

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)



Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007

2007 CHAPTER 2

An Act to make provision about social security and for connected purposes. [29th June 2007]

BE IT ENACTED by being passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly and assented to by Her Majesty as follows:

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

PART 1

EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** Pt. 1 (ss. 1-29) applied (with modifications) (1.10.2010) by [Employment and Support Allowance \(Transitional Provisions and Housing Benefit\) \(Existing Awards\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2010 \(S.R. 2010/312\)](#), regs. 1, 6, Sch. 1
- C2** Pt. 1 (ss. 1-29) applied (with modifications) (1.10.2010) by [Employment and Support Allowance \(Transitional Provisions and Housing Benefit\) \(Existing Awards\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2010 \(S.R. 2010/312\)](#), regs. 1, 16, Sch. 2
- C3** Pt. 1 (ss. 1-29) applied (with modifications) by [Social Security Contributions and Benefits \(Northern Ireland\) Act 1992 \(c. 7\)](#), s. 123(6A)(6B) (as inserted (prosp.)) by [Welfare Reform Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2010 \(c. 13\)](#), ss. 5(1)(b), 36(2))

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Entitlement

Employment and support allowance

1.—(1) An allowance, to be known as an employment and support allowance, shall be payable in accordance with the provisions of this Part.

(2) Subject to the provisions of this Part, a claimant is entitled to an employment and support allowance if he satisfies the basic conditions and either—

(a) the first and the second conditions set out in Part 1 of Schedule 1 (conditions relating to national insurance) or the third condition set out in that Part of that Schedule (condition relating to youth), or

(b) the conditions set out in Part 2 of that Schedule (conditions relating to financial position).

(3) The basic conditions are that the claimant—

(a) has limited capability for work,

(b) is at least 16 years old,

(c) has not reached pensionable age,

(d) is in Northern Ireland,

(e) is not entitled to income support, and

(f) is not entitled to a jobseeker's allowance (and is not a member of a couple who are entitled to a joint-claim jobseeker's allowance).

(4) For the purposes of this Part, a person has limited capability for work if—

(a) his capability for work is limited by his physical or mental condition, and

(b) the limitation is such that it is not reasonable to require him to work.

(5) An employment and support allowance is payable in respect of a week.

(6) In subsection (3)—

“joint-claim jobseeker's allowance” means a jobseeker's allowance entitlement to which arises by virtue of Article 3(2B) of the Jobseekers Order;

“pensionable age” has the meaning given by the rules in paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 to the Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (NI 22).

(7) In this Part—

“contributory allowance” means an employment and support allowance entitlement to which is based on subsection (2)(a);

“income-related allowance” means an employment and support allowance entitlement to which is based on subsection (2)(b).

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Commencement Information

- II** S. 1 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 1 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 1 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(c\), Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 1 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(d\), Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Amount of contributory allowance

2.—(1) In the case of a contributory allowance, the amount payable in respect of a claimant shall be calculated by—

- (a) taking such amount as may be prescribed,
- (b) if in his case the conditions of entitlement to the support component or the work-related activity component are satisfied, adding the amount of that component, and
- (c) making prescribed deductions in respect of any payments to which section 3 applies.

(2) The conditions of entitlement to the support component are—

- (a) that the assessment phase has ended,
- (b) that the claimant has limited capability for work-related activity, and
- (c) that such other conditions as may be prescribed are satisfied.

(3) The conditions of entitlement to the work-related activity component are—

- (a) that the assessment phase has ended,
- (b) that the claimant does not have limited capability for work-related activity, and
- (c) that such other conditions as may be prescribed are satisfied.

(4) Regulations may—

- (a) prescribe circumstances in which paragraph (a) of subsection (2) or (3) is not to apply;
- (b) prescribe circumstances in which entitlement under subsection (2) or (3) is to be backdated;
- (c) make provision about the amount of the component under subsection (2) or (3).

(5) For the purposes of this Part, a person has limited capability for work-related activity if—

- (a) his capability for work-related activity is limited by his physical or mental condition, and

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- (b) the limitation is such that it is not reasonable to require him to undertake such activity.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C4** S. 2(1)(c) modified (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **72(1)**
- C5** S. 2(2)(a) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **7(1)** (subject to reg. 7(2))
- C6** S. 2(3)(a) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **7(1)** (subject to reg. 7(2))

Commencement Information

- I2** S. 2 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 2 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 2(1)(a)(c)(4)(a)(c) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(c)**, **Sch. Pt. 1**; s. 2 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(d)**, **Sch. Pt. 2**

Deductions from contributory allowance: supplementary

3.—(1) This section applies to payments of the following kinds which are payable to the claimant—

- (a) pension payments,
- (b) PPF periodic payments, and
- (c) payments of a prescribed description made to a person who is a member of, or has been appointed to, a prescribed body carrying out public or local functions.

(2) Regulations may—

- (a) disapply section 2(1)(c), so far as relating to pension payments or PPF periodic payments, in relation to persons of a prescribed description;
- (b) provide for pension payments or PPF periodic payments of a prescribed description to be treated for the purposes of that provision as not being payments to which this section applies;
- (c) provide for sums of a prescribed description to be treated for the purposes of this section as payable to persons as pension payments or PPF periodic payments (including, in particular, sums in relation to which there is a deferred right of receipt);
- (d) make provision for the method of determining how payments to which this section applies are, for the purposes of section 2, to be related to periods for which a person is entitled to a contributory allowance.

(3) In this section—

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“pension payment” means—

- (a) a periodical payment made in relation to a person under a personal pension scheme or, in connection with the coming to an end of an employment of his, under an occupational pension scheme or a public service pension scheme,
- (b) a payment of a prescribed description made under an insurance policy providing benefits in connection with physical or mental illness or disability, and
- (c) such other payments as may be prescribed;

“PPF periodic payment” means—

- (a) any periodic compensation payment made in relation to a person, payable under the pension compensation provisions as specified in Article 146(2) of the Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (NI 1) or section 162(2) of the Pensions Act 2004 (c. 35) (the pension compensation provisions), and
- (b) any periodic payment made in relation to a person, payable under Article 150 of the Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 or section 166 of the Pensions Act 2004 (duty to pay scheme benefits unpaid at assessment date etc.).

(4) For the purposes of subsection (3), “occupational pension scheme”, “personal pension scheme” and “public service pension scheme” each have the meaning given by section 1 of the Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Act 1993 (c. 49), except that “personal pension scheme” includes—

- (a) an annuity contract or trust scheme approved under section 620 or 621 of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 (c. 1), and
- (b) a substituted contract within the meaning of section 622(3) of that Act,

which is treated as having become a registered pension scheme by virtue of paragraph 1(1)(f) of Schedule 36 to the Finance Act 2004 (c. 12).

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C7** S. 3 modified (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **72(1)**
- C8** S. 3 restricted (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **75**

Commencement Information

- I3** S. 3 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 3 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 3(1)(c)(2)(b)(d) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(c)**, [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 3(3) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(c)**, [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 3 in

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operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), Sch. Pt. 2

Amount of income-related allowance

4.—(1) In the case of an income-related allowance, the amount payable in respect of a claimant shall be—

- (a) if he has no income, the applicable amount;
- (b) if he has an income, the amount by which the applicable amount exceeds his income.

(2) Subject to subsection (3), the applicable amount for the purposes of subsection (1) shall be calculated by—

- (a) taking such amount, or the aggregate of such amounts, as may be prescribed, and
- (b) if in the claimant's case the conditions of entitlement to the support component or the work-related activity component are satisfied, adding the amount of that component.

(3) Regulations may provide that, in prescribed cases, the applicable amount for the purposes of subsection (1) shall be nil.

(4) The conditions of entitlement to the support component are—

- (a) that the assessment phase has ended,
- (b) that the claimant has limited capability for work-related activity, and
- (c) that such other conditions as may be prescribed are satisfied.

(5) The conditions of entitlement to the work-related activity component are—

- (a) that the assessment phase has ended,
- (b) that the claimant does not have limited capability for work-related activity, and
- (c) that such other conditions as may be prescribed are satisfied.

(6) Regulations may—

- (a) prescribe circumstances in which paragraph (a) of subsection (4) or (5) is not to apply;
- (b) prescribe circumstances in which entitlement under subsection (4) or (5) is to be backdated;
- (c) make provision about the amount of the component under subsection (4) or (5).

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Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C9** S. 4(4)(a) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **7(1)** (subject to reg. 7(2))
- C10** S. 4(4)(a) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **146(3)(b)**
- C11** S. 4(5)(a) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **7(1)** (subject to reg. 7(2))
- C12** S. 4(5)(a) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **146(3)(b)**

Commencement Information

- I4** S. 4 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 4 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 4(2)(a)(3)(6)(a)(c) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(c)**, [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 4 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(d)**, [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Advance award of income-related allowance

5.—(1) This section applies to claims for an employment and support allowance by a person who—

- (a) would be entitled to an income-related allowance, but for the fact that he does not satisfy the condition in paragraph 6(1)(a) of Schedule 1,
- (b) would satisfy that condition if he were entitled to the component mentioned in section 4(4) or (5), and
- (c) is not entitled to a contributory allowance.

(2) In relation to claims to which this section applies, section 5(1) of the Administration Act (regulations about claims for benefit) shall have effect as if—

- (a) in paragraph (d) (power to permit an award on a claim for benefit for a future period to be made subject to the condition that the claimant satisfies the requirements for entitlement when the benefit becomes payable under the award), there were inserted at the end “ and to such other conditions as may be prescribed ”, and
- (b) in paragraph (e) (power to provide for such an award to be revised or superseded under the 1998 Order if any of those requirements are found not to have been satisfied), for “any of those requirements” there were substituted “ any of the conditions to which the award is made subject ”.

(3) Regulations may, in relation to claims to which this section applies, make provision enabling an award to be made on terms such that the time at which benefit becomes payable under the award is later than the start of the period for which the award is made.

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Commencement Information

- I5** S. 5 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 5 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 5(2)(3) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 5 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Amount payable where claimant entitled to both forms of allowance

6.—(1) This section applies where a claimant is entitled to both a contributory allowance and an income-related allowance.

(2) If the claimant has no income, the amount payable by way of an employment and support allowance shall be the greater of—

- (a) his personal rate, and
- (b) the applicable amount.

(3) If the claimant has an income, the amount payable by way of an employment and support allowance shall be the greater of—

- (a) his personal rate, and
- (b) the amount by which the applicable amount exceeds his income.

(4) Where the amount payable to the claimant by way of an employment and support allowance does not exceed his personal rate, the allowance shall be treated as attributable to the claimant's entitlement to a contributory allowance.

(5) Where the amount payable to the claimant by way of an employment and support allowance exceeds his personal rate, the allowance shall be taken to consist of two elements, namely—

- (a) an amount equal to his personal rate, and
- (b) an amount equal to the excess.

(6) The element mentioned in subsection (5)(a) shall be treated as attributable to the claimant's entitlement to a contributory allowance.

(7) The element mentioned in subsection (5)(b) shall be treated as attributable to the claimant's entitlement to an income-related allowance.

(8) In this section—

“applicable amount” means the amount which, in the claimant's case, is the applicable amount for the purposes of section 4(1);

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“personal rate” means the amount calculated in accordance with section 2(1).

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Exclusion of payments below prescribed minimum

7 Except in such circumstances as regulations may provide, an employment and support allowance shall not be payable where the amount otherwise payable would be less than a prescribed minimum.

Assessments relating to entitlement

Limited capability for work

8.—(1) For the purposes of this Part, whether a person's capability for work is limited by his physical or mental condition and, if it is, whether the limitation is such that it is not reasonable to require him to work shall be determined in accordance with regulations.

(2) Regulations under subsection (1) shall—

- (a) provide for determination on the basis of an assessment of the person concerned;
- (b) define the assessment by reference to the extent to which a person who has some specific disease or bodily or mental disablement is capable or incapable of performing such activities as may be prescribed;
- (c) make provision as to the manner of carrying out the assessment.

(3) Regulations under subsection (1) may, in particular, make provision—

- (a) as to the information or evidence required for the purpose of determining the matters mentioned in that subsection;
- (b) as to the manner in which that information or evidence is to be provided;
- (c) for a person in relation to whom it falls to be determined whether he has limited capability for work to be called to attend for such medical examination as the regulations may require.

(4) Regulations under subsection (1) may include provision—

- (a) for a person to be treated as not having limited capability for work if he fails without good cause—
 - (i) to provide information or evidence which he is required under such regulations to provide,

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(ii) to provide information or evidence in the manner in which he is required under such regulations to provide it, or

(iii) to attend for, or submit himself to, a medical examination for which he is called under such regulations to attend;

(b) as to matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining for the purposes of any provision made by virtue of paragraph (a) whether a person has good cause for any act or omission;

(c) as to circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded for the purposes of any such provision as having good cause for any act or omission.

(5) Regulations may provide that, in prescribed circumstances, a person in relation to whom it falls to be determined whether he has limited capability for work, shall, if prescribed conditions are met, be treated as having limited capability for work until such time as—

(a) it has been determined whether he has limited capability for work, or

(b) he falls in accordance with regulations under this section to be treated as not having limited capability for work.

(6) The prescribed conditions referred to in subsection (5) may include the condition that it has not previously been determined, within such period as may be prescribed, that the person in question does not have, or is to be treated as not having, limited capability for work.

Commencement Information

I6 S. 8 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 8 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 8 (except subsection (4)(c)) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 8 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Limited capability for work-related activity

9.—(1) For the purposes of this Part, whether a person's capability for work-related activity is limited by his physical or mental condition and, if it is, whether the limitation is such that it is not reasonable to require him to undertake such activity shall be determined in accordance with regulations.

(2) Regulations under subsection (1) shall—

(a) provide for determination on the basis of an assessment of the person concerned;

(b) define the assessment by reference to such matters as the regulations may provide;

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- (c) make provision as to the manner of carrying out the assessment.
- (3) Regulations under subsection (1) may, in particular, make provision—
 - (a) as to the information or evidence required for the purpose of determining the matters mentioned in that subsection;
 - (b) as to the manner in which that information or evidence is to be provided;
 - (c) for a person in relation to whom it falls to be determined whether he has limited capability for work-related activity to be called to attend for such medical examination as the regulations may require.
- (4) Regulations under subsection (1) may include provision—
 - (a) for a person to be treated as not having limited capability for work-related activity if he fails without good cause—
 - (i) to provide information or evidence which he is required under such regulations to provide,
 - (ii) to provide information or evidence in the manner in which he is required under such regulations to provide it, or
 - (iii) to attend for, or submit himself to, a medical examination for which he is called under such regulations to attend;
 - (b) as to matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining for the purposes of any provision made by virtue of paragraph (a) whether a person has good cause for any act or omission;
 - (c) as to circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded for the purposes of any such provision as having good cause for any act or omission.

Commencement Information

- 17** S. 9 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 9 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 9 (except subsection (4)(c)) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 9 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Report

- 10** The Department shall lay before the Assembly an independent report on the operation of the assessments under sections 8 and 9 annually for the first five years after these sections come into effect.

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Conditionality

Work-focused health-related assessments

11.—(1) Regulations may make provision for or in connection with imposing on a person who is—

- (a) entitled to an employment and support allowance, and
- (b) not a member of the support group,

a requirement to take part in one or more work-focused health-related assessments as a condition of continuing to be entitled to the full amount payable to him in respect of the allowance apart from the regulations.

(2) Regulations under this section may, in particular, make provision—

- (a) prescribing circumstances in which such a person is subject to a requirement to take part in one or more work-focused health-related assessments;
- (b) for notifying such a person of any such requirement;
- (c) prescribing the work-focused health-related assessments in which a person who is subject to such a requirement is required to take part;
- (d) for the determination, and notification, of the time and place of any such assessment;
- (e) prescribing circumstances in which a person attending such an assessment is to be regarded as having, or not having, taken part in it;
- (f) for securing that the appropriate consequence follows if a person who is required under the regulations to take part in a work-focused health-related assessment—
 - (i) fails to take part in the assessment, and
 - (ii) does not, within a prescribed period, show that he had good cause for that failure;
- (g) prescribing matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining whether a person had good cause for any failure to comply with the regulations;
- (h) prescribing circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded as having good cause for any such failure.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(f), the appropriate consequence of a failure falling within that provision is that the amount payable to the person in question in respect of an employment and support allowance is reduced in accordance with regulations.

(4) Regulations under subsection (3) may, in particular, make provision for determining—

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- (a) the amount by which an allowance is to be reduced,
- (b) when the reduction is to start, and
- (c) how long it is to continue,

and may include provision prescribing circumstances in which the amount of the reduction is to be nil.

(5) Regulations under this section shall include provision for a requirement to take part in one or more work-focused health-related assessments to cease to have effect if the person subject to the requirement becomes a member of the support group.

(6) Regulations under this section may include provision—

- (a) that in such circumstances as the regulations may prescribe a requirement to take part in a work-focused health-related assessment that would otherwise apply to a person by virtue of such regulations is not to apply, or is to be treated as not having applied;
- (b) that in such circumstances as the regulations may prescribe such a requirement is not to apply until a prescribed time;
- (c) that in such circumstances as the regulations may prescribe the time and place of a work-focused health-related assessment in which a person is required by regulations under this section to take part may be redetermined.

(7) In this section, “work-focused health-related assessment” means an assessment by a health care professional approved by the Department which is carried out for the purpose of assessing—

- (a) the extent to which a person still has capability for work,
- (b) the extent to which his capability for work may be improved by the taking of steps in relation to his physical or mental condition, and
- (c) such other matters relating to his physical or mental condition and the likelihood of his obtaining or remaining in work or being able to do so, as may be prescribed.

(8) In subsection (7), “health care professional” means—

- (a) a registered medical practitioner,
- (b) a registered nurse,
- (c) an occupational therapist or physiotherapist registered with a regulatory body established by an Order in Council under section 60 of the Health Act 1999 (c. 8), or
- (d) a member of such other profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 (c. 17) as may be prescribed.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C13** S. 11(1) modified (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **66(a)**

Commencement Information

- I8** S. 11 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 11 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 11(1)(2)(a)-(g)(3)-(5)(6)(a)(7)(c) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(c)**, [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 11 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(d)**, [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Work-focused interviews

12.—(1) Regulations may make provision for or in connection with imposing on a person who is—

- (a) entitled to an employment and support allowance, and
- (b) not a member of the support group,

a requirement to take part in one or more work-focused interviews as a condition of continuing to be entitled to the full amount payable to him in respect of the allowance apart from the regulations.

(2) Regulations under this section may, in particular, make provision—

- (a) prescribing circumstances in which such a person is subject to a requirement to take part in one or more work-focused interviews;
- (b) for notifying such a person of any such requirement;
- (c) prescribing the work-focused interviews in which a person who is subject to such a requirement is required to take part;
- (d) for determining, in relation to work-focused interviews under the regulations, when and how the interview is to be conducted and, if it is to be conducted face to face, where it is to take place;
- (e) for notifying persons who are required under the regulations to take part in a work-focused interview of what is determined in respect of the matters mentioned in paragraph (d);
- (f) prescribing circumstances in which a person who is a party to a work-focused interview under the regulations is to be regarded as having, or not having, taken part in it;
- (g) for securing that the appropriate consequence follows if a person who is required under the regulations to take part in a work-focused interview—

- (i) fails to take part in the interview, and

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(ii) does not, within a prescribed period, show that he had good cause for that failure;

(h) prescribing matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining whether a person had good cause for any failure to comply with the regulations;

(i) prescribing circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded as having good cause for any such failure.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(g), the appropriate consequence of a failure falling within that provision is that the amount payable to the person in question in respect of an employment and support allowance is reduced in accordance with regulations.

(4) Regulations under subsection (3) may, in particular, make provision for determining—

(a) the amount by which an allowance is to be reduced,

(b) when the reduction is to start, and

(c) how long it is to continue,

and may include provision prescribing circumstances in which the amount of the reduction is to be nil.

(5) Regulations under this section shall include provision for a requirement to take part in one or more work-focused interviews to cease to have effect if the person subject to the requirement becomes a member of the support group.

(6) Regulations under this section may include provision—

(a) that in such circumstances as the regulations may prescribe a requirement to take part in a work-focused interview that would otherwise apply to a person by virtue of such regulations is not to apply, or is to be treated as not having applied;

(b) that in such circumstances as the regulations may prescribe such a requirement is not to apply until a prescribed time;

(c) that in such circumstances as the regulations may prescribe matters mentioned in subsection (2)(d) may be redetermined.

(7) In this section, “work-focused interview” means an interview by the Department for Employment and Learning conducted for such purposes connected with getting the person interviewed into work, or keeping him in work, as may be prescribed.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C14 S. 12(1) modified (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **66(b)**

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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Commencement Information

- I9** S. 12 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 12 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 12 (except subsection (2)(i)) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 12 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Work-related activity

13.—(1) Regulations may make provision for or in connection with imposing on a person who is subject to a requirement imposed under section 12(1) a requirement to undertake work-related activity in accordance with regulations as a condition of continuing to be entitled to the full amount payable to him in respect of an employment and support allowance apart from the regulations.

(2) Regulations under this section may, in particular, make provision—

- (a) prescribing circumstances in which such a person is subject to a requirement to undertake work-related activity in accordance with regulations;
- (b) for notifying such a person of any such requirement;
- (c) prescribing the time or times at which a person who is subject to such a requirement is required to undertake work-related activity and the amount of work-related activity he is required at any time to undertake;
- (d) prescribing circumstances in which a person who is subject to such a requirement is, or is not, to be regarded as undertaking work-related activity;
- (e) for securing that the appropriate consequence follows if a person who is subject to such a requirement—
 - (i) fails to comply with the regulations, and
 - (ii) does not, within a prescribed period, show that he had good cause for that failure;
- (f) prescribing the evidence which a person who is subject to such a requirement needs to provide in order to show that he has complied with the regulations;
- (g) prescribing matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining whether a person has complied with the regulations;

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(h) prescribing matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining whether a person had good cause for any failure to comply with the regulations;

(i) prescribing circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded as having good cause for any such failure.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (2)(e), the appropriate consequence of a failure falling within that provision is that the amount payable to the person in question in respect of an employment and support allowance is to be reduced in accordance with regulations.

(4) Regulations under subsection (3) may, in particular, make provision for determining—

(a) the amount by which an allowance is to be reduced,

(b) when the reduction is to start, and

(c) how long it is to continue,

and may include provision prescribing circumstances in which the amount of the reduction is to be nil.

(5) Regulations under this section shall include provision for a requirement to undertake work-related activity in accordance with regulations to cease to have effect if the person subject to the requirement becomes a member of the support group.

(6) Regulations under this section may include provision that in such circumstances as the regulations may provide a person's obligation under the regulations to undertake work-related activity at a particular time is not to apply, or is to be treated as not having applied.

(7) In this Part, “work-related activity”, in relation to a person, means activity which makes it more likely that the person will obtain or remain in work or be able to do so.

Commencement Information

I10 S. 13 wholly in operation at 11.7.2011; s. 13 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 13(7) in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/425](#), [art. 2](#); s. 13(1)-(6) in operation at 11.7.2011 by [S.R. 2011/260](#), [art. 2](#)

Action plans in connection with work-focused interviews

14.—(1) The Department for Employment and Learning shall in prescribed circumstances provide a person subject to a requirement imposed under section 12(1) with a document prepared for such purposes as may be prescribed (in this section referred to as an action plan).

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Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(2) Regulations may make provision about—

- (a) the form of action plans;
- (b) the content of action plans;
- (c) the review and updating of action plans.

(3) Regulations under this section may, in particular, make provision for action plans which are provided to a person who is subject under section 13 to a requirement to undertake work-related activity to contain particulars of activity which, if undertaken, would enable the requirement to be met.

(4) Regulations may make provision for reconsideration of an action plan at the request of the person to whom the plan is provided and may, in particular, make provision about—

- (a) the circumstances in which reconsideration may be requested;
- (b) the period within which any reconsideration must take place;
- (c) the matters to which regard must be had when deciding on reconsideration whether the plan should be changed;
- (d) notification of the decision on reconsideration;
- (e) the giving of directions for the purpose of giving effect to the decision on reconsideration.

Commencement Information

- III** S. 14 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 14 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 14(1)(2)(a)(b) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 14 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 11/07/2011

Directions about work-related activity

15.^{F1}(1) In prescribed circumstances, the Department or the Department for Employment and Learning may by direction given to a person subject to a requirement imposed under section 13(1) provide that the activity specified in the direction is—

- (a) to be the only activity which, in the person's case, is to be regarded as being work-related activity; or
- (b) to be regarded, in the person's case, as not being work-related activity.

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(1A) But a direction under subsection (1) may not specify medical or surgical treatment as the only activity which, in any person's case, is to be regarded as being work-related activity.

(2) A direction under subsection (1) given to any person—

(a) must be reasonable, having regard to the person's circumstances;

(b) must be given to the person by being included in an action plan provided to the person under section 14; and

(c) may be varied or revoked by a subsequent direction under subsection (1).]

(3) Where a direction under subsection (1) varies or revokes a previous direction, it may provide for the variation or revocation to have effect from a time before the giving of the direction.

Textual Amendments

F1 S. 15(1)(1A)(2) substituted (23.9.2010) for s. 15(1)(2) by [Welfare Reform Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2010 \(c. 13\)](#), **ss. 10, 36(2)**; S.R. 2010/327, **art. 2(2)(a)**

Contracting out

16.—(1) The following functions of the Department may be exercised by, or by employees of, such person (if any) as it may authorise for the purpose, namely—

(a) conducting interviews under section 12;

(b) providing documents under section 14;

(c) giving, varying or revoking directions under section 15.

(2) Regulations may provide for any of the following functions of the Department to be exercisable by, or by employees of, such person (if any) as it may authorise for the purpose—

(a) any function under regulations under any of sections 11 to 15, except the making of a decision to which subsection (3) applies (an “excluded decision”);

(b) the function under Article 10(1) of the 1998 Order (revision of decisions), so far as relating to decisions, except excluded decisions, that relate to any matter arising under such regulations;

(c) the function under Article 11(1) of that Order (superseding of decisions), so far as relating to decisions, except excluded decisions, of the Department that relate to any matter arising under such regulations;

(d) any function under Chapter 2 of Part 2 of that Order (social security decisions), except Article 25(2) and (3) (decisions involving issues that

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arise on appeal in other cases), which relates to the exercise of any of the functions falling within paragraphs (a) to (c).

(3) This subsection applies to the following decisions—

- (a) a decision about whether a person has failed to comply with a requirement imposed by regulations under section 11, 12 or 13;
- (b) a decision about whether a person had good cause for failure to comply with such a requirement;
- (c) a decision about reduction of an employment and support allowance in consequence of failure to comply with such a requirement.

(4) Regulations under subsection (2) may provide that a function to which that subsection applies may be exercised—

- (a) either wholly or to such extent as the regulations may provide,
- (b) either generally or in such cases or areas as the regulations may provide, and
- (c) either unconditionally or subject to the fulfilment of such conditions as the regulations may provide.

(5) An authorisation given by virtue of subsection (1), or by virtue of regulations under subsection (2), may authorise the exercise of the function concerned—

- (a) either wholly or to such extent as may be specified in the authorisation,
- (b) either generally or in such cases or areas as may be so specified, and
- (c) either unconditionally or subject to the fulfilment of such conditions as may be so specified.

(6) In the case of an authorisation given by virtue of regulations under subsection (2), subsection (5) is subject to the provisions of the regulations.

(7) An authorisation given by virtue of subsection (1), or by virtue of regulations under subsection (2)—

- (a) may specify its duration,
- (b) may be revoked at any time by the Department, and
- (c) shall not prevent the Department or any other person from exercising the function to which the authorisation relates.

(8) Where a person is authorised to exercise any function by virtue of subsection (1), or by virtue of regulations under subsection (2), anything done or omitted to be done by or in relation to him (or an employee of his) in, or in connection with, the exercise or purported exercise of the function shall be treated for all purposes as done or omitted to be done by or in relation to the Department.

(9) Subsection (8) shall not apply—

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(a) for the purposes of so much of any contract made between the authorised person and the Department as relates to the exercise of the function, or

(b) for the purposes of any criminal proceedings brought in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by the authorised person (or an employee of his).

(10) Any decision which a person authorised to exercise any function by virtue of subsection (1), or by virtue of regulations under subsection (2), makes in exercise of the function shall have effect as a decision of the Department under Article 9 of the 1998 Order.

(11) Where—

(a) a person is authorised to exercise any function by virtue of subsection (1), or by virtue of regulations under subsection (2), and

(b) the authorisation is revoked at a time when a relevant contract is subsisting,

the authorised person shall be entitled to treat the relevant contract as repudiated by the Department (and not as frustrated by reason of the revocation).

(12) In subsection (11), the reference to a relevant contract is to so much of any contract made between the authorised person and the Department as relates to the exercise of the function.

(13) In this section, references to functions of the Department under—

(a) a statutory provision contained in, or in regulations under, this Part; or

(b) a statutory provision contained in Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the 1998 Order,

include a reference to any function which the Department has by virtue of the application in relation to that provision of Article 9(1)(c) of that Order (decisions under certain statutory provisions to be made by the Department).

(14) In this section “the Department” means the Department for Social Development or the Department for Employment and Learning.

Commencement Information

I12 S. 16 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 16 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 16(2)(a)(4) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 16 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

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Miscellaneous

Income and capital: general

17.—(1) In relation to a claim for an employment and support allowance, the income and capital of a person shall be calculated or estimated in such manner as may be prescribed.

(2) A person's income in respect of a week shall be calculated in accordance with prescribed rules, which may provide for the calculation to be made by reference to an average over a period (which need not include the week concerned).

(3) Circumstances may be prescribed in which—

- (a) a person is to be treated as possessing capital or income which he does not possess;
- (b) capital or income which a person does possess is to be disregarded;
- (c) income is to be treated as capital;
- (d) capital is to be treated as income.

(4) Regulations may provide that a person's capital shall be deemed for the purposes of this Part to yield him an income at a prescribed rate.

Commencement Information

113 S. 17 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 17 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 17 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 1](#)

Disqualification

18.—(1) Regulations may provide for a person to be disqualified for receiving an employment and support allowance, or treated for such purposes as the regulations may provide as not having limited capability for work, if—

- (a) he has become someone who has limited capability for work through his own misconduct,
- (b) he remains someone who has limited capability for work through his failure without good cause to follow medical advice, or
- (c) he fails without good cause to observe any prescribed rules of behaviour.

(2) Regulations under subsection (1) shall provide for any such disqualification, or treatment, to be for such period not exceeding six weeks as may be determined in accordance with Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the 1998 Order.

(3) Regulations may prescribe for the purposes of subsection (1)—

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- (a) matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining whether a person has good cause for any act or omission;
 - (b) circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded as having good cause for any act or omission.
- (4) Except where regulations otherwise provide, a person shall be disqualified for receiving a contributory allowance for any period during which he is—
- (a) absent from Northern Ireland; or
 - (b) undergoing imprisonment or detention in legal custody.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C15** S. 18(4)(b) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **160(1)(3)**
- C16** S. 18(4)(b) excluded by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), reg. 160(3) (as substituted (25.3.2010) by [Social Security \(Persons Serving a Sentence of Imprisonment Detained in Hospital\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2010 \(S.R. 2010/58\)](#), **reg. 5(3)(a)**)

Commencement Information

- I14** S. 18 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 18 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 18(1)(2)(4) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(c)**, [Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 18 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), **art. 2(2)(d)**, [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Pilot schemes

- 19.—**(1) Any regulations to which this subsection applies may be made so as to have effect for a specified period not exceeding 24 months.
- (2) Subject to subsection (3), subsection (1) applies to—
- (a) regulations which are made under any provision of this Part, other than sections 3, 8 and 9;
 - (b) regulations which are made under the Administration Act, so far as they relate to an employment and support allowance.
- (3) Subsection (1) only applies to regulations if they are made with a view to ascertaining whether their provisions will or will be likely to—
- (a) encourage persons to obtain or remain in work, or

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(b) make it more likely that persons will obtain or remain in work or be able to do so.

(4) Regulations which, by virtue of subsection (1), are to have effect for a limited period are referred to in this section as a “pilot scheme”.

(5) A pilot scheme may provide that its provisions are to apply only in relation to—

- (a) one or more specified areas;
- (b) one or more specified classes of person;
- (c) persons selected—
 - (i) by reference to prescribed criteria, or
 - (ii) on a sampling basis.

(6) A pilot scheme may make consequential or transitional provision with respect to the cessation of the scheme on the expiry of the specified period.

(7) A pilot scheme may be replaced by a further pilot scheme making the same or similar provision.

Relationship with statutory payments

20.—(1) A person is not entitled to an employment and support allowance in respect of a day if, for the purposes of statutory sick pay, that day—

- (a) is a day of incapacity for work in relation to a contract of service, and
- (b) falls within a period of entitlement (whether or not it is a qualifying day).

(2) Except as regulations may provide, a woman who is entitled to statutory maternity pay is not entitled to a contributory allowance in respect of a day that falls within the maternity pay period.

(3) Regulations may provide that—

- (a) an amount equal to a woman's statutory maternity pay for a period shall be deducted from a contributory allowance in respect of the same period,
- (b) a woman shall only be entitled to a contributory allowance if there is a balance after the deduction, and
- (c) if there is such a balance, a woman shall be entitled to a contributory allowance at a weekly rate equal to it.

(4) Except as regulations may provide, a person who is entitled to statutory adoption pay is not entitled to a contributory allowance in respect of a day that falls within the adoption pay period.

(5) Regulations may provide that—

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- (a) an amount equal to a person's statutory adoption pay for a period shall be deducted from a contributory allowance in respect of the same period,
- (b) a person shall only be entitled to a contributory allowance if there is a balance after the deduction, and
- (c) if there is such a balance, a person shall be entitled to a contributory allowance at a weekly rate equal to it.

(6) Except as regulations may provide, a person who is entitled to additional statutory paternity pay is not entitled to a contributory allowance in respect of a day that falls within the additional paternity pay period.

(7) Regulations may provide that—

- (a) an amount equal to a person's additional statutory paternity pay for a period shall be deducted from a contributory allowance in respect of the same period,
- (b) a person shall only be entitled to a contributory allowance if there is a balance after the deduction, and
- (c) if there is such a balance, a person shall be entitled to a contributory allowance at a weekly rate equal to it.

(8) In this section—

“additional paternity pay period” has the meaning given in section 167ZEE(2) of the Contributions and Benefits Act;

“adoption pay period” has the meaning given in section 167ZN(2) of that Act;

“maternity pay period” has the meaning given in section 161(1) of that Act.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C17** S. 20(2) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **80(2)**
- C18** S. 20(4) excluded (27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1), **81(2)**
- C19** S. 20(6) excluded (day on which regulations made under or by virtue of ss. 167ZEA to 167ZEE of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 come into operation for certain purposes, otherwise 27.10.2008) by [Employment and Support Allowance Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2008 \(S.R. 2008/280\)](#), regs. 1(1)(3), **82(2)**

Commencement Information

- I15** S. 20 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 20 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 20(2)-(7) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(c\), Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 20 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(d\), Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Deemed entitlement for other purposes

21 Regulations may provide for a person who would be entitled to an employment and support allowance but for the operation of any provision of, or made under, this Part, the Administration Act or Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the 1998 Order (social security decisions and appeals) to be treated as if entitled to the allowance for the purposes of any rights or obligations (whether his own or another's) which depend on his entitlement, other than the right to payment of it.

Supplementary provisions

22 Schedule 2 (which contains further provisions in relation to an employment and support allowance) has effect.

Commencement Information

I16 S. 22 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 22 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 22 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(c\), Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 22 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(d\), Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Recovery of sums in respect of maintenance

23.—(1) Regulations may make provision for the court to have power to make a recovery order against any person where an award of income-related allowance has been made to that person's spouse or civil partner.

(2) The reference in subsection (1) to a recovery order is to an order requiring the person against whom it is made to make payments to the Department or to such other person or persons as the court may determine.

(3) Regulations under subsection (1) may include—

- (a) provision as to the matters to which the court is, or is not, to have regard in determining any application under the regulations;
- (b) provision as to the enforcement of orders under the regulations;
- (c) provision for the transfer by the Department of the right to receive payments under, and to exercise rights in relation to, orders under the regulations.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(4) In this section, “the court” means a court of summary jurisdiction.

Commencement Information

I17 S. 23 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 23 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 23(1)(3) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(c\), Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 23 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(d\), Sch. Pt. 2](#)

General

Interpretation, etc. of Part 1

24.—(1) In this Part—

“claimant” means a person who has claimed an employment and support allowance;

“contributory allowance” has the meaning given by section 1(7);

“employment” and “employed” have the meanings prescribed for the purposes of this Part;

“entitled”, in relation to an employment and support allowance, is to be construed in accordance with—

- (a) the provisions of this Act,
- (b) section 1 of the Administration Act (entitlement dependent on making of claim), and
- (c) Article 27 of the 1998 Order (restrictions on entitlement in certain cases of error);

“income-related allowance” has the meaning given by section 1(7);

“income support” means income support under section 123 of the Contributions and Benefits Act;

“limited capability for work” shall be construed in accordance with section 1(4);

“limited capability for work-related activity” shall be construed in accordance with section 2(5);

“period of limited capability for work” has the meaning prescribed for the purposes of this Part;

“prescribed” means specified in, or determined in accordance with, regulations;

“regulations” means regulations made by the Department;

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“week” means a period of seven days beginning with a Sunday or such other period of seven days as may be prescribed;

“work-related activity” has the meaning given by section 13(7).

(2) For the purposes of this Part, the assessment phase, in relation to a claimant, is the period—

(a) beginning, subject to subsection (3), with the first day of the period for which he is entitled to an employment and support allowance, and

(b) ending with such day as may be prescribed.

(3) Regulations may prescribe circumstances in which the assessment phase is to begin with such day as may be prescribed.

(4) For the purposes of this Part, a person is a member of the support group if he is a person in respect of whom it is determined that he has, or is to be treated as having, limited capability for work-related activity.

(5) In relation to this Part, for the purposes of Chapter 2 of Part 2 of the 1998 Order, a decision made by the Department for Employment and Learning shall be treated as if it were a decision of the Department (and accordingly, may be revised by the Department for Employment and Learning under Article 10 of that Order, or superseded by a decision made by it under Article 11 of that Order, as the case may be).

(6) Information which is held—

(a) by the Department may be supplied to the Department for Employment and Learning; or

(b) by the Department for Employment and Learning may be supplied to the Department,

for the purposes of their functions under this Part.

Commencement Information

I18 S. 24 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 24 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 24(1) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(c\), Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 24(2)(b)(3) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(c\), Sch. Pt. 1](#); s. 24 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(2\)\(d\), Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Regulations

25.—(1) Where any power under this Part to make regulations is expressed to be exercisable for alternative purposes, it may be exercised in relation to the same case for all or any of those purposes.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

- (2) Any power under this Part to make regulations includes power—
- (a) to make such incidental, supplementary, consequential or transitional provision or savings as appear to the Department to be expedient;
 - (b) to provide for a person to exercise a discretion in dealing with any matter.
- (3) Without prejudice to the generality of the provisions of this section, regulations under any of sections 11 to 15 may make provision which applies only in relation to an area or areas specified in the regulations.
- (4) The fact that a power to make regulations is conferred by this Part is not to be taken to prejudice the extent of any other power to make regulations so conferred.

Commencement Information

- I19** S. 25 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 25 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 25(1)(2) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.7.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#); s. 25 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

Assembly control

- 26.—**(1) Subject to the following provisions of this section, any regulations made under this Part are subject to negative resolution.
- (2) Regulations to which this subsection applies—
- (a) must be laid before the Assembly after being made; and
 - (b) take effect on such date as may be specified in the regulations, but (without prejudice to the validity of anything done thereunder or to the making of new regulations) cease to have effect upon the expiration of a period of six months from that date unless at some time before the expiration of that period the regulations are approved by a resolution of the Assembly.
- (3) Subsection (2) applies to—
- (a) regulations under section 2(2)(c) or (3)(c) or 4(4)(c) or (5)(c);
 - (b) the first regulations under section 13;
 - (c) regulations which by virtue of section 19(1) are to have effect for a limited period.
- (4) This subsection applies to any regulations made under this Part which—
- (a) but for subsection (5), would be subject to negative resolution, and

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(b) are contained in a statutory rule which includes any regulations subject to the confirmatory procedure.

(5) Any regulations to which subsection (4) applies shall not be subject to negative resolution, but shall be subject to the confirmatory procedure.

(6) In this section “the confirmatory procedure” means the procedure described in subsection (2).

Commencement Information

I20 S. 26 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 26 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 26(1) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.7.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#); s. 26 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), [Sch. Pt. 2](#)

VALID FROM 27/10/2008

Financial provisions relating to Part 1

27.—(1) There shall be paid out of the Northern Ireland National Insurance Fund so much of any sums payable by way of employment and support allowance as is attributable to entitlement to a contributory allowance.

(2) The Department shall pay into the Northern Ireland National Insurance Fund sums estimated by it to be equivalent in amount to sums recovered by it in connection with payments of contributory allowance.

(3) The Department shall pay into the Consolidated Fund sums estimated by it to be equivalent in amount to sums recovered by it in connection with payments made by way of income-related allowance.

Consequential amendments relating to Part 1

28.—(1) Schedule 3 (which makes amendments consequential on this Part) has effect.

(2) Regulations may make provision consequential on this Part amending, repealing or revoking any statutory provision.

Commencement Information

I21 S. 28 partly in operation; s. 28 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 28(1) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.7.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#); s. 28(2) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 27.7.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#); s. 28(1) in operation for certain purposes at

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27.7.2008 by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(b)**; s. 28(1) in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.10.2008 by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(c)**, Sch. Pt. 1; s. 28 (except s. 28(1) for certain purposes) in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(d)**, Sch. Pt. 2

Transition relating to Part 1

29 Schedule 4 (which makes provision with respect to transition in relation to this Part) has effect.

Commencement Information

I22 S. 29 partly in operation; s. 29 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 29 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and 27.7.2008 by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(a)**; s. 29 in operation for certain purposes at 27.7.2008 by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(b)**; s. 29 in operation for certain purposes at 27.10.2008 by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(d)**, Sch. Pt. 2; s. 29 in operation for certain purposes at 9.9.2010 by S.R. 2010/308, **art. 2**

PART 2

HOUSING BENEFIT

VALID FROM 10/03/2008

Local housing allowance

30.—(1) In section 129 of the Contributions and Benefits Act (housing benefit) subsection (4) ceases to have effect.

(2) After that section insert—

“129A Appropriate maximum housing benefit

(1) For the purposes of section 129 above, the appropriate maximum housing benefit (in this section referred to as “the AMHB”) is determined in accordance with this section.

(2) Regulations must prescribe the manner in which the AMHB is to be determined.

(3) The regulations may provide for the AMHB to be ascertained in the prescribed manner by reference to Executive determinations.

(4) The regulations may make provision as to the circumstances in which, for the purpose of determining the AMHB, the amount of the liability

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mentioned in section 129(1)(a) above must be taken to be the amount of an Executive determination instead of the actual amount of that liability.

(5) Regulations under subsection (4) above may also make provision for the liability of a person who, by virtue of regulations under section 133(2)(j) below, is treated as having a liability mentioned in section 129(1)(a) above to be the amount of an Executive determination.

(6) An Executive determination is a determination made by the Executive in the exercise of functions under this section or regulations under this section.”.

(3) In Schedule 7 to the 2000 Act (housing benefit: revisions and appeals), in paragraph 4—

(a) in sub-paragraph (1) for “sub-paragraph (4)” substitute “ sub-paragraphs (3) and (3A) ”;

(b) after sub-paragraph (3) insert—

“(3A) Regulations may prescribe the cases and circumstances in which, and the procedure by which, a decision relating to housing benefit must be made by the appropriate relevant authority.”.

Commencement Information

I23 S. 30 wholly in operation at 7.4.2008; s. 30 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 30(2)(3) in operation for certain purposes at 10.3.2008 by [S.R. 2008/93](#), [art. 2\(a\)](#); s. 30 in operation at 7.4.2008 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2008/93](#), [art. 2\(b\)](#)

PROSPECTIVE

Loss of housing benefit following eviction for anti-social behaviour, etc.

31.—(1) After section 129A of the Contributions and Benefits Act (inserted by section 30) insert—

“129B Loss of housing benefit following eviction on certain grounds

(1) If the following conditions are satisfied, then housing benefit is payable in the case of a person (“the former occupier”) subject to subsection (3) below—

- (a) a court makes a relevant order for possession of a dwelling occupied by him as his home;
- (b) in consequence of the order he ceases to occupy the dwelling;
- (c) the condition in subsection (2) below is satisfied; and

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(d) the conditions for entitlement to housing benefit are or become satisfied with respect to him.

(2) The condition in this subsection is that the former occupier fails, without good cause, to comply with a warning notice served on him by the Executive after he has ceased to occupy the dwelling.

(3) During the restriction period or such part of it as may be prescribed, one or both of the following applies—

(a) the rate of the benefit is reduced in such a manner as may be prescribed;

(b) the benefit is payable only if the circumstances are such as may be prescribed.

(4) The restriction period begins with the earliest date on which the conditions set out in subsections (1) and (2) above are satisfied.

(5) That period stops running if the Executive considers that the restriction set out in subsection (3) above should no longer apply (whether because the former occupier is taking action to improve his behaviour or for any other reason), but starts running again if the former occupier fails to comply with a further warning notice served on him.

(6) The restriction period shall not include any period which falls more than five years after the date on which the order for possession was made.

(7) A former occupier may not be subject to more than one restriction period in respect of one order for possession.

(8) A warning notice is a notice in the prescribed form—

(a) requiring the former occupier to take specified action with the aim of ending, or preventing repetition of, the conduct which may lead or has led to the making of a relevant order for possession,

(b) specifying the time when, or within which, that action must be taken, and

(c) warning the former occupier that if he fails to take the action the amount of housing benefit payable to him would be affected.

129C Relevant orders for possession

(1) In section 129B above a relevant order for possession is—

(a) an order made under Article 29 of the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 (secure tenancies) on ground 2 set out in Schedule 3 to that Order;

(b) an order made under Article 13 of the Rent (Northern Ireland) Order 1978 (protected or statutory tenancies) in the circumstances specified in Case 2 in Schedule 4 to that Order.

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(2) For the purposes of subsection (1) above it does not matter whether the order is made on the grounds or in the circumstances there mentioned alone or together with other grounds or circumstances.

(3) Subsections (4) and (5) below apply if the court—

(a) stays or suspends the execution of a relevant order for possession, or postpones the date of possession under it, and

(b) imposes a condition (or conditions) on that stay, suspension or postponement.

(4) If a condition relates to the behaviour of a person or persons occupying the dwelling, section 129B(3) above applies only if the order takes effect as a result of a breach of that condition.

(5) Section 129B(3) above does not apply if the condition (or, if there is more than one, each of them) relates only to matters other than the behaviour of a person or persons occupying the dwelling.

129D Loss of housing benefit: supplementary

(1) Regulations may provide that, where housing benefit has been paid subject to the restriction set out in section 129B(3) above, in prescribed circumstances—

(a) the former occupier must be paid some or all of the amount of the benefit which, by virtue of that subsection, has not been payable to him, and

(b) such other adjustments must be made as are prescribed.

(2) The Department may by order vary the definition of relevant order for possession by—

(a) adding to or removing from it orders of a specified description;

(b) specifying circumstances in which it includes orders of a specified description.

(3) Regulations may prescribe—

(a) matters which are, or are not, to be taken into account in determining whether a person has, or does not have, good cause for failing to take action specified in a warning notice;

(b) circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be regarded as having, or not having, such good cause.

(4) Expressions used in this section and in section 129B above have the meaning given in that section.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

129E Couples

(1) This section applies where at any time the conditions for entitlement to housing benefit are satisfied with respect to a person who is a member of a couple.

(2) Where paragraphs (a) and (b) of section 129B(1) above are satisfied in relation to both members of the couple (whether or not in respect of the same dwelling), then for the purposes of subsection (2) of that section, the failure by one member of the couple to comply with a warning notice must be treated also as a failure by his partner to comply with it.

(3) Where paragraph (a) of section 129B(1) above is not satisfied in relation to one member of the couple, then subsection (3) of that section does not apply to his partner (even if paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of section 129B(1) above are satisfied in relation to the partner).

(4) References to a person's partner are to the other member of the couple concerned.

129F Information provision

(1) The Department may by regulations require—

- (a) a court which makes a relevant order for possession, or
- (b) any other person or description of person who the Department thinks is or may be aware of the making of such an order,

to notify the Department of the making of the order and to provide it with such details of matters in connection with the order as may be prescribed.

(2) The Department may provide—

- (a) information obtained under subsection (1) above, or
- (b) information which is relevant to the exercise by the Department of any function relating to housing benefit,

to the Executive, or a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive relating to services to a former occupier with the aim mentioned in section 129B(8)(a) above, for use in the provision of such services.

(3) The Department may by regulations require—

- (a) the Executive, or
- (b) a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive relating to services mentioned in subsection (2) above,

to supply relevant information held by the Executive or other person to, or to a person providing services to, the Department for use for any purpose relating to the administration of housing benefit.

(4) The Department may by regulations require—

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- (a) the Executive,
- (b) a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive relating to housing benefit, or
- (c) a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive relating to services mentioned in subsection (2) above,

to provide relevant information, held by the Executive or person, to the Executive or person mentioned in paragraph (b) above for use for any purpose relating to the administration of housing benefit.

(5) The Department may by regulations require—

- (a) the Executive,
- (b) a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive relating to housing benefit, or
- (c) a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive relating to services mentioned in subsection (2) above,

to provide relevant information, held by the Executive or person, to the Executive or person mentioned in paragraph (c) above for use in the provision of those services.

(6) Relevant information is, if the information is held by the Executive or a person authorised to exercise any function of the Executive—

- (a) information which is relevant to the exercise of any function relating to housing benefit by the Executive or person;
- (b) information which is relevant to the exercise of any function relating to the provision of services mentioned in subsection (2) above.

(7) Information must be supplied under subsection (1), (3), (4) or (5) above in such circumstances, in such manner and form, and in accordance with such requirements, as may be prescribed.

(8) “Relevant order for possession” has the same meaning as in section 129B above.”.

(2) In section 172(2) of that Act (Assembly control)—

- (a) in paragraph (a), after “104(3)” insert “, 129B(3) ”;
- (b) in paragraph (c), after “35A(7),” insert “ 129D(2), ”.

(3) The preceding provisions of this section have no effect after 31st December 2010.

(4) The Department may by order make such provision as it thinks necessary or expedient in consequence of the operation of subsection (3) for the purpose of securing that, with effect from 1st January 2011, housing benefit to which a person who is a former occupier (within the meaning of section 129B of the

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Contributions and Benefits Act) is entitled is not subject to any restriction as mentioned in subsection (3) of that section.

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

Housing benefit for persons taking up employment

32.—(1) Subsection (2) applies if a person is entitled to housing benefit (by virtue of the general conditions of entitlement) and—

- (a) he is also entitled to a prescribed benefit or his partner is entitled to such a benefit,
- (b) he or his partner ceases to be entitled to the prescribed benefit in prescribed circumstances, and
- (c) the prescribed conditions are satisfied.

(2) That person is entitled to housing benefit in accordance with this section for a prescribed period.

(3) Subsection (2) applies whether or not the person would be entitled to housing benefit by virtue of the general conditions of entitlement for the whole or any part of the prescribed period.

(4) A person who is entitled to housing benefit by virtue of subsection (2) must be treated for all purposes—

- (a) as having made a claim for that benefit, and
- (b) as having complied with any requirement under or by virtue of any statutory provision in connection with the making of such a claim.

(5) The amount of housing benefit payable in respect of a person who is entitled to the benefit by virtue of subsection (2) is to be determined in accordance with regulations made for the purposes of this section.

(6) If an amount of housing benefit is, by virtue of subsection (2), payable in respect of a person for any period, no other amount of housing benefit is (by virtue of the general conditions of entitlement) payable in respect of that person for the same period.

(7) Regulations may make provision in connection with the effect of a person's entitlement to housing benefit by virtue of subsection (2) on an award of such benefit by virtue of the general conditions of entitlement in respect of that person or his partner.

(8) Regulations may make provision as to circumstances in which subsection (6) does not apply.

(9) For the purposes of subsection (1) a person must be treated as entitled to housing benefit by virtue of the general conditions of entitlement if—

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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- (a) he is not so entitled to that benefit at the time he or his partner ceases to be entitled to the prescribed benefit as mentioned in subsection (1) (b), and
- (b) his entitlement to housing benefit ceased during the prescribed period before that time.

Commencement Information

I24 S. 32 wholly in operation at 6.10.2008; s. 32 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 32 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 6.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(1\)](#)

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

Section 32: supplemental

33.—(1) The administration provisions apply in relation to housing benefit to which a person is entitled by virtue of subsection (2) of section 32 subject to—

- (a) subsection (4) of that section;
- (b) any prescribed modifications of those provisions which the Department thinks are necessary or expedient in connection with such housing benefit.

(2) In this section the administration provisions are—

- (a) the Administration Act;
- (b) any orders or regulations made in pursuance of that Act.

(3) The power to make regulations under this section or section 32 is exercisable by the Department.

(4) Regulations made under this section or section 32 shall be subject to negative resolution.

(5) Where a power under this section or section 32 to make regulations is expressed to be exercisable for alternative purposes it may be exercised in relation to the same case for any or all of those purposes.

(6) Any such power includes power—

- (a) to make such incidental, supplementary, consequential, saving or transitional provision (including provision amending, repealing or revoking statutory provisions) as appears to the Department to be expedient; and

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(b) to provide for a person to exercise a discretion in dealing with any matter.

(7) Any power to make regulations for the purposes of this section or section 32 is without prejudice to any power to make regulations for the purposes of any other statutory provision.

(8) Without prejudice to section 17(5) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954 (c. 33), any power conferred by this section or section 32 includes power to make different provision for different areas.

(9) Regulations under this section or section 32 relating to housing benefit administered by the Department of Finance and Personnel shall not be made without the consent of that Department.

(10) Any power to make regulations under this section or section 32, where the power is not expressed to be exercisable with the consent of the Department of Finance and Personnel shall, if that Department so directs, be exercisable only in conjunction with it.

(11) In section 149 of the Administration Act (Social Security Advisory Committee) in subsection (5) in the definition of “the relevant enactments”, before paragraph (b) insert—

“(aj) sections 32 and 33 of the Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007;”.

(12) For the purposes of any statutory provision other than a relevant statutory provision entitlement to housing benefit by virtue of section 32(2) is to be treated as entitlement under section 129 of the Contributions and Benefits Act.

(13) In subsection (12), the relevant statutory provisions are—

- (a) the administration provisions, and
- (b) Part 7 of the Contributions and Benefits Act, except sections 122 and 130(2) and (3).

Commencement Information

I25 S. 33 wholly in operation at 6.10.2008; s. 33 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 33 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 6.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(1\)](#)

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

Sections 32 and 33: interpretation

34.—(1) This section has effect for the interpretation of sections 32 and 33.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(2) The general conditions of entitlement are the conditions governing entitlement to housing benefit provided for by Part 7 of the Contributions and Benefits Act.

(3) Partner, in relation to a person, is a person who is a member of the same couple (within the meaning of Part 7 of the Contributions and Benefits Act) as that person.

(4) Prescribed means prescribed by regulations made by the Department.

Commencement Information

I26 S. 34 wholly in operation at 6.10.2008; s. 34 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 34 in operation for certain purposes at 1.7.2008 and wholly in operation at 6.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276, art. 2\(1\)](#)

PROSPECTIVE

Payment of housing benefit

35 In section 126 of the Administration Act (arrangements for housing benefit), for subsection (2) substitute—

“(2) Housing benefit is to be paid in such manner as is prescribed, and regulations may, in particular, provide for—

- (a) a payment or payments by the Housing Executive or the Department of Finance and Personnel, as the case may be, to the person entitled to it (E), to some other person on E's behalf or in respect of a liability which E has,
- (b) a reduction in the amount of any payments which E is liable to make to the Housing Executive or the Department of Finance and Personnel, as the case may be, by way of rent or rates, or
- (c) such a payment or payments and such a reduction.

(2A) In any statutory provision (whenever passed or made) “pay” in relation to housing benefit includes discharge in any manner prescribed under subsection (2) above.

(2B) Subsection (2) above does not affect any power under section 5 above to make provision in relation to the payment of benefit.”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

VALID FROM 01/04/2008

Directions by Department

36.—(1) Section 128D of the Administration Act (power to give directions) is amended in accordance with subsections (2) to (6).

(2) In subsection (2) for “invite” substitute “ require ”.

(3) After subsection (2) insert—

“(2A) A requirement under subsection (2) above may specify—

- (a) any information or description of information to be provided;
- (b) the form and manner in which the information is to be provided.

(2B) The Housing Executive must respond to a requirement under subsection (2) above before the end of such period (not less than one month after the day on which the requirement is made) as the Department specifies in the requirement.

(2C) The Department may extend the period specified under subsection (2B) above.”.

(4) For subsection (3) substitute—

“(3) After considering—

- (a) the report,
- (b) any proposals made by the Housing Executive in response to it, and
- (c) any other information the Department thinks is relevant,

the Department may give directions to the Housing Executive under subsection (3A) or (3B) below or both.

(3A) Directions under this subsection are directions as to—

- (a) standards which the Housing Executive is to attain in the prevention and detection of fraud relating to housing benefit or otherwise in the administration of that benefit;
- (b) the time within which the standards are to be attained.

(3B) Directions under this subsection are directions to take such action as the Department thinks necessary or expedient for the purpose of improving the Housing Executive's exercise of its functions—

- (a) in relation to the prevention and detection of fraud relating to housing benefit;
- (b) otherwise in relation to the administration of that benefit.

(3C) A direction under subsection (3B) above may specify the time within which anything is to be done.”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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(5) In subsection (4), for “subsection (3)” substitute “ subsection (3A) ”.

(6) After subsection (4) add—

“(5) If the Department proposes to give a direction under this section it must give the Housing Executive an opportunity to make representations about the proposed direction.

(6) The Department may specify a period within which representations mentioned in subsection (5) above must be made.

(7) The Department may extend a period specified under subsection (6) above.

(8) Subsections (5) to (7) above do not apply if the Department thinks that it is necessary for a direction to be given as a matter of urgency.

(9) If the Department acts under subsection (8) above it must give in writing to the Housing Executive its reasons for doing so.”.

(7) After section 128D of that Act insert—

“128DA Directions: variations and revocation

(1) The Department may at any time in accordance with this section vary or revoke a direction under section 128D above.

(2) A direction may be varied or revoked only if the Department thinks it is necessary to do so—

- (a) in consequence of representations made by the Housing Executive,
- (b) to rectify an omission or error, or
- (c) in consequence of a material change in circumstances.

(3) The Department must not vary a direction unless it first—

- (a) sends a copy of the proposed variation to the Housing Executive,
- (b) gives the Housing Executive its reasons for making the variation, and
- (c) gives the Housing Executive an opportunity to make representations about the proposed variation.

(4) The Department may specify a period of not less than one month within which representations mentioned in subsection (3)(c) above must be made.

(5) The Department may extend a period specified under subsection (4) above.”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

Minor and consequential amendments relating to Part 2

37 Schedule 5 (which makes miscellaneous minor amendments and amendments consequential on this Part) has effect.

Commencement Information

- I27** S. 37 partly in operation; s. 37 in operation for certain purposes at 29.6.2007 see s. 60(1)(2)
(b); s. 37 in operation for certain purposes at 1.4.2008 by S.R. 2008/147, **art. 2(c)**

PART 3

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION: GENERAL

Sharing of social security information

Social security information

38.—(1) In the Administration Act, after section 5A (sharing of functions as regards certain claims and information) insert—

“5B Use of social security information

(1) A relevant authority may use for a relevant purpose any social security information which it holds.

(2) Regulations may make provision as to the procedure to be followed by a relevant authority for the purposes of any function it has relating to the administration of a specified benefit if the authority holds social security information which—

- (a) is relevant for the purposes of anything which may or must be done by the authority in connection with a claim for or an award of the benefit, and
- (b) was used by another relevant authority in connection with a claim for or an award of a different specified benefit or was verified by that other authority in accordance with regulations under section 5A(2)(e) above.

(3) A relevant purpose is anything which is done in relation to a claim which is made or which could be made for a specified benefit if it is done for the purpose of—

- (a) identifying persons who may be entitled to such a benefit;
- (b) encouraging or assisting a person to make such a claim;
- (c) advising a person in relation to such a claim.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(4) Social security information means—

- (a) information relating to social security, child support or war pensions;
- (b) evidence obtained in connection with a claim for or an award of a specified benefit.

(5) A specified benefit is a benefit which is specified in regulations for the purposes of this section.

(6) Expressions used in this section and in section 5A have the same meaning in this section as in that section.

(7) This section does not affect any power which exists apart from this section to use for one purpose social security information obtained in connection with another purpose.”

(2) In section 5A of that Act—

(a) in subsection (2) after paragraph (d) add—

“(e) the verification by a relevant authority of information or evidence supplied to or obtained by the authority in connection with a claim for or an award of a relevant benefit.”;

(b) in subsection (3) for “and (d)” substitute “, (d) and (e) ”.

Commencement Information

I28 S. 38 wholly in operation at 8.10.2007; s. 38(2) in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1)(2) (a); s. 38(1) in operation at 8.10.2007 by [S.R. 2007/429](#), [art. 2\(1\)\(a\)](#)

VALID FROM 08/08/2008

Information relating to certain benefits

39.—(1) Information falling within subsection (3) may be supplied by the person who holds it to a person falling within subsection (4) for purposes connected with the application of grant paid under a relevant statutory provision towards expenditure incurred by the recipient of the grant—

- (a) in providing, or contributing to the provision of, welfare services, or
- (b) in connection with such welfare services.

(2) Information falling within subsection (3) which is held for a prescribed purpose by a person falling within any of paragraphs (c) to (h) of subsection (4) may be—

- (a) used by that person for another prescribed purpose;
- (b) provided to another such person for use in relation to the same or another prescribed purpose.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

- (3) The information is any information which is held by a person falling within subsection (4) relating to—
- (a) income support;
 - (b) income-based jobseeker's allowance;
 - (c) income-related employment and support allowance;
 - (d) state pension credit;
 - (e) housing benefit;
 - (f) welfare services.
- (4) The persons are—
- (a) the Department;
 - (b) a person providing services to the Department;
 - (c) the Housing Executive or the Department of Finance and Personnel;
 - (d) a person authorised to exercise any function of the Housing Executive or that Department relating to housing benefit;
 - (e) a person providing to the Housing Executive or that Department services relating to housing benefit;
 - (f) a body established by or under a statutory provision to which any grant is or will be paid as mentioned in subsection (1);
 - (g) a person authorised to exercise any function of such a body relating to the grant;
 - (h) a person providing to such a body services relating to any such function.
- (5) Information which is supplied under subsection (1) to a person or body falling within subsection (4)(f), (g) or (h) may be supplied by the person or body to a person who provides qualifying welfare services for purposes connected with the provision of those services.
- (6) A person provides qualifying welfare services if—
- (a) he provides welfare services,
 - (b) a body established by or under a statutory provision contributes or will contribute to the expenditure incurred by him in providing those services, and
 - (c) that contribution is or will be derived (in whole or in part) from any grant which is or will be paid to the body as mentioned in subsection (1).
- (7) A relevant statutory provision is a statutory provision specified by order made by the Department subject to negative resolution.
- (8) In subsection (2) a prescribed purpose is a purpose relating to housing benefit or welfare services which is prescribed by regulations made by the Department subject to negative resolution.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(9) The power to make an order or regulations under this section includes power to make such incidental, supplementary, consequential, transitional or savings provision as the Department thinks necessary or expedient.

(10) In this section—

“income-based jobseeker's allowance” has the same meaning as in the Jobseekers Order;

“income-related employment and support allowance” means an income-related allowance under Part 1;

“welfare services” includes services which provide support, assistance, advice or counselling to individuals with particular needs.

(11) In the Housing Support Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (NI 8), omit Articles 6 (disclosure of information) and 7 (unauthorised disclosure of information).

Commencement Information

I29 S. 39 wholly in operation at 1.9.2008; s. 39 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 39 in operation for certain purposes at 8.8.2008 and wholly in operation at 1.9.2008 by [S.R. 2008/339, art. 2\(1\)\(2\)\(a\)](#)

VALID FROM 01/09/2008

Unlawful disclosure of certain information

40.—(1) A person to whom subsection (2) applies is guilty of an offence if he discloses without lawful authority any information—

- (a) which comes to him by virtue of section 39(1), (2) or (5), and
- (b) which relates to a particular person.

(2) This subsection applies to—

- (a) a person mentioned in section 39(4)(f) to (h);
- (b) a person who provides qualifying welfare services (within the meaning of section 39(6));
- (c) a person who is or has been a director, member of the committee of management, manager, secretary or other similar officer of a person mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b);
- (d) a person who is or has been an employee of a person mentioned in paragraph (a) or (b).

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this section shall be liable—

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- (a) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or a fine or both, or
- (b) on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum or both.
- (4) It is not an offence under this section—
 - (a) to disclose information in the form of a summary or collection of information so framed as not to enable information relating to any particular person to be ascertained from it;
 - (b) to disclose information which has previously been disclosed to the public with lawful authority.
- (5) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section to prove that at the time of the alleged offence—
 - (a) he believed that he was making the disclosure in question with lawful authority and had no reasonable cause to believe otherwise, or
 - (b) he believed that the information in question had previously been disclosed to the public with lawful authority and had no reasonable cause to believe otherwise.
- (6) A disclosure is made with lawful authority if it is so made for the purposes of section 117 of the Administration Act.
- (7) This section does not affect that section.

Overpayment recovery

Recovery of overpaid benefit

41.—(1) Section 69 of the Administration Act (overpayments) is amended as follows.

(2) Subsection (5) (recovery of overpayments paid into account not recoverable under regulations under subsection (4) unless determination of amount is reversed on appeal etc. and overpayment is determined on the appeal etc. to be so recoverable) ceases to have effect.

(3) In subsection (5A) (recovery of overpayments paid in consequence of misrepresentation etc. not recoverable under subsection (1) unless determination of amount is reversed on appeal etc.) for “under subsection (1) above” substitute “under subsection (1) above or under regulations under subsection (4) above”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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VALID FROM 01/04/2008

Benefit fraud

PROSPECTIVE

Housing Executive powers to investigate benefit fraud

42.—(1) Section 104A of the Administration Act (authorisation of investigations by the Housing Executive) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (1) for “any one or more of the purposes mentioned in subsection (2) below” substitute “ a relevant purpose ”.

(3) After subsection (1) insert—

“(1A) Each of the following is a relevant purpose—

- (a) a purpose mentioned in subsection (2) below;
- (b) a purpose mentioned in section 103A(2)(a), (c) or (d) above.

(1B) If the Department prescribes conditions for the purposes of this section, the Housing Executive must not proceed under this section for a purpose mentioned in section 103A(2)(a), (c) or (d) above unless any such condition is satisfied.

(1C) An authorisation made for a purpose mentioned in section 103A(2)(a), (c) or (d) above—

- (a) is subject to such restrictions as may be prescribed;
- (b) is not valid in such circumstances as may be prescribed.”.

(4) In subsection (2) for “Those purposes” substitute “ The purposes in this subsection ”.

(5) In subsection (7) after paragraph (c) add— “ but paragraphs (a) and (b) above do not apply in any case where the relevant purpose is as mentioned in subsection (1A)(b) above. ”.

PROSPECTIVE

Housing Executive powers to prosecute benefit fraud

43 After section 110 of the Administration Act (legal proceedings) insert—

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“110A Housing Executive powers to prosecute benefit fraud

(1) This section applies if the Housing Executive has power to bring proceedings for a benefit offence relating to housing benefit.

(2) The Housing Executive may bring proceedings for a benefit offence relating to any other relevant social security benefit unless—

(a) the proceedings relate to any benefit or circumstances or any description of benefit or circumstances which the Department prescribes for the purposes of this paragraph, or

(b) the Department has directed that the Housing Executive must not bring the proceedings,

and a direction under paragraph (b) above may relate to the Housing Executive or to particular proceedings or any description of proceedings.

(3) If the Department prescribes conditions for the purposes of this section the Housing Executive must not bring proceedings under this section unless any such condition is satisfied.

(4) The Department may continue proceedings which have been brought by the Housing Executive under this section as if the proceedings had been brought in the Department's name or it may discontinue the proceedings if—

(a) it makes provision under subsection (2)(a) above, such that the Housing Executive would no longer be entitled to bring the proceedings under this section,

(b) it gives a direction under subsection (2)(b) above in relation to the proceedings, or

(c) a condition prescribed under subsection (3) above ceases to be satisfied in relation to the proceedings.

(5) The Housing Executive must not bring proceedings for a benefit offence which does not relate to housing benefit otherwise than in accordance with this section.

(6) In subsection (2) above, “relevant social security benefit” has the same meaning as in section 115CA below.”

PROSPECTIVE

Housing Executive functions relating to benefit: information

44.—(1) Section 116C of the Administration Act (supply of information to the Housing Executive) is amended as follows—

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(a) in subsection (2) at the end add “ or for the purposes of anything the Housing Executive is permitted to do in relation to any other benefit by virtue of section 104A or 110A above ”;

(b) in subsection (3)(a) for “offences relating to housing benefit” substitute “ benefit offences (within the meaning of Part 6 above) ”.

(2) Section 116D of that Act (supply of information by the Housing Executive) is amended as follows—

(a) in subsection (1), for “benefit administration information” substitute “ relevant benefit information ”;

(b) in subsection (2A), after “subsection (2)” insert “ , in addition to any other purpose for which the information may be used, ”;

(c) for subsection (4) substitute—

“(4) In subsection (1) above “relevant benefit information”, in relation to the Housing Executive or other person, means any information which is relevant to the exercise of any function relating to a relevant social security benefit by the Housing Executive or other person.”;

(d) in subsection (5), in each place where it occurs, for “housing benefit” substitute “ any relevant social security benefit ”;

(e) in subsection (6), after the definition of “private pensions policy” insert—

““relevant social security benefit” has the same meaning as in section 115CA above.”.

(3) In section 119A of that Act (power to require information from landlords and agents), in subsection (8) for “benefit administration information” substitute “ relevant benefit information ”.

Loss of benefit for commission of benefit offences

45.—(1) In section 6 of the Social Security Fraud Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 (c. 17) (loss of benefit for commission of benefit offences) in subsection (1)(b) (period within which later offence must be committed), for “three years” substitute “ five years ”.

(2) The amendment made by subsection (1) shall be disregarded insofar as the application of section 6(1)(b) of that Act involves considering whether an offence committed before the day on which this section comes into operation was committed within the relevant period.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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PART 4

MISCELLANEOUS

VALID FROM 07/10/2008

Benefits for bereaved persons

Widowed mother's allowance

46 In section 37(2) of the Contributions and Benefits Act (which links entitlement to widowed mother's allowance on the ground of being entitled to child benefit to whether one of the conditions specified in section 77(5) of the Act is satisfied), omit the words from “one of the conditions” to “person and”.

Widowed parent's allowance

47 In section 39A(3) of the Contributions and Benefits Act (which links entitlement to widowed parent's allowance on the ground of being entitled to child benefit to whether one of the conditions specified in section 77(5) of the Act is satisfied), omit the words from “one of the conditions” to “person and”.

VALID FROM 08/10/2007

Disability living allowance: age conditions

Care component of disability living allowance: persons under the age of 16

48.—(1) Section 72 of the Contributions and Benefits Act (care component of disability living allowance) is amended as follows.

(2) After subsection (1) insert—

“(1A) In its application to a person in relation to so much of a period as falls before the day on which he reaches the age of 16, subsection (1) above has effect subject to the following modifications—

- (a) the condition mentioned in subsection (1)(a)(ii) above shall not apply, and
- (b) none of the other conditions mentioned in subsection (1) above shall be taken to be satisfied unless—
 - (i) he has requirements of a description mentioned in the condition substantially in excess of the normal requirements of persons of his age, or

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(ii) he has substantial requirements of such a description which younger persons in normal physical and mental health may also have but which persons of his age and in normal physical and mental health would not have.”.

(3) After subsection (2) insert—

“(2A) The modifications mentioned in subsection (1A) above shall have effect in relation to the application of subsection (1) above for the purposes of subsection (2) above, but only—

- (a) in the case of a person who is under the age of 16 on the date on which the award of the care component would begin, and
- (b) in relation to so much of any period mentioned in subsection (2) above as falls before the day on which he reaches the age of 16.”.

(4) In subsection (5) (terminally ill person to be taken to have satisfied the conditions mentioned in subsection (1)(b) and (c)), after “person, shall” insert “ (notwithstanding subsection (1A)(b) above) ”.

(5) Subsection (6) (modifications for persons under 16) ceases to have effect.

(6) In subsection (7), for “subsections (5) and (6)” substitute “ subsection (5) ”.

(7) After that subsection insert—

“(7A) Subsection (1A) above has effect subject to regulations made under subsection (7) above (except as otherwise prescribed).”.

Mobility component of disability living allowance: persons under the age of 16

49.—(1) Section 73 of the Contributions and Benefits Act (mobility component of disability living allowance) is amended as follows.

(2) For subsection (4) substitute—

“(4A) In its application to a person in relation to so much of a period as falls before the day on which he reaches the age of 16, subsection (1) above has effect subject to the modification that the condition mentioned in paragraph (d) of that subsection shall not be taken to be satisfied unless—

- (a) he requires substantially more guidance or supervision from another person than persons of his age in normal physical and mental health would require, or
- (b) persons of his age in normal physical and mental health would not require such guidance or supervision.”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

- (3) In subsection (5), omit “Subject to subsection (4) above.”.
- (4) After that subsection insert—
- “(5A) Subsection (4A) above has effect subject to regulations made under subsection (5) above (except as otherwise prescribed).”.
- (5) After subsection (9) insert—
- “(9A) The modifications mentioned in subsection (4A) above shall have effect in relation to the application of subsection (1) above for the purposes of subsection (9) above, but only—
- (a) in the case of a person who is under the age of 16 on the date on which the award of the mobility component would begin, and
- (b) in relation to so much of any period mentioned in subsection (9) above as falls before the day on which he reaches the age of 16.”.

Social fund

Matters to which regard must be had in awarding budgeting loans

50 In section 136(1A) of the Contributions and Benefits Act (principles for determining awards of budgeting loans)—

- (a) in paragraph (b) (duty to have regard to criteria specified in paragraphs (b) to (e) of subsection (1)), for “(b) to (e)” substitute “ (b), (d) and (e) ”, and
- (b) the words following paragraph (b) (which enable the Department to give directions about cases in which the applicant's personal circumstances would preclude the award of a budgeting loan) cease to have effect.

Allocations from Social Fund

51.—(1) Section 147 of the Administration Act (allocations from social fund) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (1) (duty of Department to allocate amounts for payments from the social fund such as are mentioned in section 134(1)(b) of the Contributions and Benefits Act), after “Act” insert “ (in this section referred to as “section 134(1)(b) payments”) ”.

(3) In subsection (3) (types of allocation that may be made)—

- (a) for paragraph (a) substitute—
- “(a) may be for all section 134(1)(b) payments or for any description of such payments;”;

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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- (b) in paragraph (b) (power to allocate different amounts for different purposes), for “different purposes” substitute “ payments of different descriptions ”; and
 - (c) in paragraph (d) (additional allocations), omit the words from “to the same officer” to the end.
- (4) After subsection (3) insert—
- “(3A) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (3)(a) above, descriptions of section 134(1)(b) payments may, in particular, be framed by reference to—
- (a) the purposes for which payments are made;
 - (b) the persons by whom payments are made (including where such persons are located);
 - (c) the persons to whom payments are made (including where such persons are located).”.

Compensation for pneumoconiosis etc.

“Relevant employer”

52.—(1) The Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (NI 9) is amended as follows.

(2) In Article 2(2) (interpretation), at the end add—

““relevant employer” has the meaning given in the Schedule.”.

(3) In Article 3(3)(b) (payments to persons disabled by pneumoconiosis, etc.) for the words from “every person” to “disablement,” substitute “ every relevant employer of the person so disabled ”.

(4) In Article 11(2) (regulations subject to affirmative resolution), after “Article 4” insert “ , regulations under paragraph 9 of the Schedule ”.

(5) Insert the Schedule (definition of “relevant employer”) set out in Schedule 6.

Commencement Information

I30 S. 52 wholly in operation at 10.8.2007; s. 52 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 52 in operation for specified purpose at 19.7.2007 and in operation at 10.8.2007 for all other purposes by [S.R. 2007/335](#), [art. 2](#)

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

“Dependant”

53.—(1) In Article 5 of the Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (NI 9) (meaning of “dependant”), for paragraph (1)(c) substitute—

“(c) if neither sub-paragraph (a) nor sub-paragraph (b) applies but the deceased left a person who was residing with him and with whom he was in a qualifying relationship, that person;”.

(2) After paragraph (2) of that Article insert—

“(2A) For the purposes of paragraph (1)(c)—

(a) two persons of the opposite sex are in a qualifying relationship if they are living together as husband and wife;

(b) two persons of the same sex are in a qualifying relationship if they are living together as if they were civil partners.

(2B) For the purposes of paragraph (2A)(b), two persons of the same sex are to be regarded as living together as if they were civil partners if, but only if, they would be regarded as living together as husband and wife were they instead two people of the opposite sex.”.

(3) In Schedule 22 to the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (c. 33) (existing provisions to which the provisions of section 246 about interpretation of references to stepchildren apply), after paragraph 6 insert—

“6A Article 5(3) of the Pneumoconiosis, etc., (Workers' Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (“child” and “relative”: establishment of relationship).”.

Other

VALID FROM 08/10/2007

Power to stop payment of allowances to care home residents

54.—(1) In section 67 of the Contributions and Benefits Act (exclusions relating to attendance allowance) for subsection (2) substitute—

“(2) Regulations may provide that an attendance allowance shall not be payable in respect of a person for a period when he is a resident of a care home in circumstances in which any of the costs of any qualifying services provided for him are borne out of public or local funds under a specified enactment.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(3) The reference in subsection (2) above to a care home is to an establishment that provides accommodation together with nursing or personal care.

(4) The following are qualifying services for the purposes of subsection (2) above—

- (a) accommodation,
- (b) board, and
- (c) personal care.

(5) The reference in subsection (2) above to a specified enactment is to an enactment which is, or is of a description, specified for the purposes of that subsection by regulations.

(6) The power to specify an enactment for the purposes of subsection (2) above includes power to specify it only in relation to its application for a particular purpose.”.

(2) In section 72 of that Act (care component of disability living allowance), for subsection (8) substitute—

“(8) Regulations may provide that no amount in respect of a disability living allowance which is attributable to entitlement to the care component shall be payable in respect of a person for a period when he is a resident of a care home in circumstances in which any of the costs of any qualifying services provided for him are borne out of public or local funds under a specified enactment.

(9) The reference in subsection (8) above to a care home is to an establishment that provides accommodation together with nursing or personal care.

(10) The following are qualifying services for the purposes of subsection (8) above—

- (a) accommodation,
- (b) board, and
- (c) personal care.

(11) The reference in subsection (8) above to a specified enactment is to an enactment which is, or is of a description, specified for the purposes of that subsection by regulations.

(12) The power to specify an enactment for the purposes of subsection (8) above includes power to specify it only in relation to its application for a particular purpose.”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

Commencement Information

- I31** S. 54 wholly in operation at 29.10.2007; s. 54 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); s. 54 in operation for specified purposes at 8.10.2007 and in operation at 29.10.2007 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2007/429](#), [art. 2\(1\)\(c\)\(2\)](#)

Medical examinations

55.—(1) The 1998 Order is amended as follows.

(2) In Article 2 (interpretation), in paragraph (2), after the definition of “the Department” insert—

““health care professional” means—

- (a) a registered medical practitioner;
- (b) a registered nurse;
- (c) an occupational therapist or physiotherapist registered with a regulatory body established by an Order in Council under section 60 of the Health Act 1999 (c. 8); or
- (d) a member of such other profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 (c. 17) as the Department may prescribe;”.

(3) In Article 19 (medical examination required by the Department), in paragraphs (1) and (2)(b), for “medical practitioner” substitute “health care professional approved by the Department”.

(4) In Article 20 (medical examination required by appeal tribunal), in paragraph (2), for “medical practitioner” substitute “health care professional approved by the Department”.

(5) In that Article, after paragraph (2), insert—

“(2A) The power under paragraph (2) to refer a person to a health care professional approved by the Department includes power to specify the description of health care professional to whom the person is to be referred.”.

Minor and consequential amendments relating to Part 4

56 Schedule 7 (which makes miscellaneous minor amendments and amendments consequential on this Part) has effect.

Commencement Information

- I32** S. 56 wholly in operation at 27.10.2008; s. 56 in operation for certain purposes at Royal Assent see s. 60(1)(2)(c); s. 56 in operation for certain purposes at 8.10.2007 by [S.R.](#)

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

2007/429, **art. 2(1)(d)**; s. 56 in operation at 27.10.2008 in so far as not already in operation by S.R. 2008/276, **art. 2(2)(d)**, Sch. Pt. 2

PART 5

GENERAL

Interpretation

57.—(1) In this Act—

“the 1998 Order” means the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (NI 10);

“the 2000 Act” means the Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act (Northern Ireland) 2000 (c. 4);

“the Administration Act” means the Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 8);

“the Contributions and Benefits Act” means the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 7);

“the Department” (except in section 16) means the Department for Social Development;

“the Housing Executive” means the Northern Ireland Housing Executive;

“the Jobseekers Order” means the Jobseekers (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (NI 15);

“statutory provision” has the meaning given by section 1(f) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954 (c. 33).

(2) In the application, for the purposes of this Act, of—

(a) section 24(1) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954 (service of documents by post) omit the word “registering”;

(b) section 39(2) of that Act (time beginning on a particular day), omit the word “not”.

Repeals

58 The statutory provisions specified in Schedule 8 are hereby repealed to the extent specified.

Commencement Information

I33 S. 58 partly in operation; s. 58 in operation for certain purposes at Royal Assent see s. 60(1)(2)(d); s. 58 in operation for certain purposes at 8.10.2007 by S.R. 2007/429, **art. 2(1)(e)**; s. 58 in operation for certain purposes at 7.4.2008 by S.R. 2008/93, **art. 2(b)**; s. 58 in

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operation for certain purposes at 27.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(d\)](#), Sch. Pt. 2; s. 58 in operation for certain purposes at 1.9.2008 by [S.R. 2008/339](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)](#) (with [art. 3\(1\)\(2\)](#)); s. 58 in operation for certain purposes at 7.10.2008 by [S.R. 2008/339](#), [art. 2\(3\)\(b\)](#)

Transition

59.—(1) The Department may by order make in connection with the coming into operation of any provision of this Act, except Part 1, such transitional provision or savings as it considers necessary or expedient.

(2) The power under subsection (1) includes power to make incidental, supplementary and consequential provision.

Commencement

60.—(1) This Act, except the provisions specified in subsection (2), shall come into operation on such day or days as the Department may by order appoint.

(2) The provisions referred to in subsection (1) are—

- (a) sections 38(2), 41, 50, 51, 53, 55, 57, 59, this section and section 61;
- (b) paragraphs 1 and 5 of Schedule 5 and section 37 so far as relating thereto;
- (c) paragraphs 1(1) and (3), 2 and 4 of Schedule 7 and section 56 so far as relating thereto;
- (d) Schedule 8, so far as relating to—
 - (i) section 136(1A) of the Contributions and Benefits Act;
 - (ii) section 69(5), 69ZA and 147(3) of the Administration Act; and
 - (iii) Article 38(7)(a) of, and paragraph 62(2) of Schedule 6 to, the 1998 Order,
 and section 58 so far as relating thereto.

Subordinate Legislation Made

- P1** S. 60(1) power partly exercised: different dates appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2007/335](#), [art. 2](#);
- S. 60(1) power partly exercised: different dates appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2007/429](#), [art. 2](#);
- S. 60(1) power partly exercised: different dates appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2008/93](#), [art. 2](#);
- S. 60(1) power partly exercised: 1.4.2008 appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2008/147](#), [art. 2](#);
- S. 60(1) power partly exercised: different dates appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2008/276](#), [art. 2](#), [Sch.](#);

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

S. 60(1) power partly exercised: different dates appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2008/339](#), [art. 2](#) (with [art. 3\(1\)\(2\)](#));

S. 60(1) power partly exercised: 27.10.2008 appointed for specified provision by [S.R. 2008/425](#), [art. 2](#);

S. 60(1) power partly exercised: 9.9.2010 appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2010/308](#), [art. 2](#);

S. 60(1) power partly exercised: 11.7.2011 appointed for specified provisions by [S.R. 2011/260](#), [art. 2](#)

Short title

61 This Act may be cited as the Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

SCHEDULES

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

SCHEDULE 1 Section 1.

EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT
ALLOWANCE: ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS

.....

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

SCHEDULE 2 Section 22.

EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT ALLOWANCE:
SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISIONS

.....

VALID FROM 01/07/2008

SCHEDULE 3 Section 28.

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS RELATING TO PART 1

.....

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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VALID FROM 01/07/2008

SCHEDULE 4

Section 29.

TRANSITION RELATING TO PART 1

.....

SCHEDULE 5

Section 37.

MINOR AND CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS RELATING TO PART 2

*The Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 8)***1** The Administration Act is amended as follows.

VALID FROM 01/04/2008

2 In section 128E (information about attainment of standards), in subsection (1)—

- (a) for “section 128D(3)” substitute “ section 128D(3A) or (3B) ”;
- (b) after paragraph (a) insert—
 - “(aa) whether the Housing Executive has taken the action which it has been directed to take;”;
- (c) in paragraph (b) after “those standards” insert “ or take that action ”.

VALID FROM 01/04/2008

3.—(1) Section 128F (enforcement notices) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (1)—

- (a) for “section 128D(3)” substitute “ section 128D(3A) or (3B) ”;
 - (b) after paragraph (a) insert—
 - “(aa) is not satisfied that the Housing Executive has taken the action which it has been directed to take;”;
 - (c) in paragraph (b) after “those standards” insert “ or take that action ”.
- (3) In subsection (2)(a), after “paragraph (a)” insert “ , (aa) ”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

(4) In subsection (4), at the beginning insert “ If the notice identifies directions under section 128D(3A) above, ”.

(5) After subsection (4) insert—

“(4A) If the notice identifies directions under section 128D(3B) above, the Housing Executive's response shall either—

- (a) state that the Housing Executive has taken the action, or is likely to take it within the time specified in the directions, and justify that statement; or
- (b) state that the Housing Executive has not taken the action, or is not likely to take it within that time, and (if the Housing Executive wishes) give reasons why a determination under section 128G below should not be made or should not include any particular provision.”.

VALID FROM 01/04/2008

4.—(1) Section 128G (enforcement determinations) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (1)—

- (a) in paragraph (a) after “the standards” insert “ or taken the action ”;
- (b) in paragraph (b) after “those standards” insert “ or take that action ”.

(3) In subsections (3) and (5)(c), after “the standards” insert “ or the taking of the action ”.

5 In section 167(1) (interpretation), in the definition of “prescribe” at the end add “ and “prescribed” must be construed accordingly ”.

PROSPECTIVE

The Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act (Northern Ireland) 2000 (c. 4)

6 In Schedule 7 to the 2000 Act (housing benefit: revisions and appeals), in paragraph 1(2), after head (b) add—

- “(c) a decision of a relevant authority under or by virtue of section 73 of the Administration Act that an amount of housing benefit is recoverable;”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

SCHEDULE 6

Section 52(5).

SCHEDULE TO BE INSERTED IN THE PNEUMOCONIOSIS, ETC.,
(WORKERS' COMPENSATION) (NORTHERN IRELAND) ORDER 1979

Commencement Information

I62 Sch. 6 wholly in operation at 10.8.2007; Sch. 6 not in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1); Sch. 6 in operation for specified purposes at 19.7.2007 and in operation at 10.8.2007 for all other purposes by S.R. 2007/335, art. 2

“THE SCHEDULE

DEFINITION OF “RELEVANT EMPLOYER”

Basic definition

1 Subject to the following provisions, “relevant employer”, in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies, means any person—

- (a) by whom the disabled person was employed in a prescribed occupation at any time during the period during which he was developing the disease, and
- (b) against whom he might have or might have had a claim for damages in respect of the disablement.

Disregarded employers

2 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies if the disabled person has had no period of employment with him which is a qualifying period of employment.

3 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies if the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with him did not exceed 12 months.

4 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies if the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with him—

- (a) did not exceed 5 years, and
- (b) represents not more than 25 per cent. of the time during which the disabled person was employed in a prescribed occupation.

5 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies if the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with him—

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- (a) did not exceed 7 years, and
- (b) represents not more than 20 per cent. of the time during which the disabled person was employed in a prescribed occupation.

6 In paragraphs 3 to 5, references to the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with his employer, where there has been more than one such period, are to the aggregate of those periods.

“Qualifying period of employment”

7.—(1) In this Schedule, “qualifying period of employment”, in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies, means any period of employment in a prescribed occupation, except for—

- (a) a period of employment which ended more than 20 years before the qualifying date, and
- (b) in the case of a claim relating to diffuse mesothelioma, a period of employment which began not more than 15 years before the qualifying date.

(2) In sub-paragraph (1), “qualifying date” means—

- (a) the date on which the Department determines a claim for disablement benefit made by or on behalf of the disabled person in respect of the disease, or
- (b) if the disabled person has died without a claim for disablement benefit in respect of the disease having been determined, the date on which he died.

“Prescribed occupation”

8.—(1) In this Schedule, “prescribed occupation”, in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies, means an occupation prescribed in relation to the disease by the Department by order.

(2) An order under sub-paragraph (1) shall be subject to negative resolution.

Power to amend Schedule

9 Regulations made by the Department may—

- (a) amend this Schedule for the purpose of adding to the cases in which a person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Order applies;
- (b) amend or repeal any provision of this Schedule relating to such cases.”

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

SCHEDULE 7

Section 56.

MINOR AND CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS RELATING TO PART 4

The Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 7)

1.—(1) The Contributions and Benefits Act is amended as follows.

(2) In section 73 (mobility component of disability living allowance), in subsection (9)(a), after “subsection (1)” insert “ (a) to (d) ”.

(3) In section 136 (social fund payments: principles of determination), for subsection (3) substitute—

“(3) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (2) above, the Department may issue directions under that subsection for the purpose of securing that allocations under section 147 of the Administration Act are not exceeded.”.

Commencement Information

163 Sch. 7 para. 1 wholly in operation at 8.10.2007; Sch. 7 para. 1(1)(3) in operation at Royal Assent see s. 60(1)(2)(c); Sch. 7 para. 1(2) in operation at 8.10.2007 by S.R. 2007/429, art. 2(1)(d)

The Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 8)

2.—(1) The Administration Act is amended as follows.

(2) In section 117 (unauthorised disclosure of information relating to particular persons), in subsection (6A), for “medical practitioner” substitute “ health care professional ”.

(3) In section 147 (allocations from social fund), in subsection (5) (power to give directions with respect to the control and management of social fund allocations to particular officers or groups of officers), for “the amounts allocated to them” substitute “ any amounts allocated to them ”.

(4) In subsection (6) of that section (definition of “appropriate officer”), for “payments from the social fund such as are mentioned in section 134(1)(b) of the Contributions and Benefits Act” substitute “ section 134(1)(b) payments ”.

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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VALID FROM 27/10/2008

The Deregulation and Contracting Out (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (NI 11)

3 In Article 17 of the Deregulation and Contracting Out (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (social security: amendments following certain orders), at the end of paragraph (2) add “ the Welfare Reform Act 2007 ”.

The Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (NI 10)

4 In Article 38(7) of the 1998 Order (principles applicable on review of social fund determination), at the end of sub-paragraph (a)(i) insert “ and ”.

SCHEDULE 8

Section 58.

REPEALS

Commencement Information

I64 Sch. 8 partly in operation; Sch. 8 in operation for specified purposes at Royal Assent, see s. 60(1)(2)(d); Sch. 8 in operation for specified purposes at 8.10.2007 by S.R. 2007/429, art. 2(1)(e); Sch. 8 in operation for specified purposes at 7.4.2008 by S.R. 2008/93, art. 2(b); Sch. 8 in operation for specified purposes at 27.10.2008 by S.R. 2008/276, art. 2(2)(d), Sch. Pt. 2; Sch. 8 in operation for specified purposes at 1.9.2008 by S.R. 2008/339, art. 2(2)(c) (with art. 3(1)(2)); Sch. 8 in operation for specified purposes at 7.10.2008 by S.R. 2008/339, art. 2(3)(b)

Short Title

The Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 7).

Extent of repeal

In section 6A(3), the word “and” at the end of paragraph (c).

Section 20(1)(b).

In section 20(2)—

(a) in the definition of “long-term benefit”, paragraph (a);

(b) in the definition of “short-term benefit”, paragraph (b).

In section 21(1)—

(a) the words from “short-term incapacity benefit” to “subsection (5) of that section,”;

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- (b) the words “or short-term or long-term incapacity benefit under section 40 or 41 below”.

In section 21(2), in the table—

- (a) the heading “Short-term benefit”;
- (b) the entry relating to short-term incapacity benefit;
- (c) the heading “Other benefits”.

In section 21(4), the words “short-term benefit or”.

In section 21(5A)(c), the words “(4)(a) and (5)(a),”.

Sections 30A to 30E.

In section 37(2), the words from “one of the conditions” to “person and”.

In section 39A(3), the words from “one of the conditions” to “person and”.

Sections 40 to 42.

In section 44(4), the words from “except that” to the end.

Section 47.

In section 61—

- (a) in subsection (1), the words “under section 47(1) above or”;
- (b) subsection (2).

In section 61A(3), paragraph (d) and the word “and” immediately preceding it.

Section 72(6).

In section 73(5), the words “Subject to subsection (4) above,”.

Section 84.

Section 86A.

Section 87.

In section 89(1) and (1A), the words “, and in regulations under section 86A above,”.

Section 93.

In section 123(1), the word “and” at the end of paragraph (f).

Section 129(4).

In section 136(1A), the words following paragraph (b).

Section 146(1)(b).

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

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	Sections 167A to 167G. Section 167ZP(1) to (3). In section 172(2)(a), the words “section 30DD(5)(b) or (c);”.
	In Schedule 3, paragraphs 2 and 5(6). In Schedule 4—
	(a) in Part 1, paragraphs 2 and 2A; (b) in Part 4, paragraphs 1A and 2.
	In Schedule 11, paragraph 2(d)(i). In Schedule 12, paragraphs 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6.
	In Schedule 13, paragraphs 1 and 2.
The Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 8).	Section 2A(2)(d) and (e). In section 2AA(2), paragraph (c) and the word “and” at the end of paragraph (d). Section 69(5). In section 69ZA(2)—
	(a) in paragraph (a), the words “paragraph (a) of subsection (5) and”;
	(b) paragraph (b). In section 71(4), the word “or” at the end of paragraph (a). Section 122(1)(a) and (c). Section 124(1)(b) and (c). In section 147(3)(d), the words from “to the same officer” to the end.
The Pension Schemes (Northern Ireland) Act 1993 (c. 49).	Section 42(3). In Schedule 7, paragraph 33.
The Social Security (Incapacity for Work) (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 (NI 12).	Articles 3 to 5, 7 to 9 and 15. In Schedule 1, paragraphs 2, 3(3), 8 to 10, 13, 17, 24, 28, 33, 38(2) and (3), 43, 44, 48, 49 and 54(4).
The Jobseekers (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (NI 15).	In Schedule 2, paragraphs 3, 6, 8, 9, 20, 23(2), 36(2) and 52(3), (4) and (5).
The Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 (NI 22).	In Schedule 2, paragraphs 14(b) and 18(3) and (4).
The Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (NI 10).	In Article 4(2), the word “or” at the end of sub-paragraph (h).

Status: Point in time view as at 19/07/2007. This version of this Act contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 26 March 2024. 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)

	In Article 28(3), the word “or” at the end of sub-paragraph (e).
	Article 31(1).
	In Article 38(7)(a), head (iii), and the word “and” immediately preceding it.
	Article 73.
	In Schedule 2, in paragraph 6(b), the word “or” at the end of paragraph (ii).
	In Schedule 3, in paragraph 3, the word “or” at the end of paragraph (e).
	In Schedule 6, paragraphs 54(3), 57, 62(2) and 80(1).
The Welfare Reform and Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (NI 11).	Articles 58 to 61.
	In Article 69(3), the word “or” at the end of sub-paragraph (b).
	In Schedule 8, paragraphs 19 to 24.
The National Insurance Contributions Act 2002 (c. 19).	In Schedule 1, paragraph 33(2).
The Tax Credits Act 2002 (c. 21).	In Schedule 3, paragraphs 37, 38, 40 and 42.
The State Pension Credit Act (Northern Ireland) 2002 (c. 14).	In Schedule 2, paragraphs 22(a) and 25(a).
The Housing Support Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2002 (NI 8).	Articles 6 and 7.
The Civil Partnership Act 2004 (c. 33).	In Schedule 24, paragraphs 68 and 69.

Status:

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