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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2018 No. 699**

**The Representation of the People (Electronic Communications and Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2018**

**PART 3**

**Amendment of other enactments (except the Representation of the People (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008)**

**Amendment of the Local Elections (Northern Ireland) Order 1985: absent vote at local elections**

**5.—**(1) Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Local Elections (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 is amended as follows.

(2) In paragraph 1 (absent vote at local elections for indefinite period)—

(a) in sub-paragraph (1)—

(i) in paragraph (bb), at the beginning insert “in the case of an applicant other than one who is or will be digitally registered,”,

(ii) after paragraph (bb) insert—

“(bba) in the case of an applicant who is or will be digitally registered, the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the application—

(i) is signed, and

(ii) includes the digital registration number allocated to the applicant by the Chief Electoral Officer,”

(b) after sub-paragraph (1) insert—

“(1ZA) In the case of an applicant who is or will be digitally registered, if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that it is not reasonably practicable for the applicant to sign in a consistent and distinctive way because of blindness or any other disability of that person or because that person is unable to read, the Chief Electoral Officer may make a determination to that effect.”,

(c) after sub-paragraph (6) insert—

“(7) In this paragraph, a reference to a person who is or will be digitally registered is a reference to a person whose registration in the register of local electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service.

(8) In this paragraph—

“digital registration number” has the same meaning as in section 10B(1) of the 1983 Act;

“the UK digital service” has the same meaning as in section 10ZF of the 1983 Act, and the reference to an application submitted through the UK digital service shall be construed in accordance with subsection (4) of that section.”

- (3) In paragraph 2 (absent vote at a particular local election and absent voters list)—
- (a) in sub-paragraph (1)—
- (i) in paragraph (bb), at the beginning insert “in the case of an applicant other than one who is or will be digitally registered,”,
- (ii) after paragraph (bb) insert—
- “(bba) in the case of an applicant who is or will be digitally registered, the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that the application—
- (i) is signed, and
- (ii) includes the digital registration number allocated to the applicant by the Chief Electoral Officer,”
- (b) after sub-paragraph (1) insert—
- “(1ZA) In the case of an applicant who is or will be digitally registered, if the Chief Electoral Officer is satisfied that it is not reasonably practicable for the applicant to sign in a consistent and distinctive way because of blindness or any other disability of that person or because that person is unable to read, the Chief Electoral Officer may make a determination to that effect.”,
- (c) after sub-paragraph (5) insert—
- “(6) In this paragraph, a reference to a person who is or will be digitally registered is a reference to a person whose registration in the register of local electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service.
- (7) In this paragraph—
- “digital registration number” has the same meaning as in section 10B(1) of the 1983 Act;
- “the UK digital service” has the same meaning as in section 10ZF of the 1983 Act, and the reference to an application submitted through the UK digital service shall be construed in accordance with subsection (4) of that section.”