



Companies Act 2006

2006 CHAPTER 46

PART 18

ACQUISITION BY LIMITED COMPANY OF ITS OWN SHARES

CHAPTER 2

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR PURCHASE OF OWN SHARES

Circumstances in which financial assistance prohibited

678 Assistance for acquisition of shares in public company

- (1) Where a person is acquiring or proposing to acquire shares in a public company, it is not lawful for that company, or a company that is a subsidiary of that company, to give financial assistance directly or indirectly for the purpose of the acquisition before or at the same time as the acquisition takes place.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not prohibit a company from giving financial assistance for the acquisition of shares in it or its holding company if—
 - (a) the company's principal purpose in giving the assistance is not to give it for the purpose of any such acquisition, or
 - (b) the giving of the assistance for that purpose is only an incidental part of some larger purpose of the company,and the assistance is given in good faith in the interests of the company.
- (3) Where—
 - (a) a person has acquired shares in a company, and
 - (b) a liability has been incurred (by that or another person) for the purpose of the acquisition,

it is not lawful for that company, or a company that is a subsidiary of that company, to give financial assistance directly or indirectly for the purpose of reducing or

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discharging the liability if, at the time the assistance is given, the company in which the shares were acquired is a public company.

- (4) Subsection (3) does not prohibit a company from giving financial assistance if—
- (a) the company's principal purpose in giving the assistance is not to reduce or discharge any liability incurred by a person for the purpose of the acquisition of shares in the company or its holding company, or
 - (b) the reduction or discharge of any such liability is only an incidental part of some larger purpose of the company,
- and the assistance is given in good faith in the interests of the company.
- (5) This section has effect subject to sections 681 and 682 (unconditional and conditional exceptions to prohibition).

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

- Act amendment to earlier affecting provision S.I. 1989/638, Sch. 4 by [S.I. 2024/410 Sch. 2 para. 1](#)
- Act amendment to earlier affecting provision S.I. 2008/373 reg. 11(1) by [S.I. 2013/1971 reg. 9\(a\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Amending Regulations revoked (1.10.2013) without ever being in force by S.I. 2013/2224, reg. 2)
- Act amendment to earlier affecting provision S.I. 2008/373 reg. 3(4) by [S.I. 2013/1971 reg. 4](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Amending Regulations revoked (1.10.2013) without ever being in force by S.I. 2013/2224, reg. 2)

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

- s. 156A-156C inserted by [2015 c. 26 s. 87\(4\)](#)
- s. 156B(5) omitted by [2023 c. 56 Sch. 2 para. 26](#)
- s. 156C(2) words substituted by [2023 c. 56 s. 41\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- s. 156C(2A) inserted by [2023 c. 56 s. 41\(2\)\(b\)](#)
- s. 156C(3) substituted for s. 156C(3)-(5) by [2023 c. 56 Sch. 2 para. 27](#)
- s. 479A(2)(c)(zi) inserted by [S.I. 2019/177 reg. 4\(b\)\(i\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Reg. 4 substituted by regs. 4, 4A immediately before IP completion day by S.I. 2019/1392, regs. 1(2), 4)
- s. 1047(4)(i)(j) inserted by [2023 c. 56 s. 21\(2\)](#)
- s. 1087(da) substituted by [2023 c. 56 s. 52\(2\)](#)
- s. 1087A-1807C applied by S.I. 2009/2436, Sch. 1 para. 20(1)(ca) (as substituted) by [S.I. 2024/410 Sch. 2 para. 5\(d\)\(ii\)](#)
- s. 1110E-110G applied by S.I. 2009/1804, reg. 60 (as amended) by [S.I. 2024/234 reg. 26](#)
- s. 11989A applied (with modifications) by S.I. 2009/1804, reg. 79A (as inserted) by [S.I. 2024/234 reg. 46](#)
- Sch. 10 para. 6(2D) inserted by [S.I. 2019/177 reg. 28\(e\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Reg. 28(e) omitted immediately before IP completion day by virtue of S.I. 2020/523, regs. 1(2), 14(e)(iv))
- Sch. 10 para. 7(2A) inserted by [S.I. 2019/177 reg. 29\(b\)](#) (This amendment not applied to legislation.gov.uk. Reg. 29 substituted immediately before IP completion day by S.I. 2020/523, regs. 1(2), 14(f))