



Disability Discrimination Act 1995

1995 CHAPTER 50

PART VII

SUPPLEMENTAL

[^{F1}56 Help for aggrieved persons in obtaining information etc.

[^{F2}(1) For the purposes of this section—

- (a) a person who considers that he may have been—
 - (i) discriminated against in contravention of Part II or III, or
 - (ii) subjected to harassment in contravention of Part II or section 21A(2),is referred to as “the person aggrieved”; and
 - (b) a person against whom the person aggrieved may decide to institute, or has instituted, proceedings in respect of such discrimination or harassment is referred to as “the respondent”.
- (2) With a view to helping the person aggrieved decide whether to institute proceedings and, if he does so, to formulate and present his case in the most effective manner, the Office shall by order prescribe—
- (a) forms by which the person aggrieved may question the respondent on his reasons for doing any relevant act, or on any other matter which is or may be relevant; and
 - (b) forms by which the respondent may if he so wishes reply to any questions.
- (3) Where the person aggrieved questions the respondent in accordance with forms prescribed by an order under subsection (2)—
- (a) the question, and any reply by the respondent (whether in accordance with such an order or not), shall be admissible as evidence in any proceedings under Part II or III;
 - (b) if it appears to the court or tribunal in any such proceedings—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Section 56. (See end of Document for details)

- (i) that the respondent deliberately, and without reasonable excuse, omitted to reply within the period of eight weeks beginning with the day on which the question was served on him, or
- (ii) that the respondent's reply is evasive or equivocal,
- it may draw any inference which it considers it just and equitable to draw, including an inference that the respondent committed an unlawful act.
- (4) The Office may by order—
- (a) prescribe the period within which questions must be duly served in order to be admissible under subsection (3)(a); and
 - (b) prescribe the manner in which a question, and any reply by the respondent, may be duly served.
- (5) County court rules may enable a court entertaining a claim under section 25 to determine, before the date fixed for the hearing of the claim, whether a question or reply is admissible under this section or not.
- (6) In proceedings in respect of a section 21B claim, subsection (3)(b) does not apply in relation to a failure to reply, or a particular reply, if the following conditions are met—
- (a) that at the time of doing any relevant act, the respondent was carrying out public investigator functions or was a public prosecutor; and
 - (b) that the respondent reasonably believes that a reply or (as the case may be) a different reply would be likely to prejudice any criminal investigation, any decision to institute criminal proceedings or any criminal proceedings or would reveal the reasons behind a decision not to institute, or a decision not to continue, criminal proceedings.
- (7) The Office may by regulations provide for this section not to have effect, or to have effect with prescribed modifications, in relation to section 21B claims of a prescribed description.
- (8) This section is without prejudice to any other enactment or rule of law regulating interlocutory and preliminary matters in proceedings before a county court or industrial tribunal, and has effect subject to any enactment or rule of law regulating the admissibility of evidence in such proceedings.
- (9) In this section “section 21B claim” means a claim under section 25 by virtue of section 21B.]]

Extent Information

- E1** Following the repeal of this Act for E.W.S. by the Equality Act 2010, this section now extends to N.I. only. Prior to that repeal, different versions of this section had been created for N.I. and E.W.S. respectively to reflect the different amendment history for each jurisdiction. This version is based on the N.I. version as it stood at the date of the repeal. It does not reflect the history of E.W.S. effects prior to the 2010 repeal, which can be found in earlier versions.

Textual Amendments

- F1** [S. 56](#) substituted (N.I.) (3.7.2006 for certain purposes and 31.12.2007 insofar as not already in force) by [The Disability Discrimination \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2006 \(S.I. 2006/312 \(N.I. 1\)\)](#), [arts. 1, 17](#); [S.R. 2006/289](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#); [S.R. 2007/466](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(k\)](#)
- F2** Act repealed (E.W.S.) (1.10.2010 (except for the repeal of ss. 49A-49D) and 5.4.2011 in so far as not already in force) by [Equality Act 2010 \(c. 15\)](#), 216(3), Sch. 27 Pt. 1 (as substituted (1.10.2010) by [S.I.](#)

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2010/2279, **Sch. 2**) (with ss. 6(4), 205, and with amendments and savings in the said S.I. 2010/2279, **art. 16**); S.I. 2010/2317, **art. 2(15)(f)** (with arts. 4-25, Schs. 1-16); S.I. 2011/1066, **art. 2(h)**

Commencement Information

II S. 56 wholly in force at 11.7.1996; s. 56 not in force at Royal assent see s. 70(3); s. 56 in force (N.I.) at 11.7.1996 by S.R. 1996/280, art. 2(1), **Sch. Pt. I**

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Section 56.