



2000 CHAPTER 4

PART III  
SOCIAL SECURITY

*Loss of benefit*

**Information provision**

**55.—(1)** A court in Northern Ireland shall, before making a relevant community order in relation to any person, explain to that person in ordinary language the consequences by virtue of sections 53 and 54 of a failure to comply with the order.

(2) The Department may by regulations require the Chief Probation Officer for Northern Ireland, or such other person as may be prescribed, to notify the Department or, as the case may be, the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment, at the prescribed time and in the prescribed manner—

- (a) of the making by a member of the staff of the Probation Board of a complaint that a person has failed to comply with the requirements of a relevant community order;
- (b) of any such determination as is mentioned in section 53(1);
- (c) of such information about the offender, and in the possession of the person giving the notification, as may be prescribed; and
- (d) of any circumstances by virtue of which any payment or adjustment might fall to be made by virtue of section 53(6) or 54(6).

(3) Where it appears to the Department or, as the case may be, the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment, that the making of any complaint could result in a determination the making of which would result in the imposition by or under one or both of sections 53 and 54 of any restrictions, it shall be the duty of that Department to notify the person in whose case those restrictions would be imposed, or (as the case may be) the members of any joint-claim couple in whose case they would be imposed, of the consequences under those sections of such a determination in the case of that person, or couple.

(4) A notification required to be given by the Department or, as the case may be, the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment, under subsection (3) must be given as soon as reasonably practicable after it first appears to that Department as mentioned in that subsection.

(5) The Department may by regulations make such provision as it thinks fit for the purposes of sections 53 to 56 about—

- (a) the use by a person within subsection (6) of information relating to community orders or social security;
- (b) the supply of such information by a person within that subsection to any other person (whether or not within that subsection); and
- (c) the purposes for which a person to whom such information is supplied under the regulations may use it.

(6) The persons within this subsection are—

- (a) the Department or, as the case may be, the Department of Higher and Further Education, Training and Employment;
- (b) a person providing services to either of those Departments;
- (c) a member of the staff of the Probation Board.

(7) Regulations under subsection (5) may, in particular, authorise information supplied to a person under the regulations—

- (a) to be used for the purpose of amending or supplementing other information held by that person; and
- (b) where so used, to be supplied to any other person to whom, and used for any purpose for which, the information amended or supplemented could be supplied or used.

(8) In this section—

“member of the staff of the Probation Board” has the same meaning as in the [Probation Board \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1982 \(NI 10\)](#);

“the Probation Board” means the Probation Board for Northern Ireland;

“relevant community order” has the same meaning as in section 53.