



# Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003

## 2003 CHAPTER 6

### PART 2

#### POLICE POWERS

##### *Designation of civilians*

### **30 Police powers for designated police support staff**

- (1) The Chief Constable may designate a member of the police support staff as an officer of one or more of these descriptions—
  - (a) investigating officer;
  - (b) detention officer;
  - (c) escort officer.
- (2) The Chief Constable may designate a person under this section only if he is satisfied that these requirements are met—
  - (a) the person is a suitable person to carry out the functions for the purposes of which he is to be designated;
  - (b) the person is capable of effectively carrying out those functions;
  - (c) the person has received adequate training in the carrying out of those functions and in the exercise of the powers and performance of the duties to be conferred or imposed on him by his designation.
- (3) A person designated under this section has—
  - (a) the powers conferred on him by his designation;
  - (b) the duties imposed on him by his designation.
- (4) A designation under this section may confer powers or impose duties on a person only by applying the powers or duties to him.
- (5) The powers and duties that may be applied to a person designated under this section by his designation are any or all of those specified in the applicable Part of Schedule 2.

---

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

---

- (6) The applicable Part of Schedule 2 is—
- (a) Part 1, in the case of a person designated under this section as an investigating officer;
  - (b) Part 2, in the case of a person designated under this section as a detention officer;
  - (c) Part 3, in the case of a person designated under this section as an escort officer.
- (7) If a power is conferred or a duty imposed on a person designated under this section by his designation—
- (a) the power or duty does not authorise or require him to engage in any conduct otherwise than in the course of his employment as a member of the police support staff;
  - (b) the power may be conferred or the duty imposed subject to restrictions or conditions specified in the designation.
- (8) Subsection (9) applies in relation to the exercise of a power by a person designated under this section in reliance on his designation if the power is one which, if exercised by a police officer, includes or is supplemented by a power to use reasonable force.
- (9) The designated person has the same entitlement to use reasonable force as a police officer would have if the power were exercised by him.
- (10) If a power exercisable by a person designated under this section in reliance on his designation includes power to use force to enter any premises, the power is exercisable by the person only—
- (a) in the company of a police officer and under the supervision of a police officer, or
  - (b) for the purpose of saving life or limb or preventing serious damage to property.

### **[<sup>F1</sup>30A Community support officers**

- (1) The Chief Constable may designate a member of the police support staff as a community support officer.
- (2) The Chief Constable may designate a person under this section only if he is satisfied that—
  - (a) the person is a suitable person to carry out the functions of a community support officer;
  - (b) the person is capable of effectively carrying out those functions; and
  - (c) the person has received adequate training in the carrying out of those functions.
- (3) A person designated under this section has, by virtue of the designation, the powers and duties set out in Schedule 2A (and references in any statutory provision to the powers and duties conferred or imposed on him by his designation shall be construed accordingly).
- (4) A person designated under this section is not authorised or required by virtue of his designation to engage in any conduct otherwise than in the course of his employment as a member of the police support staff.
- (5) Where any power conferred on a person by his designation under this section is a power which, if exercised by a police officer, includes or is supplemented by a

---

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

---

power to use reasonable force, the designated person has the same entitlement to use reasonable force in exercising that power as a police officer would have if the power were exercised by him.

- (6) Where any power conferred on a person by his designation under this section includes power to use force to enter any premises, that power is exercisable by the person only—
- (a) in the company of a police officer and under the supervision of a police officer; or
  - (b) for the purpose of saving life or limb or preventing serious damage to property.
- (7) A power exercisable by any person in reliance on his designation under this section shall be exercisable only when he is wearing such uniform as may be—
- (a) determined or approved for the purposes of this section by the Chief Constable; and
  - (b) identified or described in the designation.
- (8) The [F<sup>2</sup>Department of Justice] may by order amend Schedule 2A.]

#### Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 30A inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), **7(2)**
- F2** Words in s. 30A(8) substituted (18.10.2012) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2012 \(S.I. 2012/2595\)](#), arts. 1(2), **11(2)** (with arts. 24-28)

### 31 Police powers for designated contracted-out staff

- (1) This section applies if the Board has entered into a contract with a person (“the contractor”) for the provision of services relating to the detention or escort of persons who have been arrested or are otherwise in custody.
- (2) The Chief Constable may designate an employee of the contractor as an officer of either or both of these descriptions—
- (a) detention officer;
  - (b) escort officer.
- (3) The Chief Constable may designate a person under this section only if he is satisfied that these requirements are met—
- (a) the person is a suitable person to carry out the functions for the purposes of which he is to be designated;
  - (b) the person is capable of effectively carrying out those functions;
  - (c) the person has received adequate training in the carrying out of those functions and in the exercise of the powers and performance of the duties to be conferred or imposed on him by his designation;
  - (d) the contractor is a fit and proper person to supervise the carrying out of the functions for the purposes of which the person is to be designated.
- (4) A person designated under this section has—
- (a) the powers conferred on him by his designation;
  - (b) the duties imposed on him by his designation.

---

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

---

- (5) A designation under this section may confer powers or impose duties on a person only by applying the powers or duties to him.
- (6) The powers and duties that may be applied to a person designated under this section by his designation are any or all of those specified in the applicable Part of Schedule 2.
- (7) The applicable Part of Schedule 2 is—
  - (a) Part 2, in the case of a person designated under this section as a detention officer;
  - (b) Part 3, in the case of a person designated under this section as an escort officer.
- (8) If a power is conferred or a duty imposed on a person designated under this section by his designation—
  - (a) the power or duty does not authorise or require him to engage in any conduct otherwise than in the course of his employment as an employee of the contractor;
  - (b) the power may be conferred or the duty imposed subject to restrictions or conditions specified in the designation.
- (9) Subsection (10) applies in relation to the exercise of a power by a person designated under this section in reliance on his designation if the power is one which, if exercised by a police officer, includes or is supplemented by a power to use reasonable force.
- (10) The designated person has the same entitlement to use reasonable force as a police officer would have if the power were exercised by him.
- (11) A designation under this section, unless it is previously withdrawn or ceases to have effect under subsection (12), shall remain in force for such period as may be specified in the designation; but it may be renewed at any time with effect from the time when it would otherwise expire.
- (12) A designation under this section shall cease to have effect—
  - (a) if the designated person ceases to be an employee of the contractor; or
  - (b) if the contract between the Board and the contractor is terminated or expires.

### **32 Police powers: amendments**

- (1) Schedule 3 contains amendments consequential on sections 30 and 31.
- (2) In Schedule 3 “the 1989 Order” means the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (S.I. 1989/1341 (N.I. 12)).

### **33 Designations: supplementary**

- (1) Subsection (2) applies if, in reliance on his designation under section 30<sup>F3</sup>, 30A ] or 31, a person exercises or performs a power or duty in relation to another or purports to do so.
- (2) The designated person must produce his designation to the other if requested to do so.
- (3) A failure to comply with subsection (2) does not make the exercise or performance of the power or duty invalid.

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

- (4) The Chief Constable may at any time modify or withdraw a person's designation under section 30<sup>F4</sup>, 30A ] or 31 by notice to him.
- (5) If the Chief Constable modifies or withdraws a person's designation under section 31, he must send a copy of the notice of the modification or withdrawal to the contractor responsible for supervising the designated person in the carrying out of the functions for the purposes of which the designation was granted.
- (6) In subsection (5) "contractor" means a person who has entered into a contract with the Board such as is mentioned in section 31(1).

#### Textual Amendments

- F3** Word in s. 33(1) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), 7(3)
- F4** Word in s. 33(4) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), 7(3)

## 34 Complaints and misconduct

- (1) The [<sup>F5</sup>Department of Justice] may by regulations make provision for the handling of—
  - (a) complaints relating to the carrying out by a person designated under section 30 [<sup>F6</sup>, 30A] or 31 of any of the functions mentioned in subsection (2);
  - (b) instances of misconduct involving the carrying out by such a person of any of those functions.
- (2) The functions are those for the purposes of which any power or duty is conferred or imposed on the person by his designation.
- (3) Regulations under subsection (1) may in particular provide that any provision of Part 7 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (c. 32) is to apply, with such modifications as may be prescribed by the regulations, with respect to persons designated under section 30 [<sup>F7</sup>, 30A] or 31.
- (4) Before making regulations under subsection (1), the [<sup>F8</sup>Department of Justice] must consult—
  - (a) the Ombudsman;
  - (b) the Board;
  - (c) the Chief Constable;
  - (d) the Police Association;
  - (e) any other person or body appearing to [<sup>F9</sup>the Department of Justice] to have an interest in the matter.

#### Textual Amendments

- F5** Words in s. 34(1) substituted (12.4.2010) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/976\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 93(2)(a)** (with arts. 28-31)
- F6** Word in s. 34(1)(a) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), 7(4)

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

- F7** Word in s. 34(3) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), **7(4)**
- F8** Words in s. 34(4) substituted (12.4.2010) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/976\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 93(2)(b)(i)** (with arts. 28-31)
- F9** Words in s. 34(4) substituted (12.4.2010) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/976\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 93(2)(b)(ii)** (with arts. 28-31)

### [<sup>F10</sup>34A Secretary of State’s power to make regulations

- (1) The Secretary of State may make regulations containing provision of any kind within section 34(1) to (3) for purposes connected with—
  - (a) excepted or reserved matters (within the meaning given by section 4 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998);
  - (b) matters in respect of which a function is conferred or imposed on the Secretary of State by or under a statutory provision (within the meaning given by section 1(f) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954).
- (2) Before making regulations under this section the Secretary of State must consult the Department of Justice, the persons mentioned in section 34(4)(a) to (d) and any other person or body appearing to the Secretary of State to have an interest in the matter.
- (3) Regulations made by the Department of Justice under section 34 have effect subject to regulations made by the Secretary of State under this section.]

#### Textual Amendments

- F10** [S. 34A](#) inserted (12.4.2010) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/976\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 93(3)** (with arts. 28-31)

### 35 Liability for unlawful conduct

- (1) For the purposes of determining liability for the unlawful conduct of members of the police support staff—
  - (a) a member of the police support staff must be treated as an employee of the Chief Constable in relation to conduct in reliance or purported reliance on a designation under section 30 [<sup>F11</sup> or 30A] ;
  - (b) conduct by a member of the police support staff in reliance or purported reliance on a designation under section 30 [<sup>F11</sup> or 30A] must be taken to be conduct in the course of that employment;
  - (c) in the case of a tort, the Chief Constable accordingly falls to be treated as a joint tortfeasor.
- (2) For the purposes of determining liability for the unlawful conduct of employees of a contractor, conduct by such an employee in reliance or purported reliance on a designation under section 31 must be taken to be conduct in the course of his employment by the contractor; and, in the case of a tort, the contractor accordingly falls to be treated as a joint tortfeasor.
- (3) In subsection (2) “contractor” means a person who has entered into a contract with the Board such as is mentioned in section 31(1).

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

#### Textual Amendments

- F11** Words in s. 35(1)(a)(b) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), **7(5)**

### 36 Notifiable memberships

- (1) Section 51 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 (c. 32) (notifiable memberships of police officers) applies in relation to persons designated under section 30<sup>F12</sup>, 30A] or 31 as it applies in relation to police officers.
- (2) As so applied, that section has effect as if the reference in subsection (1) to the duties of a police officer were to the functions for the purposes of which any power or duty is conferred or imposed on a person by his designation under section 30<sup>F12</sup>, 30A] or 31.

#### Textual Amendments

- F12** Word in s. 36(1)(2) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), **7(6)**

### 37 Code of ethics

- (1) The <sup>F13</sup>Department of Justice] may by order apply the code of ethics issued by the Board under section 52 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 (c. 32) to persons designated under section 30 <sup>F14</sup>, 30A] or 31.
- (2) An order under subsection (1) may apply the code with such modifications as are specified in the order.
- (3) If an order is made under subsection (1) applying the code to a person designated under section 30 <sup>F15</sup>, 30A] or 31 he must be guided by the code as it applies to him in carrying out the functions for the purposes of which any power or duty is conferred or imposed on him by his designation.

#### Textual Amendments

- F13** Words in s. 37(1) substituted (12.4.2010) by [The Northern Ireland Act 1998 \(Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions\) Order 2010 \(S.I. 2010/976\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 93(4)** (with arts. 28-31)
- F14** Word in s. 37(1) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), **7(7)**
- F15** Word in s. 37(3) inserted (22.4.2007) by [The Policing \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I. 6\)\)](#), arts. 1(3), **7(7)**

### 38 Assaults on, and obstruction of, designated persons

- (1) Section 66 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (c. 32) (assaults on, and obstruction of, constables etc.) is amended as follows.
- (2) After subsection (1) insert—

---

*Changes to legislation: Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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) View outstanding changes*

---

“(1A) Any person who assaults, resists, obstructs or impedes a designated person in the execution of his duty, or a person assisting a designated person in the execution of his duty, shall be guilty of an offence.”

(3) In subsection (2) after “subsection (1)” insert “ or (1A) ”

(4) In subsection (3) after “subsection (1)” insert “ or (1A) ”

(5) After subsection (3) insert—

“(3A) In subsection (1A) the references to the execution of the duty of a designated person are to—

- (a) the exercise of a power conferred on him by his designation;
- (b) the performance of a duty imposed on him by his designation.

(3B) In this section “designated person” means a person designated under section 30 or 31 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003.”

### **39 Impersonation etc. of designated persons**

(1) Section 67 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (impersonation etc.) is amended as follows.

(2) After subsection (1) insert—

“(1A) Any person who, with intent to deceive—

- (a) impersonates a designated person; or
- (b) makes any statement or does any act calculated falsely to suggest that he is a designated person; or
- (c) makes any statement or does any act calculated falsely to suggest that he has powers as a designated person that exceed the powers he actually has,

shall be guilty of an offence.”

(3) In subsection (3) after “subsection (1)” insert “ , (1A) ”

(4) After subsection (5) insert—

“(6) In this section “designated person” means a person designated under section 30 or 31 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003.”

### **40 Designated persons: interpretation**

(1) This section applies for the interpretation of sections 30 to 39.

(2) “Conduct” includes omissions and statements.

(3) Expressions used in those sections and in the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000 (c. 32) have the same meanings in those sections as they have in that Act.

**Changes to legislation:**

Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2003, Cross Heading: Designation of civilians is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 27 July 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.

[View outstanding changes](#)

**Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:**

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 30(1)(d) added by [S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I.\) art. 6\(1\)](#)
- s. 30(1)(d) repealed by [2009 c. 26 Sch. 7 para. 126\(2\)\(a\)Sch. 8 Pt. 13](#)
- s. 30(6)(d) inserted by [S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I.\) Sch. 4 para. 3](#)
- s. 30(6)(d) repealed by [2009 c. 26 Sch. 7 para. 126\(2\)\(b\)Sch. 8 Pt. 13](#)
- s. 30(11) added by [S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I.\) Sch. 4 para. 4](#)
- s. 30(11) repealed by [2009 c. 26 Sch. 7 para. 126\(2\)\(c\)Sch. 8 Pt. 13](#)
- [Sch. 2 Pt. 3A](#) repealed by [2009 c. 26 Sch. 7 para. 126\(3\)Sch. 8 Pt. 13](#)
- [Sch. 2A para. 17A](#) inserted by [2019 c. 17 s. 12\(6\)](#)
- [Sch. 4 Pt. 3A](#) inserted by [S.I. 2007/912 \(N.I.\) Sch. 4 para. 5](#)