



2015 CHAPTER 2

PART 4

PROTECTION OF SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS AND PROCEEDINGS

Protection of slavery and trafficking victims in criminal investigations

23.—(1) Without prejudice to the rights of the accused, and in accordance with an individualised assessment of the personal circumstances of the complainant, the Chief Constable shall ensure that during an investigation of an offence under section 1 or 2—

- (a) the complainant receives specific treatment aimed at preventing secondary victimisation by avoiding, as far as possible—
 - (i) unnecessary repetition of interviews;
 - (ii) visual contact between the complainant and the accused, using appropriate means including communication technologies;
 - (iii) unnecessary questioning concerning the complainant's private life;
- (b) in addition if the complainant is under the age of 18—
 - (i) interviews with the complainant take place without unjustified delay after the facts have been reported;
 - (ii) interviews with the complainant take place, where necessary, in premises designed or adapted for the purpose;
 - (iii) interviews with the complainant are carried out, where necessary, by or through persons trained for the purpose;
 - (iv) if possible and where appropriate, the same persons conduct all the interviews with the complainant;

Changes to legislation: *Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, Section 23 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 30 September 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

- (v) the number of interviews with the complainant is as limited as possible and interviews are carried out only where strictly necessary for the purposes of the investigation;
- (vi) the complainant may be accompanied by an adult of the complainant's choice, unless the police officer in charge of the investigation decides to the contrary and records the reasons for that decision in writing.

(2) In this section—

“the accused” means a person who is alleged to have committed, or has committed, an offence under section 1 or 2;

“complainant” means a person against or in relation to whom an offence under section 1 or 2 is alleged to have been committed, or has been committed.

Changes to legislation:

Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015, Section 23 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 30 September 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

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

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

- s. 18(10A) inserted by [2023 c. 37 s. 28\(5\)](#)