



2016 CHAPTER 22

PART 1 **N.I.**

Meaning of “house in multiple occupation”

Meaning of “house in multiple occupation” **N.I.**

1.—(1) A building or part of a building is a “house in multiple occupation” if—

- (a) it is living accommodation (see section 2),
- (b) it is occupied by 3 or more persons as their only or main residence (see section 3),
- (c) those persons form more than two households (see section 4), and
- (d) rents are payable or other consideration is to be provided in respect of the occupation by at least one of those persons of the living accommodation.

(2) But a building or part of a building within subsection (1) is not a house in multiple occupation if it is listed in Schedule 1 (exceptions).

(3) The Department may by regulations amend this section, sections 2 to 4 and Schedule 1 as it considers appropriate in order to provide that any building or part of a building of a description set out in the regulations is or is not to be a house in multiple occupation for the purposes of this Act, or for such purposes of this Act as are specified in the regulations.

Commencement Information

II S. 1 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Definition of living accommodation **N.I.**

2.—(1) A building or part of a building is living accommodation if—

- (a) it is, or is capable of being, occupied as a separate dwelling, or
- (b) both of the following conditions are met—
 - (i) it is, or forms part of, any building or group of buildings which is in single ownership, and
 - (ii) its occupants share one or more basic amenities with each other.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b)(i), a building or group of buildings is in “single ownership” if the whole of the building, or all the buildings in the group, are owned—

- (a) by one person, or
- (b) by one person and that person's associates (as defined in section 88), whether jointly or severally.

(3) For this purpose, if—

- (a) a building or part of a building is owned by a body corporate, and
- (b) the body corporate is controlled by a director of it (within the meaning given by section 255 of the Companies Act 2006),

the building or part is to be treated as being owned by the director as well as by the body corporate.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (1)(b)(ii), the “basic amenities” are—

- (a) a toilet,
- (b) personal washing facilities, and
- (c) facilities for the preparation or provision of cooked food.

(5) References in this Act to “living accommodation” include—

- (a) any part of the living accommodation (including its structure and exterior) which is, and any common facilities relating to it which are, owned in common with others, and
- (b) any yard, garden, garage, out-house or other area or structure which is, or which is capable of being, occupied or enjoyed together with the living accommodation or any part of it (solely or in common with others).

Commencement Information

I2 S. 2 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Cases where person is treated as occupying accommodation as only or main residence **N.I.**

3.—(1) This section sets out some cases where a person is, or is not, to be treated for the purposes of this Act as occupying living accommodation as their only or main residence.

(2) A person who occupies living accommodation during term time for the purpose of undertaking a full-time course of further or higher education is to be treated, at all times during that person's residence there, as occupying that accommodation as the person's only or main residence.

(3) A person who occupies living accommodation for the purpose of engaging in seasonal work is to be treated, at all times during that person's residence there, as occupying that accommodation as the person's only or main residence.

(4) A person who occupies living accommodation that is—

- (a) managed by a voluntary organisation, and
- (b) used wholly or mainly for the temporary accommodation of persons who have left their homes as a result of—
 - (i) physical violence or mental abuse, or
 - (ii) threats of such violence or abuse,

is to be treated as occupying that accommodation as the person's only or main residence.

(5) The Department may make regulations setting out other circumstances in which a person is, or is not, to be treated as occupying living accommodation as his or her only or main residence.

Commencement Information

I3 S. 3 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Persons who are members of the same household **N.I.**

4.—(1) For the purposes of this Act persons are members of the same household only if—

- (a) they are members of the same family (as defined in section 88),
- (b) they are to be treated as being members of the same household by virtue of subsections (2) and (3), or
- (c) their circumstances are of a description set out in regulations made by the Department (as to which, see subsections (4) and (5)).

(2) Subsection (3) applies if—

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- (a) a person (A) is engaged to provide domestic help or personal care to another person (B), and
 - (b) the terms of that engagement require A to occupy the same living accommodation as B.
- (3) A is to be treated as being a member of the same household as—
- (a) B, and
 - (b) any member of B's family who also occupies that living accommodation.
- (4) Regulations under subsection (1)(c) may, in particular, provide that a group of persons are to be regarded as being members of the same household only where each member of the group has a prescribed relationship, or at least one of a number of prescribed relationships, to any one or more of the others.
- (5) In subsection (4) “prescribed relationship” means any relationship of a description set out in the regulations.

Commencement Information

I4 S. 4 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Notice regarding evidence of household **N.I.**

- 5.**—(1) This section applies if—
- (a) it appears to a council that living accommodation is occupied by 3 or more persons, and
 - (b) the council believes, on reasonable grounds, that the occupants form more than two households.
- (2) The council may serve a notice which—
- (a) states the council's belief mentioned in subsection (1)(b),
 - (b) states the grounds for that belief,
 - (c) invites the person on whom the notice is served to supply to the council, within the period of 28 days beginning with the date of service of the notice, evidence that the occupants form no more than two households, and
 - (d) informs the person of the effect of subsections (4) and (5).
- (3) The notice may be served on any or all of the following (as the council considers appropriate)—
- (a) any person appearing to the council to be the owner of the accommodation;
 - (b) any person appearing to the council to be a managing agent of the accommodation;
 - (c) the occupants of the accommodation.

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- (4) Subsection (5) applies if, after a council has served a notice under subsection (2)—
- (a) no such evidence is provided within the period mentioned in subsection (2)(c), or
 - (b) such evidence is provided within that period, but it is not sufficient to cause the council to change its belief.
- (5) Where this subsection applies—
- (a) the council may serve a notice (a “household notice”) stating that the condition set out in paragraph (a) or, as the case may be, paragraph (b) of subsection (4) is met, and
 - (b) as from the date of service of that notice, the living accommodation is to be treated as if the occupants formed more than two households.
- (6) A household notice must be served on all the persons on whom the notice under subsection (2) was served.
- (7) Subsection (5)(b) ceases to apply if (whether or not as a result of an appeal under section 67) the council ceases to hold the belief mentioned in subsection (1)(b).

Commencement Information

I5 S. 5 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Notice regarding continuation of occupation **N.I.**

- 6.—(1) This section applies if—
- (a) it appears to a council that living accommodation—
 - (i) has been a house in multiple occupation, but
 - (ii) has ceased to be so because the number of occupants has reduced below 3, and
 - (b) the council believes, on reasonable grounds, that the accommodation is likely to become a house in multiple occupation again within 4 months of that cessation.
- (2) The council may serve a notice (a “continuation notice”) which—
- (a) states the council's belief mentioned in subsection (1)(b),
 - (b) states the grounds for that belief, and
 - (c) informs the person on whom the notice is served of the effect of subsections (4) and (5).
- (3) The notice may be served on any or all of the following (as the council considers appropriate)—

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- (a) any person appearing to the council to be the owner of the accommodation;
- (b) any person appearing to the council to be a managing agent of the accommodation;
- (c) the occupants of the accommodation.

(4) A continuation notice has effect for a period of 4 months beginning with the date on which it is served (but this is subject to subsections (7) and (8)).

(5) During that period, the accommodation is to be treated as if it were an HMO for the purposes of this Act, except for the purposes of the following sections—

- (a) section 5 (service of household notice);
- (b) sections 15 to 17 (service and extension of temporary exemption notice);
- (c) sections 44 to 48 (service of overcrowding notice and information notice);
- (d) sections 50 to 53 (service of unsuitability notice).

(6) A continuation notice must invite the person on whom the notice is served to supply to the council, within the period of 28 days beginning with the date of service of the notice—

- (a) evidence that the accommodation will not become a house in multiple occupation within the period of 4 months beginning with the date on which the notice was served, or
- (b) evidence that, throughout the period of 4 months before the notice was served, the accommodation was not a house in multiple occupation.

(7) If evidence is provided, within the period mentioned in subsection (6), that is sufficient to satisfy the council—

- (a) that the accommodation will not become a house in multiple occupation within the period of 4 months beginning with the date on which the continuation notice was served, or
- (b) that the accommodation was a house in multiple occupation at no time in the period of 4 months before the notice was served,

the council must serve a notice cancelling the continuation notice.

(8) If evidence is supplied to the council in response to a continuation notice but the council decides that the evidence is not sufficient to satisfy the council as mentioned in subsection (7), the council must serve notice of that decision.

(9) A notice under subsection (7) or (8) must be served on all the persons on whom the continuation notice was served.

(10) Subsection (5) ceases to apply if (whether or not as a result of an appeal under section 67) the council ceases to hold the belief mentioned in subsection (1)(b).

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Commencement Information

I6 S. 6 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

PART 2 **N.I.**

Licensing of Houses in multiple occupation

Requirement for and issue of licences

Requirement for HMOs to be licensed **N.I.**

7.—(1) Every house in multiple occupation (“HMO”) must be licensed under this Act (unless a temporary exemption notice under section 15 is in effect in respect of it).

(2) A licence under this Act (an “HMO licence”) is to be issued by the council for the district in which the HMO is situated.

(3) An HMO licence must specify—

- (a) the HMO to which it relates,
- (b) the council which issued it,
- (c) the number of persons who are authorised by the licence to occupy the HMO as their only or main residence,
- (d) the owner of the HMO,
- (e) any managing agent of the HMO, and
- (f) any conditions which the council has decided to include in the licence under section 14.

Commencement Information

I7 S. 7 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Applications for HMO licence **N.I.**

8.—(1) An application for an HMO licence is to be made to the council by the owner of the living accommodation in question.

(2) The council may grant the licence only if it is satisfied that—

- (a) the occupation of the living accommodation as an HMO would not constitute a breach of planning control (see section 9);
- (b) the owner of the living accommodation, and any managing agent of it, are fit and proper persons (see section 10);

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- (c) the proposed management arrangements for the living accommodation are satisfactory (see section 11);
 - (d) the granting of the licence will not result in overprovision of HMOs in the locality in which the living accommodation is situated (see section 12); and
 - (e) the living accommodation is fit for human habitation and—
 - (i) is suitable for occupation as an HMO (see section 13) by the number of persons to be specified in the licence as mentioned in section 7(3)(c), or
 - (ii) can be made so suitable by including conditions in the licence under section 14.
- (3) Schedule 2 makes provision about the procedural requirements relating to an application for an HMO licence.

Commencement Information

18 S. 8 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Breach of planning control **N.I.**

9.—(1) For the purposes of section 8(2)(a) (refusal of licence for breach of planning control), “breach of planning control” has the meaning given by section 131 of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

(2) For provisions under which a decision to refuse a licence under section 8(2)(a) is treated differently from a refusal on other grounds, see—

- (a) paragraphs 5 to 7 of Schedule 2 (procedure on refusal of application);
- (b) section 25 (restriction on making applications after refusal);
- (c) section 67(1)(d) (appeals).

Commencement Information

19 S. 9 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Fit and proper persons **N.I.**

10.—(1) This section sets out the matters which are relevant for deciding whether an owner or managing agent is a fit and proper person for the purposes of this Act.

(2) A person who is subject to a disqualification order (see section 38) is not a fit and proper person.

(3) In deciding whether any other person (“P”) is a fit and proper person, the council must have regard to—

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- (a) the matters mentioned in subsections (4) to (7), and
 - (b) any other matter which the council considers to be relevant.
- (4) The council must have regard to whether P has—
- (a) committed any offence involving—
 - (i) fraud or other dishonesty,
 - (ii) violence,
 - (iii) drugs,
 - (iv) human trafficking, or
 - (v) a firearm (within the meaning of Article 2(2) of the Firearms (Northern Ireland) Order 2004);
 - (b) committed an offence listed in Schedule 3 to the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (offences attracting notification requirements);
 - (c) practised unlawful discrimination in, or in connection with, the carrying on of any business;
 - (d) contravened any provision of the law relating to housing or of landlord and tenant law; or
 - (e) acted otherwise than in accordance with a code of practice approved under section 63.
- (5) The council must have regard to whether any associate or former associate of P has engaged in any of the conduct mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (e) of subsection (4), if it appears to the council that that conduct is relevant to whether P is a fit and proper person.
- (6) The council must have regard to—
- (a) any anti-social behaviour engaged in by P, and
 - (b) P's conduct as regards any anti-social behaviour—
 - (i) engaged in by the occupants of any relevant living accommodation whilst in the accommodation, or
 - (ii) adversely affecting the occupants of any such accommodation.
- (7) In subsection (6)—
- “anti-social behaviour” means—
- (i) acting or threatening to act in a manner causing or likely to cause a nuisance or annoyance to a person residing in, visiting or otherwise engaging in a lawful activity in residential premises or in the locality of such premises, or
 - (ii) using or threatening to use residential premises for illegal purposes;
- “relevant living accommodation” means living accommodation of which P is or was the owner or managing agent.

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(8) If an owner or managing agent is a body (whether incorporated or not), the body is not a fit and proper person if any of the following is not a fit and proper person—

- (a) a director of the body,
- (b) a partner of it, or
- (c) any other person concerned in the management of the body.

Commencement Information

I10 S. 10 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Satisfactory management arrangements **N.I.**

11 In deciding for the purposes of section 8(2)(c) whether the proposed management arrangements for the living accommodation are satisfactory, the council must have regard to (among other things)—

- (a) whether any person proposed to be involved in the management has a sufficient level of competence to be so involved,
- (b) whether any person proposed to be involved in the management, other than a managing agent named in the licence, is a fit and proper person (within the meaning given by section 10) to be so involved, and
- (c) whether any proposed management structures and funding arrangements are suitable.

Commencement Information

I11 S. 11 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Overprovision **N.I.**

12.—(1) In considering whether the granting of a licence will result in overprovision in a locality for the purposes of section 8(2)(d), the council must have regard to—

- (a) the number and capacity of licensed HMOs in the locality,
- (b) the need for housing accommodation in the locality and the extent to which HMO accommodation is required to meet that need, and
- (c) such other matters as the Department may by regulations specify.

(2) It is for the council to determine the localities within its district for the purposes of this section.

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Commencement Information

I12 S. 12 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Suitability of living accommodation for multiple occupation **N.I.**

13.—(1) In determining for the purposes of section 8(2)(e) whether living accommodation is, or can be made, suitable for occupation as an HMO by the specified maximum number of persons, the council must have regard to—

- (a) the matters set out in subsection (2),
- (b) the minimum standards set under subsection (3) for the accommodation's condition, facilities or equipment for that number of persons, and
- (c) the extent (if any) to which the accommodation falls short of the provisions of building regulations.

(2) The matters referred to in subsection (1)(a) are—

- (a) the accommodation's location,
- (b) the type and number of persons likely to occupy it,
- (c) the safety and security of persons likely to occupy it, and
- (d) the possibility of undue public nuisance.

(3) The Department may by regulations set minimum standards which must be met in relation to the matters set out in subsection (5) in order for accommodation to be regarded as suitable for occupation by prescribed numbers of persons.

(4) In having regard to those minimum standards, the council—

- (a) cannot be satisfied that the accommodation is suitable if the council considers that the accommodation fails to meet the standards, but
- (b) may decide that the accommodation is not suitable for occupation by that number even if the accommodation does meet the standards.

(5) The matters referred to in subsection (3) are—

- (a) natural and artificial lighting,
- (b) ventilation,
- (c) installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation, space heating and heating water,
- (d) personal washing facilities,
- (e) facilities for the storage, preparation and provision of food,
- (f) any requirements about the display of signs relating to fire exits or other matters,
- (g) interior and exterior decoration,

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- (h) safety equipment (including fire safety equipment), and
- (i) disposal of refuse.

(6) The standards that may be set under subsection (3) include standards as to the number, type and condition of facilities or equipment which should be available in prescribed circumstances.

(7) In subsections (3) and (6), “prescribed” means prescribed in the regulations.

(8) In relation to any application for an HMO licence, the “specified maximum number of persons” means—

- (a) the number of persons specified in the application as the proposed maximum for the accommodation, or
- (b) if the council decides to specify a lower number in the licence, that lower number.

Commencement Information

I13 S. 13 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Licence conditions

Licence conditions **N.I.**

14.—(1) An HMO licence may include such conditions as the council considers appropriate for regulating any or all of the following—

- (a) the management, use and occupation of the HMO;
- (b) its condition and contents.

(2) The conditions may, in particular, include—

- (a) conditions imposing restrictions or prohibitions on the use or occupation of particular parts of the HMO by persons occupying it;
- (b) conditions requiring the taking of reasonable and practicable steps to prevent or reduce anti-social behaviour by persons occupying or visiting the HMO;
- (c) conditions requiring facilities and equipment to be made available in the house for the purpose of making it suitable for occupation as an HMO (within the meaning of section 13);
- (d) conditions requiring such facilities and equipment to be maintained in repair and proper working order;
- (e) conditions requiring, in the case of any works needed in order for any such facilities or equipment to be made available or to be so maintained, that

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the works are carried out within such period or periods as may be specified in, or determined under, the licence;

- (f) conditions requiring the owner of the HMO or the managing agent of it (if any) to attend training courses in relation to any code of practice approved under section 63.

(3) The Department may make regulations requiring councils to include in HMO licences such conditions as are specified in the regulations.

(4) An HMO licence may include a condition imposing a restriction or obligation on—

- (a) the owner of the HMO or the managing agent of it (if any);
 (b) any class of persons described by reference to the HMO (such as occupants of it or visitors to it), whether or not identified by name;
 (c) any other person named in the condition.

(5) But an HMO licence may include a condition imposing a restriction or obligation on a person named in it (other than the owner or managing agent) only if that person has consented to the imposition of the restriction or obligation.

(6) An HMO licence may not include conditions requiring, or intended to secure, any alteration in the terms of any tenancy or other occupancy arrangement under which any person occupies the HMO.

(7) A condition included in an HMO licence may specify a date from which the condition is to have effect (and such a date may be later, but not earlier, than the date from which the other provisions of the licence have effect).

(8) If an HMO licence includes a condition which requires work to be carried out in or to any living accommodation, the condition must specify the date by which that work must be completed.

(9) Any date specified for the purposes of subsection (7) or (8) must be such as would, in the opinion of the council, enable the licence holder to secure compliance with the condition, or to complete the work, before that date.

Commencement Information

I14 S. 14 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Temporary exemption from licensing requirement

Temporary exemption notice **N.I.**

15.—(1) This section applies where the owner of an unlicensed HMO makes an application to the council that—

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- (a) specifies steps which may be taken with a view to securing that the HMO ceases to be an HMO, and
 - (b) includes a declaration that the owner intends to take those steps.
- (2) An application under subsection (1) must be in such form as the council specifies by general notice.
- (3) If the council is satisfied—
- (a) that the steps specified in the application will have the intended effect, and
 - (b) that the owner intends to take them,
- it may issue a notice (a “temporary exemption notice”) in respect of the HMO.
- (4) A temporary exemption notice may include safety or security requirements (see section 17).
- (5) The council must—
- (a) if it decides to issue a temporary exemption notice, serve that notice on the owner and the occupants of the HMO;
 - (b) otherwise, serve on the owner and the occupants notice of its decision not to do so.
- (6) An HMO is not required to be licensed under this Act during the period for which a temporary exemption notice has effect in respect of it.
- (7) A temporary exemption notice has effect for—
- (a) the period of 3 months beginning with the date on which it is served, or
 - (b) such longer period as may be granted under section 16.

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Commencement Information

I15 S. 15 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Extension of temporary exemption notice **N.I.**

16.—(1) This section applies if the council is satisfied, on the application of the owner, that there are special circumstances that justify the extension of the period for which a temporary exemption notice has effect.

(2) The council may grant an extension for such period, not exceeding 3 months, as it considers appropriate.

(3) Only one such extension may be granted.

(4) The council must serve notice of its decision under this section on the owner and the occupants of the HMO.

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Commencement Information

I16 S. 16 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Safety and security requirements **N.I.**

17.—(1) A temporary exemption notice may include requirements that the owner of the HMO carry out such work in or to the HMO as the council considers appropriate for the purpose of improving the safety or security of the HMO's occupants during the period for which the notice has effect.

(2) If a notice does so, it must specify—

- (a) the work to be carried out, and
- (b) a date by which the work must be completed.

(3) Different dates may be specified for different works.

(4) A date specified under subsection (2) must not be earlier than the date by which the council reasonably considers that the work can be completed.

(5) A notice which requires work to be carried out may also specify particular steps which the council requires to be taken in carrying out that work.

(6) Part 1 of Schedule 3 applies to a temporary exemption notice that includes a requirement under this section.

Commencement Information

I17 S. 17 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Revocation of temporary exemption notice **N.I.**

18.—(1) If the council is satisfied that the owner of the HMO has failed to comply with any requirement included in a temporary exemption notice under section 17, the council may revoke the notice.

(2) A council that revokes a notice must serve on the owner and the occupants notice of its decision to do so.

(3) A revocation under this section has effect from—

- (a) the last date on which the decision to revoke the notice may be appealed in accordance with section 67(4), or
- (b) if such an appeal is made, the date on which the appeal is finally determined.

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I18 S. 18 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Duration and renewal

Duration of HMO licence **N.I.**

- 19.—(1) An HMO licence has effect from—
- (a) the date on which notice of the decision to grant it is served under paragraph 13 of Schedule 2, or
 - (b) such later date as may be specified in the licence.
- (2) An HMO licence has effect for—
- (a) 5 years, or
 - (b) such shorter period, of not less than 6 months, as may be specified in the licence.
- (3) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to a licence which is treated as having been granted in accordance with paragraph 12(6) of Schedule 2.
- (4) Such a licence—
- (a) has effect from the date by which the council was required by that paragraph to determine the application, and
 - (b) has effect for 1 year.
- (5) Subsections (2) and (4)(b) are subject to the following provisions, which provide for the date on which a licence is to cease to have effect in certain circumstances—
- (a) section 21 (effect on existing licence where application is made to renew);
 - (b) section 23 (revocation of licence);
 - (c) section 27 (surrender of licence);
 - (d) section 28 (change of ownership of property);
 - (e) section 29 (death of licence holder).

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I19 S. 19 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

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Renewal of licence **N.I.**

20.—(1) Where the holder of an HMO licence makes an application in accordance with this section for it to be renewed, the council may renew the licence.

(2) An application to renew a licence must be made before the licence ceases to have effect.

(3) The provisions of this Part apply to applications to renew a licence (and decisions on such applications) as they apply to applications for a licence (and decisions on such applications).

(4) But the following provisions do not apply to applications to renew—

- (a) sections 8(2)(a) and 9 and paragraphs 5 to 7 of Schedule 2 (breach of planning control);
- (b) sections 8(2)(d) and 12 (overprovision).

Commencement Information

I20 S. 20 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Application to renew: effect on existing licence **N.I.**

21.—(1) Where an application to renew a licence is made in accordance with section 20, the existing licence has effect until the date mentioned in subsection (2).

(2) That date is—

- (a) if the application is granted, the date from which the renewed licence has effect (determined in accordance with section 19(1) or (4)(a));
- (b) if the application is refused, the latest of the following dates—
 - (i) the last date on which the decision to refuse the application may be appealed in accordance with section 67(4);
 - (ii) if such an appeal is made, the date on which the appeal is finally determined;
 - (iii) the date on which the existing licence would cease to have effect if the application to renew it had not been made.

(3) This section is subject to the following provisions, which provide for the date on which a licence is to cease to have effect in certain circumstances—

- (a) section 23 (revocation of licence);
- (b) section 27 (surrender of licence);
- (c) section 28 (change of ownership of property);
- (d) section 29 (death of licence holder).

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement Information

I21 S. 21 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Variation and revocation

Variation of licences **N.I.**

22.—(1) The council may vary an HMO licence in any of the following ways—

- (a) varying the number of persons who are authorised by the licence to occupy the HMO;
- (b) removing, adding or substituting the managing agent of the HMO;
- (c) removing, adding or varying any conditions included in the licence.

(2) The council may vary a licence under this section—

- (a) on the application of the licence holder,
- (b) on the application of any person named in the licence as a person on whom a restriction or obligation is imposed under section 14, or
- (c) on the council's own initiative.

Commencement Information

I22 S. 22 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Revocation of licences **N.I.**

23.—(1) The council may revoke an HMO licence if it is satisfied that—

- (a) the owner of the HMO, or any managing agent of it (whether or not named in the licence), is not a fit and proper person (see section 10);
- (b) the management arrangements for the HMO are not satisfactory (see section 11);
- (c) the HMO is not fit for human habitation;
- (d) the HMO is not suitable for occupation (within the meaning of section 13) by any number of persons and cannot be made suitable by varying the licence to include conditions under section 14;
- (e) any of the following persons has committed a serious breach of a condition of the licence—
 - (i) the owner or managing agent of the HMO;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

(ii) any person named in the licence as a person on whom a restriction or obligation is imposed under section 14; or

(f) there has been more than one breach of the conditions of the licence.

(2) For the purposes of subsection (1), it does not matter whether the council has taken any other action, or whether criminal proceedings have been commenced, in respect of the circumstances in question.

Commencement Information

I23 S. 23 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Variation and revocation: procedure **N.I.**

24 Schedule 4 makes provision about the procedure for varying or revoking an HMO licence.

Commencement Information

I24 S. 24 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Other provision about licences

Restriction on applications **N.I.**

25.—(1) This section applies where a council refuses to grant an HMO licence, except where the refusal is solely because the council is not satisfied as mentioned in section 8(2)(a) (planning control).

(2) Where the refusal is on the ground that any person is not a fit and proper person (see sections 8(2)(b) and 11(b)), that person is to be regarded as not being a fit and proper person for the purposes of any application for an HMO licence made in the restricted period.

(3) Where the refusal is on one or both of the grounds mentioned in section 8(2)(d) and (e) (overprovision, and accommodation not habitable or not suitable for HMO), the council may not consider any application for an HMO licence in relation to the living accommodation in question made in the restricted period.

(4) The “restricted period” is the period of 1 year beginning with the date on which notice of refusal is served under paragraph 13 of Schedule 2.

(5) This section does not prevent the council from considering an application made in the restricted period if the council is satisfied that there has been a material change of circumstances.

Commencement Information

I25 S. 25 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Joint licence holders **N.I.**

26.—(1) This section applies where living accommodation is owned jointly by two or more persons.

(2) An application for an HMO licence may be made by, and an HMO licence may be granted to—

- (a) any one of those owners, or
- (b) any two or more of those owners jointly.

(3) In a case falling within subsection (2), any reference in this Act to the “owner” of the accommodation is a reference to the owner or owners in question; and in particular, in a case falling within subsection (2)(b)—

- (a) any requirement to be fulfilled by the owner must be fulfilled by all of them, and
- (b) anything required to be done in relation to the owner must be done in relation to all of them.

(4) Where—

- (a) there is a transfer of ownership of a licensed HMO,
- (b) as a result of the transfer one or more joint licensees (but not all of them) cease to be an owner of the HMO,

the licence is to be treated as being held, from the date of the transfer, by the remaining owner or owners.

(5) Where—

- (a) there is a transfer of ownership of a licensed HMO,
- (b) as a result of the transfer there is a new owner (or more than one), and
- (c) at least one person who was a licensee before the transfer continues to be an owner after it,

the new owner (or any of them) may apply to the council to be added as a joint licensee.

(6) The council must—

- (a) treat an application under subsection (5) as an application to renew the licence made jointly by the existing licensee and the new owner, and
- (b) if it decides to grant the application, vary the licence accordingly.

(7) Where one or more joint licensees (but not all of them) apply to the council to be removed as such, the council must vary the licence accordingly.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

(8) Where a licence is varied under subsection (6) or (7), the council must serve a copy of the licence as varied on each joint licensee and on each person who was a joint licensee before the variation.

(9) In this section—

“transfer of ownership” includes the creation of a new estate;

“new owner” means a person who is an owner after the transfer but was not an owner before it.

Commencement Information

I26 S. 26 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Surrender of HMO licence **N.I.**

27.—(1) The holder of an HMO licence may surrender the licence by giving notice to the council to that effect.

(2) Notice under subsection (1) is to be in such form as the council may specify by general notice.

Commencement Information

I27 S. 27 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Change of ownership: effect on licence **N.I.**

28.—(1) A licence may be transferred to another person only in accordance with this section.

(2) Accordingly, except as set out in subsection (3), where—

- (a) there is a transfer of ownership of a licensed HMO,
- (b) as a result of the transfer there is a new owner (or more than one), and
- (c) no person who was a licensee before the transfer continues to be an owner after it,

the licence ceases to have effect on the date of the transfer.

(3) If—

- (a) there is a transfer of ownership of a licensed HMO, and
- (b) before the date of the transfer, the proposed new owner (or any of them) applies for a licence in respect of the HMO (a “new licence”),

the licence which is already in effect in respect of the HMO (“the existing licence”) is to be treated as being held, from the date of the transfer, by the person or persons who made the application for the new licence (“the transferee”).

(4) But the existing licence ceases to have effect on the date mentioned in subsection (5).

(5) That date is—

(a) if the transferee's application is granted, the date from which the new licence has effect (determined in accordance with section 19(1) or (4)(a));

(b) if the transferee's application is refused—

(i) one month after the last date on which the decision to refuse the transferee's application may be appealed in accordance with section 67(4), or

(ii) if such an appeal is made, one month after the date on which the appeal is finally determined.

(6) Subsection (4) and (5) are subject—

(a) to sections 23 (revocation) and 27 (surrender), which provide for a licence in certain circumstances to cease to have effect earlier than as provided by this section, and

(b) if the transferee dies, to section 29, which provides for a licence in certain circumstances to cease to have effect earlier than, or later than, as provided by this section.

(7) In this section—

“transfer of ownership” includes the creation of a new estate;

“new owner” means a person who is an owner after the transfer but was not an owner before it.

Commencement Information

I28 S. 28 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Death of sole licence holder: effect on licence **N.I.**

29.—(1) Where a sole licensee dies, the HMO licence—

(a) is to be treated as being held, from the date of death, by the licensee's personal representatives, but

(b) ceases to have effect 3 months after that date.

(2) The council may, on the application of the personal representatives of the licensee, extend the period for which the licence has effect beyond the date mentioned in subsection (1)(b) if the council considers that it is reasonable to do so for the purpose of winding up the licensee's estate.

(3) An application under subsection (2) must be made within the period mentioned in subsection (1)(b).

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

(4) The council must serve on the personal representatives notice of its decision under subsection (2).

(5) Subsections (1)(b) and (2) are subject—

- (a) to sections 23 (revocation) and 27 (surrender), which provide for a licence in certain circumstances to cease to have effect earlier than as provided by this section, and
- (b) if the personal representatives of the licensee transfer ownership of the HMO, to section 28, which provides for a licence in certain circumstances to cease to have effect earlier than, or later than, as provided by this section.

Commencement Information

I29 S. 29 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

PART 3 N.I.

Enforcement of licensing requirements

Offences

Unlicensed HMO N.I.

30.—(1) The owner of an HMO commits an offence if—

- (a) the HMO is required to be licensed under section 7 but is not so licensed, and
- (b) the owner does not have a reasonable excuse for not having a licence.

(2) If—

- (a) an HMO is required to be licensed under section 7 but is not so licensed,
- (b) any person, acting as an agent for the owner of an HMO, does anything that the agent knows will permit or facilitate the occupation of the HMO by any other person, and
- (c) the agent does not have a reasonable excuse for doing so,

the agent commits an offence.

(3) The owner of an HMO commits an offence if—

- (a) the HMO is required to be licensed under section 7 but is not so licensed, and
- (b) the owner authorises a person to act as mentioned in subsection (2)(b).

(4) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) or (2) is liable on summary conviction—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (a) to a fine not exceeding £20,000, and
- (b) to a further fine not exceeding £50 for every day or part of a day after conviction on which the HMO is required to be licensed under section 7 but is not so licensed.

(5) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (3) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £10,000.

Commencement Information

I30 S. 30 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Exceeding licensed occupancy or breach of licence conditions **N.I.**

31.—(1) If the number of persons occupying a licensed HMO exceeds the number authorised by the licence and—

- (a) the owner or managing agent of the HMO has done anything that permits or facilitates the excessive occupation, or
- (b) the owner or agent knows, or ought reasonably to know, that the HMO is so occupied and does not take such steps as are reasonably necessary to ensure that the excessive occupation ceases,

the owner or agent (as the case may be) commits an offence.

(2) If—

- (a) a condition in an HMO licence imposes a restriction or obligation on the owner or managing agent of the HMO or any other person named in the condition,
- (b) that person breaches the condition at a time when the HMO is required to be licensed under section 7, and
- (c) the person does not have a reasonable excuse for breaching the condition,

the person commits an offence.

(3) If—

- (a) a condition in an HMO licence imposes a restriction or obligation on any person (whether or not named in the licence),
- (b) any person breaches the condition at a time when the HMO is required to be licensed under section 7,
- (c) the owner or managing agent of the HMO either permits the breach or did not take such steps as are reasonably necessary to secure that the condition was not breached, and
- (d) the owner or agent does not have a reasonable excuse for permitting the breach or for failing to take those steps,

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

the owner or agent (as the case may be) commits an offence.

(4) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction—

- (a) to a fine not exceeding £20,000, and
- (b) to a further fine not exceeding £50 for every day or part of a day after conviction on which the excessive occupation continues.

(5) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (2) or (3) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £10,000.

Commencement Information

I31 S. 31 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Untrue claim that HMO is licensed **N.I.**

32.—(1) A person who is the owner or managing agent of an HMO commits an offence if the person—

- (a) claims that an HMO is licensed at a time when it is not licensed, and
- (b) does not have a reasonable excuse for making that claim.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £10,000.

Commencement Information

I32 S. 32 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Agents not named in licence **N.I.**

33.—(1) The owner of a licensed HMO commits an offence if—

- (a) the owner authorises any person to act as a managing agent in relation to the HMO, and
- (b) the person so authorised is not named in the licence as managing agent of the HMO.

(2) A person (“A”) commits an offence if—

- (a) A, on behalf of the owner of a licensed HMO, acts as a managing agent in relation to the HMO,
- (b) A is not named in the licence as managing agent of the HMO, and
- (c) A does not have a reasonable excuse for doing so.

(3) For the purposes of this section, a person acts as a managing agent in relation to an HMO if the person—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (a) does, in relation to the HMO, any of the acts mentioned in paragraph (i), (ii) or (iii) of the definition of “managing agent” in section 88(1), or
 - (b) engages in any other activity or course of activity which constitutes, or assists in, the management of the HMO.
- (4) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) or (2) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £10,000.

Commencement Information

I33 S. 33 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Reasonable excuse **N.I.**

34.—(1) This section sets out some circumstances in which the owner of an HMO has a reasonable excuse for the purposes of sections 30(1) and 31(2) and (3).

(2) This section does not limit the circumstances which may amount to a reasonable excuse apart from this section.

(3) For the purposes of section 30(1), the owner of an HMO has a reasonable excuse for not having a licence if—

- (a) an HMO licence held by the owner in respect of the HMO has been revoked, and
- (b) the owner has taken reasonable steps with a view to securing that the living accommodation in question ceases to be an HMO which requires to be licensed, but
- (c) despite having taken those steps, the owner is unable to stop it from being such an HMO without breaching the terms of any tenancy or other occupancy arrangement under which any person occupied it on the day on which the licence was revoked.

(4) For the purposes of section 31(2) and (3), the owner of an HMO has a reasonable excuse for breaching a condition, or for permitting such a breach, if—

- (a) the owner has taken reasonable steps with a view to securing that the condition is not breached, but
- (b) despite having taken those steps, the owner cannot secure compliance with the condition without breaching the terms of any tenancy or other occupancy arrangement under which any person occupied the HMO on the day on which the condition first had effect.

Commencement Information

I34 S. 34 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Rectification of breaches of conditions

Power to require rectification of breach of condition **N.I.**

35.—(1) This section applies where the council is satisfied that—

- (a) a condition in an HMO licence has been breached and the breach is ongoing or has not been rectified, or
- (b) a condition in an HMO licence is likely to be breached.

(2) It does not matter whether the council has taken any other action, or whether criminal proceedings have been commenced, in respect of the breach or anticipated breach.

(3) The council may serve on the owner of the HMO a notice (a “rectification notice”) which requires the owner to take such action, specified in the notice, as the council considers appropriate for the purpose of rectifying or (as the case may be) preventing the breach.

(4) The action which may be specified includes the carrying out of work in or to the HMO.

(5) The notice must specify a date by which the action must be taken.

(6) Different dates may be specified for different actions.

(7) A date specified under subsection (5) must not be earlier than the date by which the council reasonably considers that the action can be taken.

(8) A notice which requires work to be carried out in or to the HMO may also specify particular steps which the council requires to be taken in carrying out that work.

(9) Where the action specified in a notice is or includes the carrying out of work in or to the HMO, Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule 3 apply to the notice.

(10) The council must send a copy of the notice to the occupants of the HMO.

Commencement Information

I35 S. 35 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Revocation of rectification notice **N.I.**

36.—(1) The council—

- (a) may revoke a rectification notice, and
- (b) must do so if it is satisfied that the owner has complied with the requirement (or all the requirements) in the notice.

(2) A notice may be revoked under this section—

- (a) on the application of the owner, or

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(b) on the council's own initiative.

(3) The council must serve the following on the owner and the occupants of the HMO—

- (a) notice of any revocation under this section;
- (b) if the owner applies for a revocation but the council decides to refuse it, notice of that refusal.

Commencement Information

I36 S. 36 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Failure to comply with rectification notice **N.I.**

37.—(1) If the owner of an HMO fails to take any action specified in a rectification notice by the date specified in relation to that action, the owner commits an offence.

(2) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £10,000.

(3) In determining the seriousness of an offence under subsection (1), regard is to be had to the following matters (as well as to the seriousness of the failure to take the action specified in the rectification notice)—

- (a) the seriousness of the breach of the condition (if any) which resulted in the issuing of the rectification notice, and
- (b) whether any such breach amounted to an offence under section 31(2) or (3).

(4) Subsection (3) applies—

- (a) to a court for the purposes of sentencing, and
- (b) to a council in determining the amount of a fixed penalty under section 64.

Commencement Information

I37 S. 37 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Orders of the court: revocation and disqualification

Revocation orders and disqualification orders **N.I.**

38.—(1) This section applies where a court convicts—

- (a) any person of an offence under section 30, 31, 32 or 33;
- (b) any person of an offence under section 37(1);

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (c) any person of an offence under section 60;
 - (d) an owner or managing agent of any living accommodation of an offence under section 80(5) or 82(4) in relation to that accommodation;
 - (e) any person of an offence under paragraph 14 of Schedule 2 (false statement in connection with application for HMO licence).
- (2) The court may (in addition to any other order it makes)—
- (a) revoke any HMO licence having effect in relation to the living accommodation in question;
 - (b) where the convicted person is the owner of the accommodation, disqualify the person from holding an HMO licence;
 - (c) where the convicted person is the managing agent of the accommodation, disqualify the person from being able to act as a managing agent in relation to any HMO.
- (3) Where the convicted person is a body (whether incorporated or not), the court may disqualify any director, partner or other person concerned in the management of the body in the same way in which it may disqualify the body.
- (4) The court may disqualify a person under subsection (3) whether or not it disqualifies the convicted person.
- (5) A disqualification order is to have effect for such period, not exceeding 5 years, as the court specifies in the order (but this is subject to sections 39 and 40).

Commencement Information

I38 S. 38 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Revocations and disqualifications: appeals **N.I.**

39.—(1) A person may appeal against a revocation order or disqualification order in the same manner as the convicted person may appeal against sentence.

(2) The court which made a revocation order or disqualification order may suspend its effect pending such an appeal.

Commencement Information

I39 S. 39 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Discharge of disqualification orders **N.I.**

40.—(1) The court which made a disqualification order may discharge the order with effect from such date as the court may specify.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

(2) Such a discharge is to be made on the application of the person disqualified.

(3) No such discharge is to be made unless the court is satisfied that there has been a change in circumstances which justifies the discharge.

(4) No application under this section may be made during the first year for which a disqualification order has effect.

(5) The court may order the applicant to pay the whole or part of the expenses arising from an application under this section (whether or not the application is granted).

Commencement Information

I40 S. 40 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

PART 4 **N.I.**

Standards of housing

CHAPTER 1 **N.I.**

Overcrowding

Definition

Definition of overcrowding **N.I.**

41 An HMO is overcrowded for the purposes of this Chapter when the number of persons who sleep in it is such as to contravene—

- (a) the room standard (set out in section 42), or
- (b) the space standard (set out in section 43).

Commencement Information

I41 S. 41 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

The room standard **N.I.**

42.—(1) The room standard is contravened when the number of persons who sleep in the HMO and the number of rooms available as sleeping accommodation are such that any person aged 13 or over must sleep in the same room as—

- (a) any person of the opposite sex who is also aged 13 or over, or
- (b) a couple (within the meaning given by section 88(3)(a)).

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

(2) For this purpose, a room is available as sleeping accommodation if it is of a type normally used in the locality either as a bedroom or as a living room.

Commencement Information

I42 S. 42 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

The space standard **N.I.**

43.—(1) The space standard is contravened when the number of persons who sleep in the HMO exceeds the permitted number for that HMO.

(2) In determining for the purpose of subsection (1) the number of persons who sleep in an HMO—

- (a) no account is to be taken of a child under the age of one, and
- (b) a child aged 11 or less (but aged at least one) is to be counted as one-half of a person.

(3) To calculate the permitted number for an HMO—

- (a) for each room in the HMO which is available as sleeping accommodation, determine, by reference to what type of room it is, which of Tables 1, 2 and 3 applies to that room,
- (b) determine, by reference to the floor area of the room, the permitted number of persons for that room, and
- (c) add together the permitted numbers for each of the rooms in the HMO.

The total is the permitted number for the HMO.

Table 1 - Rooms which are a bedroom (only)

<i>Floor area of room</i>	<i>Permitted number for the room</i>
Less than 6.5m ²	No account is to be taken of the room
6.5m ² or more but less than 11m ²	1
11m ² or more but less than 15m ²	2
15m ² or more but less than 19.5m ²	3
19.5m ² or more	4 plus one additional person for each 4.5m ² in excess of 19.5m ²

Table 2 - Rooms which are a bedroom and living room

<i>Floor area of room</i>	<i>Permitted number for the room</i>
Less than 10m ²	No account is to be taken of the room
10m ² or more but less than 15m ²	1

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

15m ² or more but less than 19.5m ²	2
19.5m ² or more	3 plus one additional person for each 4.5m ² in excess of 19.5m ²

Table 3 - Rooms which are a bedroom, living room and kitchen

<i>Floor area of room</i>	<i>Permitted number for the room</i>
Less than 13m ²	No account is to be taken of the room
13m ² or more but less than 20.5m ²	1
20.5m ² or more	2 plus one additional person for each 4.5m ² in excess of 20.5m ²

(4) For the purpose of subsection (3), a room is available as sleeping accommodation if it is of a type normally used in the locality as a bedroom, as a bedroom and living room or as a bedroom, living room and kitchen (as the case may be).

(5) The Department may make regulations which specify the manner in which the floor area of a room is to be determined for the purposes of this section.

(6) The regulations may, in particular, provide for the exclusion from computation, or the bringing into computation at a reduced figure, of floor space in a part of the room which is of less than a height specified in the regulations.

(7) A certificate of the council stating the number and floor areas of the rooms in an HMO, and that the floor areas have been determined in the manner specified in regulations, is evidence for the purposes of legal proceedings of the matters stated in it.

Commencement Information

I43 S. 43 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Overcrowding notices

Overcrowding notices **N.I.**

44.—(1) This section applies where a council believes that—

- (a) an HMO is overcrowded, or
- (b) an HMO is likely to become overcrowded.

(2) The council may issue a notice which complies with section 45 (an “overcrowding notice”).

(3) At least 7 days before issuing an overcrowding notice, the council must serve a notice which—

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- (a) states the council's belief mentioned in subsection (1),
 - (b) states the grounds for that belief, and
 - (c) invites the person on whom the notice is served to make, within the period of 7 days beginning with the date of service of the notice, representations about the proposal to issue the overcrowding notice.
- (4) Notice under subsection (3) must be served on—
- (a) any person appearing to the council to be the owner of the HMO;
 - (b) any person appearing to the council to be a managing agent of the HMO.
- (5) The council must send a copy of the notice to the occupants of the HMO.
- (6) In determining whether to issue an overcrowding notice, the council must have regard to any representations made within the period mentioned in subsection (3)(c).

.....

Commencement Information

I44 S. 44 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Contents of overcrowding notice **N.I.**

45.—(1) An overcrowding notice must state, in relation to each room in the HMO and in accordance with section 43—

- (a) what is the permitted number of persons for that room, or
- (b) that the room is unsuitable to be occupied as sleeping accommodation.

(2) An overcrowding notice must contain—

- (a) the requirement as to overcrowding generally (set out in section 46), or
- (b) the requirement not to permit new residents (set out in section 47).

(3) A council which has issued an overcrowding notice containing the requirement not to permit new residents may, at any time, withdraw that notice and issue instead an overcrowding notice containing the requirement as to overcrowding generally.

(4) If the permitted number for a licensed HMO (calculated in accordance with section 43(3)) is less than the number of persons authorised to occupy the HMO as specified in the licence, the overcrowding notice must state that the council proposes to vary the licence accordingly.

(5) Schedule 4 (procedure for varying or revoking licences) does not apply to a proposal to vary a licence under subsection (4); but the proposal does not have effect unless and until the overcrowding notice becomes operative in accordance with paragraph 2 of Schedule 5.

(6) An overcrowding notice may state that its operation is suspended in accordance with paragraph 4 of Schedule 5.

.....

Commencement Information

I45 S. 45 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Requirement as to overcrowding generally **N.I.**

46.—(1) The requirement as to overcrowding generally is that the person on whom the notice is served must refrain from—

- (a) permitting any room to be occupied as sleeping accommodation otherwise than in accordance with the overcrowding notice, and
- (b) permitting such number of persons to occupy the HMO as sleeping accommodation that it is not possible to comply with the room standard (see section 42).

(2) The reference in subsection (1)(b) to complying with the room standard is to doing so on the assumption that—

- (a) the persons occupying the HMO as sleeping accommodation sleep only in rooms for which a maximum is set by the notice, and
- (b) the maximum set for each room is not exceeded.

.....

Commencement Information

I46 S. 46 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Requirement not to permit new residents **N.I.**

47.—(1) The requirement not to permit new residents is that the person on whom the notice is served must refrain from—

- (a) permitting any room to be occupied by a new resident as sleeping accommodation otherwise than in accordance with the notice, and
- (b) permitting a new resident to occupy any part of the HMO as sleeping accommodation if the result of doing so is that it is not possible to comply with the room standard (see section 42).

(2) In subsection (1) “new resident” means a person who was not an occupier of the HMO immediately before the notice was served.

(3) The reference in subsection (1)(b) to complying with the room standard is to doing so on the assumption that—

- (a) the persons occupying the HMO as sleeping accommodation sleep only in rooms for which a maximum is set by the notice, and

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(b) the maximum set for each room is not exceeded.

.....

Commencement Information

I47 S. 47 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Notice requiring further information **N.I.**

48.—(1) A council that issues an overcrowding notice in relation to an HMO may issue a notice under this section (an “information notice”) in relation to that HMO.

(2) An information notice is a notice that requires the person on whom it is served to supply to the council a statement giving all or any of the following particulars—

- (a) the number of individuals who are, on a date specified in the notice, occupying any part of the HMO as sleeping accommodation;
- (b) the names of those individuals;
- (c) the number of households to which the individuals belong;
- (d) the relationships between the individuals, and the household to which each individual belongs; and
- (e) the rooms used by the individuals and households respectively.

(3) An information notice may be served on—

- (a) any person on whom the overcrowding notice is required to be served under paragraph 1 of Schedule 5, or
- (b) any person to whom a copy of the overcrowding notice is required to be sent under that paragraph.

(4) An information notice must require the statement to be supplied—

- (a) in writing, and
- (b) within 7 days of the date of the notice or such longer period as the council may specify in the notice.

(5) An information notice may be combined with, or issued after, the overcrowding notice.

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Commencement Information

I48 S. 48 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Information notice: supplementary provisions **N.I.**

49.—(1) A person commits an offence if the person—

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- (a) refuses or fails to provide information as required by an information notice, and
 - (b) does not have a reasonable excuse for that refusal or failure.
- (2) A person commits an offence if—
- (a) the person provides information in response to an information notice,
 - (b) the information is false or misleading in a material particular, and
 - (c) the person knows that it is, or is reckless as to whether it is, false or misleading.
- (3) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) or (2) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.
- (4) Information provided by a person in response to an information notice may be used in criminal proceedings as evidence against the person only where subsection (5) or (6) applies.
- (5) This subsection applies where the person is being prosecuted for an offence under Article 7 or 10 of the Perjury (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (false statutory declarations and other false unsworn statements).
- (6) This subsection applies where the person is being prosecuted for any other offence and—
- (a) in giving evidence the person makes a statement inconsistent with the information provided in response to the notice, and
 - (b) evidence relating to that information is adduced, or a question about it is asked, by or on behalf of the person.

Commencement Information

I49 S. 49 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

CHAPTER 2 **N.I.**

Suitability for numbers in occupation

Suitability notice **N.I.**

50.—(1) This section applies where the council determines that an HMO is not suitable for occupation by the number of persons whom the council knows, or believes, to be occupying it.

(2) The council may issue a notice which complies with section 51 (a “suitability notice”).

(3) In making a determination under subsection (1), the council must have regard to—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (a) the minimum standards set under section 13(3) for the accommodation's condition, facilities or equipment for that number of persons, and
 - (b) the extent (if any) to which the HMO falls short of the provisions of building regulations.
- (4) In having regard to the minimum standards referred to in subsection (3) (a), the council—
- (a) cannot be satisfied that the HMO is suitable if the council considers that it fails to meet the standards, but
 - (b) may decide that the HMO is not suitable for occupation by that number even if it does meet the standards.

Commencement Information

I50 S. 50 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Contents of suitability notice **N.I.**

- 51.—**(1) A suitability notice must specify what the council considers to be the maximum number of persons by whom the HMO is suitable to be occupied.
- (2) A suitability notice must contain—
- (a) the general occupancy requirement (set out in section 52(1)), or
 - (b) the new residents' occupancy requirement (set out in section 52(2)).
- (3) A suitability notice may also contain a statement of remedial work (see section 53).
- (4) If, in relation to a licensed HMO, the number of persons specified under subsection (1) differs from the number of persons authorised to occupy the HMO as specified in the licence, the suitability notice must state that the council proposes to vary the licence accordingly.
- (5) Schedule 4 (procedure for varying or revoking licences) does not apply to a proposal to vary a licence under subsection (4); but the proposal does not have effect unless and until the suitability notice becomes operative in accordance with paragraph 2 of Schedule 5.
- (6) A suitability notice may state that its operation is suspended in accordance with paragraph 4 of Schedule 5.

Commencement Information

I51 S. 51 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Occupancy requirements **N.I.**

52.—(1) The general occupancy requirement is that the person on whom the notice is served must refrain from permitting more than the maximum number of persons to occupy the HMO.

(2) The new residents' occupancy requirement is that the person on whom the notice is served must refrain from permitting any new resident to occupy the HMO if that new resident's occupation results in the HMO being occupied by more than the maximum number of persons.

(3) In this section—

- (a) the “maximum number of persons” is the number stated in the notice in accordance with section 51(1), and
- (b) “new resident” means a person who was not an occupier of the HMO immediately before the notice was served.

Commencement Information

152 S. 52 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Statement of remedial work **N.I.**

53.—(1) A statement of remedial work is a statement of work which the council considers would, if carried out in or to the HMO, make it suitable for occupation by—

- (a) the number of persons whom the council knows or believes to be occupying it, or
- (b) such smaller number of persons as is specified in the statement.

(2) A statement of remedial work must state that, if the work is carried out by a date specified in the statement, the suitability notice will be revoked under paragraph 7(3) of Schedule 5.

(3) A date specified under subsection (2)—

- (a) must be not less than 21 days after the date on which the notice takes effect, and
- (b) must not be earlier than the date by which the council reasonably considers that the work can be completed.

(4) A statement of remedial work may also specify particular steps which the council requires to be taken in carrying out that work.

(5) A statement of remedial work may not specify any fire safety measures within the meaning of the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

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(6) Part 1 of Schedule 3 applies to a suitability notice that includes a statement of remedial work.

Commencement Information

I53 S. 53 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

CHAPTER 3 **N.I.**

Hazards

Definition of hazard **N.I.**

- 54.—(1) For the purposes of this Chapter, there is a “hazard” in an HMO if—
- (a) there is a risk of harm of a prescribed description to the health or safety of an actual or potential occupier of the HMO, and
 - (b) the risk arises from a deficiency—
 - (i) in the accommodation which forms the HMO,
 - (ii) in any building or land of which that accommodation forms part, or
 - (iii) in any building or land in the vicinity of that accommodation.
- (2) It does not matter whether the deficiency arises as a result of the construction of any building, an absence of maintenance or repair, or otherwise.
- (3) “Prescribed” means prescribed by regulations made by the Department.

Commencement Information

I54 S. 54 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Hazard notice **N.I.**

- 55.—(1) If the council is satisfied that a hazard exists in an HMO, the council may issue a notice which complies with sections 56 and 57 (a “hazard notice”).
- (2) A hazard notice may relate to more than one hazard in the same HMO or in the same building containing one or more flats.
- (3) If the council is satisfied that the hazard (or one of the hazards) in relation to which a hazard notice is issued involves an imminent risk of serious harm to the health or safety of any of the occupiers of the HMO or any other living accommodation, the notice may state—
- (a) that it is an “emergency hazard notice”, and
 - (b) that it is to come into operation immediately.
- (4) For provisions under which an emergency hazard notice is treated differently from other hazard notices, see—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (a) section 57(4) and paragraph 4(1) of Schedule 5 (suspension of notices);
- (b) paragraph 1(2) and (4) of Schedule 5 (service of emergency hazard notices);
- (c) paragraph 2(3) of that Schedule (date of operation of such notices).

Commencement Information

I55 S. 55 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Contents of hazard notice: prohibitions **N.I.**

56.—(1) A hazard notice is a notice imposing such prohibition (or prohibitions) on the use of any premises as the council considers appropriate in view of the hazard or hazards to which the notice relates.

(2) The notice must specify—

- (a) each prohibition, and
- (b) the premises in relation to which each prohibition is imposed.

(3) A hazard notice may impose a prohibition on the use of premises as follows—

- (a) if the hazard is in an HMO which is not a flat, the notice may impose a prohibition on the use of the HMO;
- (b) if the hazard is in a flat or flats, the notice may impose a prohibition on the use of the flat or flats, or on the use of the building containing the flat or flats (or any part of that building) or any external common parts.

(4) But a hazard notice may not, by virtue of subsection (3)(b), prohibit use of any part of the building or its external common parts that is not included in the HMO in which the hazard exists, unless the council is satisfied—

- (a) that the deficiency from which the hazard arises is situated there, and
- (b) that it is necessary for such use to be prohibited in order to protect the health or safety of any actual or potential occupiers of one or more of the flats.

(5) A prohibition may prohibit use of the premises, or of any part of the premises, either—

- (a) for all purposes, or
- (b) for any particular purpose,

except (in either case) to the extent to which any use of the premises or part is approved by the council.

As to approvals by the council, see section 59.

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(6) A prohibition imposed by virtue of subsection (5)(b) may, in particular, relate to—

- (a) occupation of the premises or part by more than a particular number of households or persons; or
- (b) occupation of the premises or part by particular descriptions of persons.

Commencement Information

I56 S. 56 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Contents of hazard notices: other matters **N.I.**

57.—(1) A hazard notice must specify, in relation to the hazard (or each of the hazards) to which it relates—

- (a) the nature of the hazard,
- (b) the HMO in which it exists, and
- (c) the deficiency giving rise to the hazard.

(2) A hazard notice may contain a works requirement (see section 58).

(3) A hazard notice must specify the date on which the notice is made.

(4) A hazard notice (other than an emergency hazard notice) may state that its operation is suspended in accordance with paragraph 4 of Schedule 5.

Commencement Information

I57 S. 57 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Works requirement **N.I.**

58.—(1) A works requirement is a requirement that the owner carry out work in or to the HMO or other premises for the purpose of removing the hazard.

(2) A hazard notice that includes a works requirement must specify—

- (a) the work to be carried out, and
- (b) a date by which the work must be completed.

(3) Different dates may be specified for different work.

(4) A date specified under subsection (2)(b)—

- (a) must be not less than 21 days after the date on which the notice takes effect, and
- (b) must not be earlier than the date by which the council reasonably considers that the work can be completed.

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(5) A hazard notice that includes a works requirement must state that, if the work is carried out by the date specified in it (or, where more than one date is specified, the last of them), the hazard notice will be revoked under paragraph 7(4) of Schedule 5.

(6) A hazard notice that includes a works requirement may also specify particular steps which the council requires to be taken in carrying out that work.

(7) A hazard notice may not require the owner to take any fire safety measures within the meaning of the Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006.

(8) Parts 1 and 2 of Schedule 3 apply to a hazard notice that includes a works requirement.

Commencement Information

I58 S. 58 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Approvals as to use of premises **N.I.**

59.—(1) Any approval of the council for the purposes of section 56(5) must not be unreasonably withheld.

(2) If the council refuses to give any such approval, it must notify the person applying for it of—

- (a) the decision,
- (b) the reasons for the decision,
- (c) the right to appeal against the decision under subsection (3), and
- (d) the period within which an appeal may be made.

(3) The person applying for the approval may appeal to a court of summary jurisdiction against the decision within the period of 21 days beginning with the date on which the notice under subsection (2) was served.

Commencement Information

I59 S. 59 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

CHAPTER 4 **N.I.**

Further provision about notices under this Part

Offences **N.I.**

60.—(1) A person commits an offence if the person—

- (a) contravenes a requirement in an overcrowding notice, and

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- (b) does not have a reasonable excuse for doing so.
- (2) A person commits an offence if the person—
 - (a) contravenes a general occupancy requirement or a new residents' occupancy requirement in a suitability notice, and
 - (b) does not have a reasonable excuse for doing so.
- (3) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (1) or (2) is liable on summary conviction—
 - (a) to a fine not exceeding £20,000, and
 - (b) to a further fine not exceeding £50 for every day or part of a day after conviction on which the person contravenes the requirement in question.
- (4) A person commits an offence if the person—
 - (a) knows that a hazard notice has become operative in relation to any specified premises,
 - (b) uses the premises, or permits the premises to be used, in contravention of the notice, and
 - (c) does not have a reasonable excuse for so using the premises or (as the case may be) permitting them to be so used.
- (5) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (4) is liable on summary conviction—
 - (a) to a fine not exceeding £20,000, and
 - (b) to a further fine not exceeding £50 for every day or part of a day after conviction on which the person so uses the premises or permits them to be so used.
- (6) If the owner of an HMO fails to carry out work specified in a works requirement in a hazard notice by the date specified in relation to that work, the owner commits an offence.
- (7) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (6) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

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Commencement Information

I60 S. 60 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Further provision **N.I.**

61 Schedule 5 makes further provision about notices under this Part.

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Commencement Information

I61 S. 61 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

PART 5 **N.I.**

Supplementary

HMO register

HMO register **N.I.**

62.—(1) Every council must keep a register containing the information required by subsections (2) to (4).

(2) The register must contain details of each application for an HMO licence made to the council, including—

- (a) the name of the applicant,
- (b) the address of the living accommodation in question,
- (c) the name of any managing agent specified in the application,
- (d) the date on which the application was made.

(3) The register must contain a note of the council's decision on each application, including in the case of decision to grant a licence—

- (a) the name of the licence holder;
- (b) the number of persons authorised to occupy the HMO (as specified in the licence under section 7(3)(c));
- (c) any conditions included in the licence;
- (d) any variation, revocation or surrender of the licence under section 22, 23 or 27.

(4) The register must contain a note of—

- (a) any revocation order or disqualification order made in relation to the HMO, its owner or any managing agent of it;
- (b) any Part 4 notice issued in respect of the HMO.

(5) The register may contain such other information as the council considers appropriate.

(6) The council must exclude from its register any information which it would otherwise enter in the register, if the council considers that entering the information is likely to jeopardise—

- (a) the safety or welfare of any person, or

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(b) the security of any premises.

(7) The council must make any entry relating to an HMO available for inspection, by any person who falls within subsection (9) in relation to that entry—

- (a) at its head office at all reasonable times, and
- (b) in such other manner as the council considers appropriate.

(8) The council must supply a certified copy of an entry relating to an HMO to any person who falls within subsection (9) in relation to that entry and requests such a copy.

(9) A person falls within this subsection in relation to an entry if the person appears to the council—

- (a) to have an interest or prospective interest in the HMO,
- (b) to be a resident of the HMO, or
- (c) to be otherwise sufficiently concerned with the information contained in the entry.

(10) In subsection (9), an “interest” is—

- (a) a freehold or leasehold estate;
- (b) a mortgage, charge or lien.

(11) The council must, on the request of any statutory authority—

- (a) make its register available for inspection by the authority;
- (b) supply a certified copy of its register, or of an extract from it, to the authority.

(12) The council may charge a reasonable fee for supplying a copy under subsection (8) or (11) (see also section 84 in relation to such fees).

(13) A copy of a register, or of an entry in or other extract from a register, which is certified by an officer of the council to be a true copy is evidence of the matters contained in it.

Commencement Information

I62 S. 62 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Code of practice

Code of practice **N.I.**

63.—(1) The Department may make regulations approving a code of practice laying down standards of conduct and practice to be followed with regard to the management of houses in multiple occupation.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (2) The standards laid down in the code may, in particular, relate to—
- (a) the repair, maintenance, cleansing and good order of—
 - (i) all means of water supply and drainage in the house,
 - (ii) all means of escape from fire and all apparatus, systems and other things provided by way of fire precautions,
 - (iii) kitchens, bathrooms and water closets,
 - (iv) sinks and wash-basins,
 - (v) staircases, corridors and passage ways, and
 - (vi) outbuildings, yards and gardens;
 - (b) the making of satisfactory arrangements for the disposal of refuse and litter from the house; and
 - (c) the making of satisfactory arrangements to ensure that all means of escape from fire are kept clear of obstructions.
- (3) The code may—
- (a) specify the persons who are, for the purposes of the code, to be treated as the managers of houses;
 - (b) impose a duty on the person managing the house to cause a copy of the code to be displayed in a suitable position in the house.
- (4) The Department may by regulations—
- (a) approve a modification of a code of practice under this section, or
 - (b) withdraw its approval of such a code or modification.
- (5) The code, and any modification, may be prepared by the Department or by another person.
- (6) The Department may approve a code of practice or a modification of a code only if satisfied that—
- (a) the code or modification has been published (whether by the Department or by another person) in a manner that the Department considers appropriate for the purpose of bringing the code or modification to the attention of those likely to be affected by it, or
 - (b) arrangements have been made for the code or modification to be so published.
- (7) Before approving a code of practice or a modification of a code, the Department must consult—
- (a) persons involved in the management of HMOs, or such persons as appear to the Department to be representative of them, and
 - (b) persons occupying HMOs, or such persons as appear to the Department to be representative of them.

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(8) A failure to comply with a code of practice for the time being approved under this section—

- (a) does not of itself make a person liable to civil or criminal proceedings, but
- (b) in accordance with section 10(4)(e), may be taken into account as a relevant matter in deciding whether a person is a fit and proper person for the purposes of this Act.

Commencement Information

I63 S. 63 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Fixed penalty as alternative to prosecution

Fixed penalty: service of notice **N.I.**

64.—(1) This section applies where an authorised officer of a council has reason to believe that a person has committed an offence under any of the following provisions—

- (a) section 30, 31, 32 or 33;
- (b) section 37(1);
- (c) section 49;
- (d) section 60;
- (e) section 75;
- (f) section 80(5);
- (g) section 82(4);
- (h) paragraph 14 of Schedule 2;
- (i) paragraph 8 of Schedule 3.

(2) The officer may serve on the person a notice which—

- (a) offers the person the opportunity of discharging any liability to conviction for the offence by payment of a fixed penalty,
- (b) contains the information required by subsections (3) to (5) and (7),
- (c) contains such other information as may be specified in regulations made by the Department, and
- (d) is in such form as the council specifies by general notice.

(3) The notice must give particulars of the circumstances alleged to constitute the offence.

(4) The notice must state the amount of the fixed penalty, which is to be determined by the council but must not exceed—

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- (a) in the case of an offence under section 30(1) or (2), 31(1) or 60(1), (2) or (4), £5,000;
 - (b) in the case of an offence under section 30(3), 31(2) or (3), 32, 33 or 37(1), £2,500;
 - (c) in the case of an offence under section 60(6), 80(5) or 82(4) or paragraph 8 of Schedule 3, £500;
 - (d) in the case of an offence under section 49, section 75 or paragraph 14 of Schedule 2, £200.
- (5) The notice must state the period during which (in accordance with section 65(1)) proceedings will not be commenced for the offence.
- (6) The fixed penalty is to be payable to the council.
- (7) The notice must state the arrangements for paying the fixed penalty; and those arrangements must include, at the least, a person to whom and an address at which the fixed penalty may be paid.
- (8) An “authorised officer” of a council is an officer who is authorised in writing by the council for the purposes of this section.

Commencement Information

164 S. 64 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Fixed penalty: effect of notice **N.I.**

65.—(1) Where a notice under section 64 is served on a person in respect of an offence—

- (a) no proceedings may be commenced against the person for the offence before the end of the period of 14 days, or such other longer period as may be specified in the notice, following the date on which the notice is served; and
 - (b) the person may not be convicted of the offence if the person pays the fixed penalty before the end of that period.
- (2) In any proceedings a certificate which—
- (a) purports to be signed on behalf of the clerk of the council, and
 - (b) states that payment of a fixed penalty was or was not received by a date specified in the certificate,

is evidence of the facts stated.

(3) A council may use amounts paid to it in pursuance of notices under section 64 only for the purposes of its functions under this Act or such other of its functions as may be specified in regulations made by the Department.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement Information

I65 S. 65 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Fixed penalty: power to alter amounts **N.I.**

66.—(1) The Department may by order substitute for any sum specified in section 64(4) such other sum as appears to the Department—

- (a) to be justified by a change in the value of money appearing to the Department to have taken place since the passing of this Act or since the last occasion on which an order was made under this section, or
- (b) to be appropriate to take account of an order which has been made, or is proposed to be made, under Article 17(2) of the Fines and Penalties (Northern Ireland) Order 1984 altering the standard scale set out in Article 5(2) of that Order.

(2) An order under subsection (1)—

- (a) is subject to negative resolution, and
- (b) does not affect the punishment for an offence committed before that order comes into force.

Commencement Information

I66 S. 66 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Appeals

Appeals **N.I.**

67.—(1) This section applies to the following decisions of a council—

- (a) to issue a household notice;
- (b) to refuse to cancel a continuation notice;
- (c) to grant an HMO licence (including any decision as to its terms or any conditions included in it);
- (d) to refuse an application for an HMO licence, unless the refusal is solely because the council is not satisfied as mentioned in section 8(2)(a) (planning control);
- (e) to issue a temporary exemption notice (including any decision as to the inclusion of safety and security requirements under section 17);
- (f) to refuse an application for a temporary exemption notice;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (g) to revoke a temporary exemption notice, or to refuse to grant an extension of one;
 - (h) to renew an HMO licence (including any decision as to its terms or any conditions included in it as from its renewal);
 - (i) to refuse an application to renew an HMO licence;
 - (j) to vary an HMO licence, or to refuse an application to vary one;
 - (k) to revoke an HMO licence;
 - (l) to refuse to extend the period for which a licence has effect under section 29 (death of sole licence holder);
 - (m) to issue a rectification notice (including any decision as to the terms of it), or to refuse to revoke such a notice;
 - (n) to issue a Part 4 notice (including any decision as to the terms of it);
 - (o) to vary or revoke a Part 4 notice, or to refuse an application to vary or revoke one;
 - (p) to demand recovery of expenses under paragraph 9 of Schedule 3.
- (2) An appeal may be made to the county court against any decision to which this section applies.
- (3) An appeal may be made only by a person on whom notice is required to be served under the provision of this Act in question.
- (4) An appeal must be made before—
- (a) the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which notice was served on the person, or
 - (b) if later, the end of the period of 7 days beginning with date on which reasons for the decision were served under section 68.
- (5) But the court may allow an appeal to be made after that date, if it considers that there are special circumstances which make it just to do so.
- (6) Where—
- (a) a person makes an application, in accordance with this Act, for a decision to which this section applies (except an application for an HMO licence or for the renewal of one), and
 - (b) the council does not notify the applicant of its decision within the period of 35 days beginning with the date on which the application was made (or such further period as the applicant may in writing allow),
- the applicant may make an appeal under this section as if the council had refused the application.
- (7) In this section, references to the service of notice are—
- (a) in the case of a decision to issue a notice, to the service of that notice;
 - (b) otherwise, to service of notice of the decision.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement Information

I67 S. 67 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Council's statement of reasons for decisions which may be appealed **N.I.**

68.—(1) In the case of any decision to which section 67 applies, the notice must (in addition to any other matters required by any provision of this Act) include or be accompanied by a statement informing the person—

- (a) that the person may request a statement of the council's reasons for the decision, and
- (b) of the right to appeal under section 67 and the period within which such an appeal must be made (as to which, see section 67(4)).

(2) A person on whom any such notice has been served may, within 7 days of service of the notice, request the council to give a statement of its reasons for the decision.

(3) Where a council receives a request in accordance with subsection (2), it must within 14 days of doing so serve a statement of its reasons for the decision on—

- (a) the person who made the request, and
- (b) any other person on whom the notice was served.

(4) The duties under subsections (1)(a) and (3) to give notice of the right to request reasons and to give a statement of reasons do not apply where (whether or not in accordance with any provision of this Act) the notice includes or is accompanied by a statement of reasons.

(5) In this section, “the notice” means—

- (a) in the case of a decision to issue a notice, that notice;
- (b) otherwise, notice of the decision.

Commencement Information

I68 S. 68 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Powers of court on appeal **N.I.**

69.—(1) An appeal under section 67—

- (a) is to be by way of a re-hearing, but
- (b) may be determined having regard to matters of which the council were unaware.

(2) The court may confirm, reverse or vary the decision of the council.

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(3) If the appeal is against a decision to refuse an application, the court may direct the council to grant the application in such terms as the court may direct.

Commencement Information

I69 S. 69 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Information

Powers to require information and documents: introductory **N.I.**

70 The powers conferred by sections 71, 72 and 73 are exercisable by a council for the purposes of—

- (a) enabling or assisting the council to exercise any function conferred on it by this Act in relation to any premises;
- (b) investigating whether any offence has been committed under this Act in relation to any premises.

Commencement Information

I70 S. 70 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Power to obtain information from persons connected to premises **N.I.**

71.—(1) The council may, by serving notice on a relevant person, require the person to provide the following information in writing to the council—

- (a) the nature of the person's estate (if any) in premises specified in the notice,
- (b) the name and address of any other person known to that person as having an estate in the premises, and
- (c) any other information about the premises that the council may reasonably request and which is in the person's custody or under the person's control.

(2) Where a notice under this section is served—

- (a) on a person who appears to the council to be the occupier of premises, and
- (b) for the purpose of enabling or assisting the council to decide whether the premises are, or contain, an HMO,

the notice may also require the person to disclose the relationship (if any) between that person and any other occupants.

(3) A notice under this section must—

- (a) specify a date, not less than 21 days after the date on which the notice is served, by which the information must be provided,

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- (b) specify a person to whom the information must be provided, and
- (c) include information about the possible consequences of not complying with the notice.

(4) Information provided by a person in response to a notice under this section may be used in criminal proceedings as evidence against the person only where subsection (5) or (6) applies.

(5) This subsection applies where the person is being prosecuted for an offence under Article 7 or 10 of the Perjury (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (false statutory declarations and other false unsworn statements).

(6) This subsection applies where the person is being prosecuted for any other offence and—

- (a) in giving evidence the person makes a statement inconsistent with the information provided in response to the notice, and
- (b) evidence relating to that information is adduced, or a question about it is asked, by or on behalf of the person.

(7) In this section “relevant person” means any person who—

- (a) is, or is proposed to be, the holder of an HMO licence in respect of the premises,
- (b) is, or is proposed to be, a person named in such an HMO licence as a person on whom a restriction or obligation is imposed under section 14,
- (c) is, or is proposed to be, a managing agent of the premises,
- (d) is, or appears to the council to be, the owner or occupier of the premises, or
- (e) receives, or appears to the council to receive, any rent (directly or indirectly) in respect of the premises.

Commencement Information

I71 S. 71 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Power to require persons connected to premises to produce documents **N.I.**

72.—(1) The council may, by serving notice on a relevant person, require the person to produce to the council any documents which—

- (a) are specified or described in the notice, or fall within a category of document which is specified or described in the notice, and
- (b) are in the person's custody or under the person's control.

(2) A notice under this section must—

- (a) specify a date, not less than 21 days after the date on which the notice is served, by which the documents must be produced,

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- (b) specify a person to whom the documents must be produced, and
 - (c) include information about the possible consequences of not complying with the notice.
- (3) A person to whom any document is produced in accordance with the notice may copy the document.
- (4) Nothing in this section requires a person to produce a document if the person would be entitled to refuse to produce it in proceedings in the High Court on grounds of legal professional privilege.
- (5) In this section—
- “relevant person” has the same meaning as in section 71,
 - “document” includes information recorded otherwise than in legible form, and in relation to information so recorded, any reference to the production of a document is a reference to the production of a copy of the information in legible form.

Commencement Information

I72 S. 72 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Power to obtain information from other persons **N.I.**

73.—(1) The council may, by serving notice on a relevant person, require the person to provide to the council, in writing, any relevant information which is in the person's custody or under the person's control.

- (2) “Relevant person” means any of the following—
- (a) the Department of Finance and Personnel;
 - (b) the Northern Ireland Housing Executive;
 - (c) a scheme administrator of a tenancy deposit scheme under regulations under Article 5A of the Private Tenancies (Northern Ireland) Order 2006;
 - (d) a registrar of landlords appointed under regulations under Article 65A of that Order;
 - (e) any person acting as a gangmaster in relation to work in Northern Ireland;
 - (f) a utilities undertaker;
 - (g) an institution of further education;
 - (h) a higher education institution;
 - (i) any person carrying on estate agency work or lettings agency work in the course of a business.
- (3) “Relevant information” means—

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- (a) information which indicates that a building or part of a building is or may be an HMO;
 - (b) the following information about any living accommodation which is or may be an HMO—
 - (i) information as to its location, condition, size or description;
 - (ii) information as to the number of its occupants;
 - (c) the name and address of the owner of any such accommodation, or of any person acting as an agent of the owner;
 - (d) the name and date of birth of any person who is, or appears to be, an occupant of any such accommodation;
 - (e) the date on which any tenancy or other arrangement to occupy any such accommodation begins or ends.
- (4) But information is “relevant information” only if—
- (a) in the case of information held by the Department of Finance and Personnel, it is held for the purpose of that Department's functions—
 - (i) under the Rates (Northern Ireland) Order 1977 or the Rates (Capital Values, etc) (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, or
 - (ii) in relation to the administration of housing benefit;
 - (b) in the case of information held by the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, it is held for the purposes of the Executive's functions in relation to the administration of housing benefit.
- (5) A notice under this section must—
- (a) specify a date, not less than 21 days after the date on which the notice is served, by which the information must be provided,
 - (b) specify a person to whom the information must be provided, and
 - (c) include information about the possible consequences of not complying with the notice.
- (6) Information provided by a person in response to a notice under this section may be used in criminal proceedings as evidence against the person only where subsection (7) or (8) applies.
- (7) This subsection applies where the person is being prosecuted for an offence under Article 7 or 10 of the Perjury (Northern Ireland) Order 1979 (false statutory declarations and other false unsworn statements).
- (8) This subsection applies where the person is being prosecuted for any other offence and—
- (a) in giving evidence the person makes a statement inconsistent with the information provided in response to the notice, and

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- (b) evidence relating to that information is adduced, or a question about it is asked, by or on behalf of the person.
- (9) This section—
 - (a) has effect notwithstanding any restriction on the disclosure of information imposed by any statutory provision or rule of law, and
 - (b) does not limit the circumstances in which information may be used or provided apart from this section.
- (10) Schedule 6 contains definitions for the purposes of this section.
- (11) The Department may by regulations amend the definitions of “relevant person” and “relevant information”, as set out in this section and Schedule 6, in such manner as it considers appropriate.

Commencement Information

I73 S. 73 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Sharing of information between councils **N.I.**

74.—(1) A council may provide to any other council any information held by the council in connection with its functions under this Act.

(2) Information may be provided under subsection (1) only on the request of the other council; and may be used by that council only in connection with its functions under this Act.

- (3) This section—
 - (a) has effect notwithstanding any restriction on the disclosure of information imposed by any statutory provision or rule of law, and
 - (b) does not limit the circumstances in which information may be used or provided apart from this section.

Commencement Information

I74 S. 74 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Failure to provide information or provision of false information **N.I.**

- 75.—**(1) A person commits an offence if the person—
 - (a) refuses or fails to provide information as required under section 71 or 73 or to provide a document as required under section 72, and
 - (b) does not have a reasonable excuse for that refusal or failure.
- (2) A person commits an offence if—

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (a) the person provides information in response to a notice under section 71 or 73 or a request under section 74,
- (b) the information is false or misleading in a material particular, and
- (c) the person knows that it is, or is reckless as to whether it is, false or misleading.

(3) A person commits an offence if the person intentionally alters, suppresses or destroys any document that the person has been required to produce by a notice under section 72.

(4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 2 on the standard scale.

Commencement Information

I75 S. 75 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Unauthorised disclosure of information obtained under section 73 or 74 **N.I.**

76.—(1) An employee of a council commits an offence if the employee discloses without lawful authority any information—

- (a) which the employee acquired in the course of his or her employment,
- (b) which is, or is derived from, information provided to the council under section 73 or 74, and
- (c) which relates to particular living accommodation or a particular person.

(2) It is not an offence under this section to disclose information which has previously been disclosed to the public with lawful authority.

(3) It is a defence for a person charged with an offence under this section to show that, at the time of the alleged offence, the person believed—

- (a) that the disclosure in question was being made with lawful authority and had no reasonable cause to believe otherwise, or
- (b) that the information in question had previously been disclosed to the public with lawful authority and had no reasonable cause to believe otherwise.

(4) For these purposes a disclosure of information is made with lawful authority if, and only if, it is made—

- (a) by an employee of the council in accordance with the employee's official duties,
- (b) in accordance with any statutory provision or order of a court,
- (c) for the purposes of any criminal proceedings, or
- (d) with the consent of the person to whom the information relates.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (5) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable—
- (a) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum;
 - (b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 2 years or to a fine or to both.

Commencement Information

I76 S. 76 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Court to inform council of convictions **N.I.**

77.—(1) This section applies where a court convicts a person of any offence under this Act, other than an offence under section 76.

(2) Within 6 days of the court convicting the person, the court must send to the relevant council—

- (a) notice of the conviction and sentence (if any), and
 - (b) a note of any revocation order or disqualification order made by the court in consequence of the conviction.
- (3) The relevant council is—
- (a) where the offence relates to an HMO or any other premises, the council for the area in which the HMO or other premises is situated;
 - (b) where the offence relates to an HMO licence or any notice issued under this Act, the council which issued the licence or notice.

Commencement Information

I77 S. 77 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Powers of entry

Powers of entry: without warrant **N.I.**

78.—(1) This section applies where a council considers that a survey or examination of any living accommodation is reasonably required for the purpose of enabling or assisting the council to decide—

- (a) whether the living accommodation is an HMO,
- (b) whether to grant, vary or revoke an HMO licence in relation to the living accommodation, or
- (c) whether or how any other function under this Act should be exercised in relation to the living accommodation.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

(2) A person authorised in writing by the council may, at any reasonable time, enter the living accommodation for the purpose of carrying out the survey or examination.

(3) Before entering the accommodation, the person must give at least 24 hours' notice of the intention to do so—

- (a) the owner of the accommodation (if known), and
- (b) the occupiers of the accommodation (if any).

(4) The person may not use force in the exercise of the power conferred by this section.

(5) The person must produce for inspection the written authorisation mentioned in subsection (2), if requested to do so by the owner or occupier or any person acting on their behalf.

Commencement Information

I78 S. 78 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Powers of entry: with warrant **N.I.**

79.—(1) A lay magistrate may issue a warrant under this section authorising a person named in the warrant to enter and search premises which are specified in the warrant.

(2) A magistrate may issue such a warrant only if satisfied, on a complaint made in writing and substantiated on oath, that the first and second conditions are met.

(3) The first condition is that an officer of the council, or a person acting on behalf of the council, reasonably requires to enter or search the premises for the purpose of enabling or assisting the council to decide—

- (a) whether any offence under this Act has been committed in relation to any living accommodation,
- (b) whether any requirement imposed by any notice issued under this Act in relation to any living accommodation is being or has been complied with, or
- (c) any of the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (c) of section 78(1).

(4) The second condition is that—

- (a) applying to the owner or occupiers for entry (whether under section 78 or otherwise) would defeat the purpose of the entry or search,
- (b) the premises are unoccupied,
- (c) the premises are temporarily vacant and it might defeat the purpose of the entry to await the return of the occupiers, or

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- (d) entry to the premises has been sought in accordance with section 78 but has been refused.
- (5) A warrant under this section must specify the purpose for which the entry and search is required.
- (6) A warrant under this section may authorise the use of force.
- (7) Entry under a warrant under this section must be at a reasonable hour unless it appears to the person executing it that the purpose of the entry or search may be defeated if the entry is at a reasonable hour.
- (8) A person executing a warrant under this section may—
- (a) search for, and inspect, any document or other item;
 - (b) take copies of any document;
 - (c) require any person to provide such information or other assistance as the person executing the warrant requires for the purpose of the entry or search.
- (9) A person executing a warrant under this section must produce the warrant for inspection, if requested to do so by the owner or occupier or any person acting on their behalf.
- (10) A warrant under this section is valid for the period of one month beginning with the date on which it is issued.

Commencement Information

179 S. 79 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Powers of entry: supplementary provisions **N.I.**

- 80.**—(1) A person entering premises under section 78 or 79 may be accompanied by such other persons as the person considers necessary for the purpose for which the power is being exercised.
- (2) If premises are unoccupied or temporarily vacant, a person entering them under section 78 or 79 must leave them as effectively secured against trespassers as the person found them.
- (3) Where any property is damaged in the exercise of any power conferred by section 78 or 79, or in the doing of anything for the purposes of which such a power is conferred, the council must compensate the person who sustained the damage, unless the damage is attributable to the fault of that person.
- (4) Any question of disputed compensation under this section is to be determined by the Lands Tribunal.
- (5) A person commits an offence if the person—
- (a) obstructs a relevant person in the performance of anything which, by virtue section 78 or 79, the relevant person is required or authorised to do, and

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(b) does not have a reasonable excuse for doing so.

(6) In subsection (5), “relevant person” means a person entering premises under section 78 or 79, or any person accompanying such a person under subsection (1).

(7) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (5) is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

Commencement Information

I80 S. 80 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Other supplementary provision

Application by person required to take action where consent withheld **N.I.**

81.—(1) This section applies where—

- (a) a person is required, by a notice served under this Act, to take any action in relation to any premises,
- (b) the consent of another person is required for the action to be taken or to enter any premises in order for it to be taken,
- (c) that person has, in response to a written request for consent, unreasonably refused to give it or has failed to respond to the request.

(2) A court of summary jurisdiction may, on the application of the person required to take the action, make an order—

- (a) declaring that the consent has been unreasonably withheld, and
- (b) granting the necessary consent.

Commencement Information

I81 S. 81 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Obstructions etc **N.I.**

82.—(1) This section applies where any person (“A”) is required, authorised or entitled to take any action under—

- (a) a temporary exemption notice,
- (b) a rectification notice,
- (c) a Part 4 notice, or
- (d) paragraph 5 of Schedule 3 (power to undertake works).

(2) If—

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- (a) A gives notice to any other person (“O”) that A intends to take the action, and
- (b) after receiving that notice, O prevents or obstructs A from taking that action,

A may make an application for an order under subsection (3).

(3) A court of summary jurisdiction may, on the application of A, order O to permit A to do all things which A reasonably requires to do for the purposes of taking the action in question.

(4) Any person who fails to comply with an order under subsection (3) is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

(5) This section does not apply in relation to rights conferred by sections 78 to 80 (powers of entry).

Commencement Information

I82 S. 82 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Effect of moving from accommodation for works to be carried out N.I.

83.—(1) This section applies where—

- (a) a person (“P”) occupies living accommodation under a tenancy or other occupancy arrangement, and
- (b) P moves from the accommodation for the purpose of enabling any person to carry out any work which is—
 - (i) required under a temporary exemption notice, a rectification notice or a hazard notice, or
 - (ii) specified in a statement of remedial work under section 53.

(2) It does not matter whether P moves voluntarily, or in accordance with any term of the tenancy or other occupancy arrangement, or in accordance with paragraph 6 or 7 of Schedule 3 (requirements or warrants to vacate).

(3) The tenancy or other occupancy arrangement, if P so chooses, is to be taken not to have been terminated, varied or altered by reason of P's moving.

(4) If P resumes lawful occupation, the same terms apply (except so far as otherwise agreed) in respect of that occupation as applied in respect of the occupation before P moved.

(5) In this section “lawful occupation” means occupation which is not an offence under paragraph 8 of Schedule 3.

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Commencement Information

I83 S. 83 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Final provisions

Fees **N.I.**

84.—(1) The Department may by regulations make provision about the charging of fees under section 62(12) and paragraph 1(5) of Schedule 2.

(2) Regulations under subsection (1) may in particular—

- (a) set the amount, or maximum amount, of any such fee;
- (b) set out how such fees are to be arrived at;
- (c) specify circumstances in which no fee is payable;
- (d) specify circumstances in which fees are to be refunded.

(3) When fixing fees under this Act, the council may (subject to any regulations made under subsection (1)) take into account all costs incurred by the council in carrying out its functions under this Act.

Guidance **N.I.**

85.—(1) The Department may issue guidance to councils about the exercise of their functions under this Act.

(2) In exercising any function under this Act, a council must have regard to any guidance under this section which applies to it in the exercise of that function.

(3) Before issuing any guidance under this section the Department must consult—

- (a) councils, and
- (b) such other persons as the Department considers appropriate.

(4) Any guidance under this section must be—

- (a) issued in writing, and
- (b) published in such manner as the Department considers appropriate for the purpose of bringing it to the attention of councils.

(5) The Department may vary or revoke any guidance issued under this section.

Regulations and orders **N.I.**

86.—(1) Regulations under section 1(3), 3(5), 4(1)(c), 13(3) or 14(3) or paragraph 4, 5 or 9 of Schedule 1, or an order under section 90, may include such consequential, transitional and saving provision as the Department considers necessary or expedient in connection with the other provision made by those regulations or that order.

(2) Provision made under subsection (1) may include the modification of Northern Ireland legislation.

(3) The following instruments may not be made unless a draft of the instrument has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, the Assembly—

- (a) any regulations or orders that, by virtue of subsection (2), modify Northern Ireland legislation;
- (b) any regulations under section 1(3);
- (c) any regulations under section 73(11).

(4) Any other regulations made under this Act are subject to negative resolution.

(5) Before making regulations under section 1(3), 12(1)(c), 13(3) or 14(3) or paragraph 2 of Schedule 2, the Department must consult—

- (a) councils;
- (b) such persons as appear to the Department to be representative of—
 - (i) landlords, and
 - (ii) occupiers of houses; and
- (c) such other persons as the Department considers appropriate (which may include landlords or occupiers of houses, or both).

General notices **N.I.**

87.—(1) This section applies to a general notice given by a council under—

- (a) section 15(2);
- (b) section 27(2);
- (c) section 64(2)(d);
- (d) paragraph 1(1) or (2)(h) of Schedule 2.

(2) Any such notice must be—

- (a) given in writing, and
- (b) published in such manner as the council considers appropriate.

(3) The council may vary or revoke any such notice.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement Information

I84 S. 87 in operation at 1.4.2019 by S.R. 2019/39, art. 2 (with art. 3)

Interpretation **N.I.**

88.—(1) In this Act—

the “associates” of a person (“P”) are—

- (i) any member of P's family (as to which, see subsections (2) and (3)), and
- (ii) if P is the director of a company, any person (not falling within subparagraph (i)) who is connected with P within the meaning of section 252 of the Companies Act 2006;

references to “buildings” do not include, in particular, mobile homes;

“building regulations” means any statutory provisions which relate to the construction of new buildings or to the carrying out of works in or to existing buildings and which are for the time being in force;

“council” means a district council (and see subsection (4));

“the Department” means the Department for Social Development;

“disqualification order” means an order under section 38(2)(b) or (c) or (3);

an “emergency hazard notice” is a hazard notice which complies with section 55(3);

an appeal against a decision is “finally determined” when—

- (i) the appeal is withdrawn, or
- (ii) a determination is made (other than a determination quashing the decision) from which no further appeal is allowed;

“fit for human habitation” has the meaning given by Article 46 of the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 (except that references in that Article to the Executive are to be read as references to the council);

“HMO” means a house in multiple occupation (see sections 1 to 6);

“HMO licence” means a licence under section 7;

“living accommodation” has the meaning given by section 2;

the “managing agent” of any living accommodation includes any person who, acting on behalf of the owner, does any of the following—

- (i) receives rents or other payments from persons who occupy the accommodation (but this is subject to subsection (7)),
- (ii) arranges for the carrying out of any repairs or refurbishment of it,
- (iii) sends or receives communications relating to it to or from the occupants or the council;

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

“owner” has the meaning given by subsections (5) and (6);

“Part 4 notice” means any of the following—

- (i) an overcrowding notice under section 44,
- (ii) a suitability notice under section 50, or
- (iii) a hazard notice under section 55;

“revocation order” means an order under section 38(2)(a);

“the statutory authorities” means—

- (i) the Chief Constable,
- (ii) the Department,
- (iii) the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service Board,
- (iv) the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, and
- (v) such other authorities as the Department may by regulations appoint for this purpose;

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

(2) For the purposes of this Act, two persons are members of the same family only if—

- (a) they are a couple,
- (b) one of them is a relative of the other, or
- (c) one of them is, or is a relative of, one member of a couple and the other is a relative of the other member of that couple.

(3) In subsection (2)—

- (a) a “couple” is two persons who are married to each other or are civil partners, or who live together as [^{F1}:if spouses of each other] ,
- (b) “relative” means parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, nephew or niece,
- (c) a relationship of the half-blood is to be treated as a relationship of the whole blood, and
- (d) the stepchild of a person is to be treated as that person's child.

(4) The functions conferred by this Act on a council are exercisable in relation to living accommodation situated in its district (so that, in particular, “the council”, in relation to an HMO or HMO licence, means the council for the district in which the HMO is situated).

(5) In this Act, the “owner” of living accommodation is the person, other than a mortgagee not in possession, who (whether on the person's own account or as trustee for another)—

- (a) receives or is entitled to receive the rack rent for the accommodation, or

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

- (b) if the accommodation is not let at a rack rent, would be entitled to receive that rent if it were so let.
- (6) For the purposes of subsection (5)—
 - (a) it does not matter whether the person receives the rent directly or through an agent;
 - (b) it does not matter whether the person receives (or would be entitled to receive) the rent alone or jointly or in common with any other person;
 - (c) “rack rent” means a rent which is not less than two-thirds of the net annual value of the accommodation, or a rent which has been fixed in accordance with the Rent (Northern Ireland) Order 1978.
- (7) Where—
 - (a) a person (“the agent”) has introduced a prospective tenant or other occupier to the owner of accommodation,
 - (b) the prospective tenant or other occupier enters into a tenancy or other occupation agreement under which periodical payments are to be made in respect of the occupation, and
 - (c) the agent (acting on behalf of the owner) receives the first of those periodical payments,

then, for the purposes of the definition of “managing agent” in subsection (1), the receipt by the agent of that payment is not to be regarded as the receipt of rent or another payment from that occupier.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 88(3)(a) substituted (13.1.2020) by [The Marriage \(Same-sex Couples\) and Civil Partnership \(Opposite-sex Couples\) \(Northern Ireland\) Regulations 2019 \(S.I. 2019/1514\)](#), regs. 1(2), **148** (with regs. 6-9)

Commencement Information

- I85** S. 88 in operation at 1.4.2019 by [S.R. 2019/39](#), **art. 2** (with **art. 3**)

Consequential amendments and repeals **N.I.**

- 89.**—(1) The consequential amendments set out in Schedule 7 have effect.
 (2) The repeals set out in Schedule 8 have effect.

Commencement Information

- I86** S. 89 in operation at 1.4.2019 by [S.R. 2019/39](#), **art. 2** (with **art. 3**)

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016. (See end of Document for details)

Commencement **N.I.**

90.—(1) Sections 84 to 86, this section and section 91 come into operation on the day on which this Act receives Royal Assent.

(2) The other provisions of this Act come into operation on such day as the Department may by order appoint.

Short title **N.I.**

91 This Act may be cited as the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016.