sup>F6</sup>... a National Health Service trust][<sup>F7</sup>or an NHS foundation trust] or in a place approved for the purposes of this section by the Secretary of State]
- [<sup>F8</sup>(3A) The power under subsection (3) of this section to approve a place includes power, in relation to treatment consisting primarily in the use of such medicines as may be specified in the approval and carried out in such manner as may be so specified, to approve a class of places.]

*Status: Point in time view as at 01/04/2013. This version of this provision has been superseded.*

*Changes to legislation: Abortion Act 1967, Section 1 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 December 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

- (4) Subsection (3) of this section, and so much of subsection (1) as relates to the opinion of two registered medical practitioners, shall not apply to the termination of a pregnancy by a registered medical practitioner in a case where he is of the opinion, formed in good faith, that the termination is immediately necessary to save the life or to prevent grave permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman.

#### Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 1(1)(a)-(d) substituted (1.4.1991) for s. 1(1)(a)(b) by [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 \(c. 37, SIF 83:1\)](#), [s. 37\(1\)](#) (with savings (in force 1.8.1991) in ss. 39(3) and 43(2)); [S.I. 1991/480](#), [art. 2\(a\)](#); [S.I. 1991/1400](#)
- F2** Words in s. 1(2) inserted (1.4.1991) by [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 \(c. 37, SIF 83:1\)](#), [s. 37 \(2\)](#), (with savings (in force 1.8.1991) in ss. 39(3) and 43(2)); [S.I. 1991/480](#), [art. 2\(a\)](#); [S.I. 1991/1400](#)
- F3** Words substituted by [Health Services Act 1980 \(c. 53, SIF 113:2\)](#), ss. 1, 2, [Sch. 1 para. 17\(1\)](#)
- F4** Words in s. 1(3) substituted (1.3.2007) by [National Health Service \(Consequential Provisions\) Act 2006 \(c. 43\)](#), ss. 2, 8(2), [Sch. 1 para. 30](#) (with Sch. 3 Pt. 1)
- F5** Words inserted by [National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 \(c. 19, SIF 113:2\)](#), s. 66(1), [Sch. 9 para. 8](#)
- F6** Words in s. 1(3) omitted (1.4.2013) by virtue of [Health and Social Care Act 2012 \(c. 7\)](#), s. 306(4), [Sch. 5 para. 9](#); [S.I. 2013/160](#), [art. 2\(2\)](#) (with arts. 7-9)
- F7** Words in s. 1(3) inserted (1.4.2004 for E.W. and otherwise prosp.) by [Health and Social Care \(Community Health and Standards\) Act 2003 \(c. 43\)](#), ss. 34, 199, [Sch. 4 para. 10](#); [S.I. 2004/759](#), arts. 1(3), 2,
- F8** S. 1(3A) inserted (1.4.1991) by [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 \(c. 37, SIF 83:1\)](#), [s. 37 \(3\)](#), (with savings (in force 1.8.1991) in ss. 39(3) and 43(2)); [S.I. 1991/480](#), [art. 2\(a\)](#); [S.I. 1991/1400](#)

#### Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 1(3): transfer of certain functions (1.7.1999) by [S.I. 1999/1750](#), arts. 1(1), 2, [Sch. 1](#) (with art. 7); [S.I. 1998/3178](#), [art. 3](#)

**Status:**

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**Changes to legislation:**

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