



# Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959

## 1959 CHAPTER 15

### [<sup>F1</sup>17C Offences relating to evidence

- (1) It is an offence for a person to do anything that is intended to have the effect of—
  - (a) distorting or otherwise altering any evidence, document or other thing that is given or produced for the purposes of any investigation or inquest under this Act, or
  - (b) preventing any evidence, document or other thing from being given or produced for the purposes of such an investigation or inquest,or to do anything that the person knows or believes is likely to have that effect.
- (2) It is an offence for a person—
  - (a) intentionally to suppress or conceal a document that is, and that the person knows or believes to be, a relevant document, or
  - (b) intentionally to alter or destroy such a document.
- (3) For the purposes of subsection (2) a document is a “relevant document” if it is likely that a coroner making any investigation or holding an inquest would (if aware of its existence) wish to be provided with it.
- (4) A person does not commit an offence under subsection (1) or (2) by doing anything that is authorised or required—
  - (a) by a coroner, or
  - (b) by virtue of section 17B(2) or (3) or any privilege that applies.
- (5) Proceedings for an offence under subsection (1) or (2) may be instituted only by or with the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions for Northern Ireland.
- (6) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) or (2) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale, or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months, or to both.]

**F1** Ss. 17A-17C substituted for s. 17 (29.2.2016) by [Coroners and Justice Act 2009 \(c. 25\), s. 182\(5\), Sch. 11 para. 1](#) (with s. 180); S.R. 2016/23, art. 2

**Changes to legislation:**

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Coroners Act (Northern Ireland) 1959, Section 17C.