



Mental Health Act 1983

1983 CHAPTER 20

PART I

APPLICATION OF ACT

1 Application of Act: “mental disorder”.

(1) The provisions of this Act shall have effect with respect to the reception, care and treatment of mentally disordered patients, the management of their property and other related matters.

(2) In this Act—

[^{F1}“mental disorder” means any disorder or disability of the mind; and “mentally disordered” shall be construed accordingly;]

^{F2}
^{F2}
^{F2}

and other expressions shall have the meanings assigned to them in section 145 below.

[^{F3}(2A) But a person with learning disability shall not be considered by reason of that disability to be—

- (a) suffering from mental disorder for the purposes of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2B) below; or
- (b) requiring treatment in hospital for mental disorder for the purposes of sections 17E and 50 to 53 below,

unless that disability is associated with abnormally aggressive or seriously irresponsible conduct on his part.

(2B) The provisions are—

- (a) sections 3, 7, 17A, 20 and 20A below;
- (b) sections 35 to 38, 45A, 47, 48 and 51 below; and
- (c) section 72(1)(b) and (c) and (4) below.]

Changes to legislation: Mental Health Act 1983, Part I is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 28 December 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

[^{F4}(3) Dependence on alcohol or drugs is not considered to be a disorder or disability of the mind for the purposes of subsection (2) above.]

[^{F5}(4) In subsection (2A) above, “learning disability” means a state of arrested or incomplete development of the mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 1(2): definitions of "mental disorder" and "mentally disordered" substituted (3.11.2008) by [Mental Health Act 2007 \(c. 12\)](#), [ss. 1\(2\)](#), 56 (with Sch. 10); S.I. 2008/1900, [art. 2\(a\)](#) (with art. 3, Sch.)
- F2** S. 1(2): definitions repealed (3.11.2008) by [Mental Health Act 2007 \(c. 12\)](#), [ss. 1\(3\)](#), 55, 56, [Sch. 11 Pt. 1](#) (with Sch. 10); S.I. 2008/1900, [art. 2\(a\)\(p\)](#) (with art. 3, Sch.)
- F3** S. 1(2A)(2B) inserted (3.11.2008) by [Mental Health Act 2007 \(c. 12\)](#), [ss. 2\(2\)](#), 56 (with Sch. 10); S.I. 2008/1900, [art. 2\(b\)](#) (with art. 3, Sch.)
- F4** S. 1(3) substituted (3.11.2008) by [Mental Health Act 2007 \(c. 12\)](#), [ss. 3](#), 56 (with Sch. 10); S.I. 2008/1900, [art. 2\(b\)](#) (with art. 3, Sch.)
- F5** S. 1(4) inserted (3.11.2008) by [Mental Health Act 2007 \(c. 12\)](#), [ss. 2\(3\)](#), 56 (with Sch. 10); S.I. 2008/1900, [art. 2\(b\)](#) (with art. 3, Sch.)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 1(2) modified (3.11.2008) by [The Mental Health Act 2007 \(Commencement No. 6 and After-care under Supervision: Savings, Modifications and Transitional Provisions\) Order 2008 \(S.I. 2008/1210\)](#), [art. 6\(a\)](#) (with arts. 4, 5)

Changes to legislation:

Mental Health Act 1983, Part I is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 28 December 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.

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

- Act applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 9](#)(replacing [1968 c 20 s. 23](#)) (Act applied (prosp.) by [1968 c. 20, s. 23\(4\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2, para. 9](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)\)](#))
- Act applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 4](#)(replacing [1957 c 53 s. 63](#)) (Act applied (prosp.) by [1957 c. 53, s. 63C\(6\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2, para. 4](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)\)](#))
- Act applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 1](#)(replacing [1955 c 19 s. 116](#)) (Act applied (prosp.) by [1955 c. 19, s. 116C\(6\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2 para. 1](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)](#))
- Act applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 1](#)(replacing [1955 c 18 s 116](#)) (Act applied (prosp.) by [1955 c. 18, s. 116C\(6\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2 para. 1](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)\)](#))
- Act power to applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 4](#)(replacing [1957 c 53 s. 63](#)) (Act: Power to apply conferred (prosp.) by [1957 c. 53, s. 63B\(4\)\(c\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2, para. 4](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)\)](#))
- Act power to applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 1](#)(replacing [1955 c 19 s. 116](#)) (Act: Power to apply conferred (prosp.) by [1955 c. 19, s. 116B\(4\)\(c\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2, para. 1](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)\)](#))
- Act power to applied by [1996 c. 46 Sch. 2 para. 1](#)(replacing [1955 c 18 s 116](#)) (Act: Power to apply conferred (prosp.) by [1955 c. 18, s. 116B\(4\)\(c\)](#) (as substituted (prosp.) by [1996 c. 46, ss. 8, 36\(2\), Sch. 2 para. 1](#) which said amending provision was repealed (31.3.2005) by [Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 \(c. 28\), ss. 58\(2\), 60, Sch. 11; S.I. 2005/579, art. 3\(h\)\(i\)\(ix\)\)](#))

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

- [s. 74\(8\)](#) inserted by [2015 c. 2 Sch. 3 para. 3\(3\)](#)