



Football (Offences) Act 1991

1991 CHAPTER 19

An Act to make further provision with respect to disorderly conduct by persons attending football matches; and for connected purposes. [27th June 1991]

Be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1 Designated football matches.

- (1) In this Act a “designated football match” means an association football match designated, or of a description designated, for the purposes of this Act by order of the Secretary of State.

Any such order shall be made by statutory instrument which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

- (2) References in this Act to things done at a designated football match include anything done at the ground—
- (a) within the period beginning two hours before the start of the match or (if earlier) two hours before the time at which it is advertised to start and ending one hour after the end of the match; or
 - (b) where the match is advertised to start at a particular time on a particular day but does not take place on that day, within the period beginning two hours before and ending one hour after the advertised starting time.

Annotations:

Commencement Information

II S. 1 wholly in force at 10.8.1991 see s. 6(2) and S.I. 1991/1564 art. 2.

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Football (Offences) Act 1991. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

2 Throwing of missiles.

It is an offence for a person at a designated football match to throw anything at or towards—

- (a) the playing area, or any area adjacent to the playing area to which spectators are not generally admitted, or
- (b) any area in which spectators or other persons are or may be present, without lawful authority or lawful excuse (which shall be for him to prove).

Annotations:

Commencement Information

I2 S. 2 wholly in force at 10.8.1991 see s. 6(2) and S.I. 1991/1564 art. 2.

3 Indecent or racist chanting.

(1) It is an offence to [^{F1}engage or take part in chanting of an indecent or racist nature at a designated football match].

(2) For this purpose—

- (a) “chanting” means the repeated uttering of any words or sounds [^{F2}(whether alone or in concert with one more others)]; and
- (b) “of a racist nature” means consisting of or including matter which is threatening, abusive or insulting to a person by reason of his colour, race, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origins.

Annotations:

Amendments (Textual)

F1 Words in s. 3(1) substituted (27.9.1999) by 1999 c. 21, ss. 9(1)(2), 12(2) (with s. 12(3))

F2 Words in s. 3(2)(a) substituted (27.9.1999) by 1999 c. 21, s. 9(1)(3), 12(2) (with s. 12(3))

Commencement Information

I3 S. 3 wholly in force at 10.8.1991 see s. 6(2) and S.I. 1991/1564 art. 2.

4 Going onto the playing area.

It is an offence for a person at a designated football match to go onto the playing area, or any area adjacent to the playing area to which spectators are not generally admitted, without lawful authority or lawful excuse (which shall be for him to prove).

5 Supplementary provisions.

(1) In section 24(2) of the ^{M1}Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (arrestable offences), after paragraph (d) insert—

“(e) any offence under the Football (Offences) Act 1991.”.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under this Act is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

^{F3}(3)

Changes to legislation: There are outstanding changes not yet made by the legislation.gov.uk editorial team to Football (Offences) Act 1991. Any changes that have already been made by the team appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Annotations:

Amendments (Textual)

F3 [S. 5\(3\)](#) repealed (28.8.2000) by [2000 c. 25, s. 1, Sch. 3](#); [S.I. 2000/2125, art. 2](#)

Commencement Information

I4 [S. 5](#) wholly in force at 10.8.1991 see [s. 6\(2\)](#) and [S.I. 1991/1564 art. 2](#).

Marginal Citations

M1 [1984 c. 60](#).

6 Short title, commencement and extent.

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Football (Offences) Act 1991.
- (2) The provisions of this Act come into force on such day as the Secretary of State may appoint by order made by statutory instrument, and different days may be appointed for different provisions.
- (3) This Act extends to England and Wales only.

Annotations:

Subordinate Legislation Made

P1 [S. 6\(2\)](#) power exercised by [S.I.1991/1564](#)

Commencement Information

I5 [S. 6](#) wholly in force at 10.8.1991 see [s. 6\(2\)](#) and [S.I. 1991/1564 art. 2](#).

Changes to legislation:

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- s. 5(1) repealed by [2005 c. 15 Sch. 17 Pt. 2](#)

Commencement Orders yet to be applied to the Football (Offences) Act 1991:

Commencement Orders bringing legislation that affects this Act into force:

- [S.I. 2005/3495 art. 2](#) commences ([2005 c. 15](#))