
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

1987 No. 463

The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987

PART II

PROCESSIONS AND MEETINGS

Prohibiting public processions and open-air public meetings

5.—(1) If at any time the [^{F1}Department of Justice] is of the opinion, in consequence of information furnished to [^{F2}the Department of Justice] by the Chief Constable or for any other reason, that—

- (a) the exercise of the powers conferred by Article 4 in any area will not be sufficient to prevent such disorder, damage, disruption or intimidation as is referred to in [^{F3} paragraph (2)] of that Article; or
- (b) the holding in any area or place of^{F4} . . . any open-air public meeting is likely to cause—
 - (i) serious public disorder;
 - (ii) serious disruption to the life of the community; or
 - (iii) undue demands to be made upon the police^{F5} . . . ,

[^{F2}the Department of Justice] may make an order—

- [^{F6}(A) prohibiting the holding in that area or place of an open-air public meeting specified in the order;
- (B) prohibiting, for such period not exceeding 28 days as may be specified in the order, the holding in that area or place of any open-air public meeting or such class or description as may be so specified; or
- (C) prohibiting, for such period not exceeding 28 days as may be specified in the order, the holding in that area or place of any open-air public meetings.]

[^{F7}(1ZA) If at any time the Secretary of State is of the opinion, in consequence of information furnished to him by the Chief Constable or for any other reason, that the holding in any area or place of any open-air public meeting is likely to cause undue demands to be made upon the military forces, the Secretary of State may, in relation to that area or place, make an order under paragraph (1)(A), (B) or (C).]

[^{F8}(1A) An order [^{F9}made by the Department of Justice or the Secretary of State] under any paragraph (1)(B) or (C) may exempt any open-air public meeting, or any class or description of open-air public meeting, specified in the order.]

Para. (2) rep. 1998 c. 2

(3) A recital in an order made by the [^{F10}Department of Justice or the Secretary of State under this Article as to its or] his opinion and the information upon which that opinion was formed shall be conclusive evidence of the matters stated therein.

Changes to legislation: The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987, Section 5 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 05 December 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

(4) The Chief Constable may delegate, to such extent and subject to such conditions as he may specify, his functions under paragraph (1) [^{F11}or (1ZA)] to a member of the Royal Ulster Constabulary not below the rank of Assistant Chief Constable.

(5) A person who—

- (a) organises^{F12} an] open-air public meeting the holding of which he knows is prohibited by virtue of an order under this Article; or
- (b) takes part in^{F12} an] open-air public meeting the holding of which he knows is prohibited by virtue of an order under this Article,

shall be guilty of an offence.

(6) A person guilty of an offence under paragraph (5) shall be^{F13} liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or to both.]

^{F14}(7) This Article does not apply in relation to a protest meeting within the meaning of the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998.]

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| F1 | Words in art. 5(1) substituted (12.4.2010) by Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(2)(a) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F2 | Words in art. 5(1) substituted (12.4.2010) by Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(2)(b) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F3 | 1998 c. 2 |
| F4 | 1998 c. 2 |
| F5 | Words in art. 5(1)(b)(iii) omitted (12.4.2010) by virtue of Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(2)(c) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F6 | 1998 c. 2 |
| F7 | Art. 5(1ZA) inserted (12.4.2010) by Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(3) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F8 | 1998 c. 2 |
| F9 | Words in art. 5(1A) inserted (12.4.2010) by Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(4) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F10 | Words in art. 5(3) substituted (12.4.2010) by Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(5) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F11 | Words in art. 5(4) inserted (12.4.2010) by Northern Ireland Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010 (S.I. 2010/976), arts. 1(2), 5, Sch. 3 para. 2(6) (with arts. 28-31); S.I. 2010/977, art. 1(2) |
| F12 | 1998 c. 2 |
| F13 | 1998 c. 2 |
| F14 | 2005 NI 2 |

Changes to legislation:

The Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987, Section 5 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 05 December 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- Instrument amended by [1998 c. 2 s.18\(1\)Sch.3 para.3](#)
- [art.5\(1\)\(b\)](#) rev. in pt. by [1998 c. 2 s.18\(2\)Sch.4](#)

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

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

- [art.2\(3\)\(b\)](#) amended by [1996 c. 26 s. 2\(3\)\(4\)](#)
- [art.2\(3\)\(b\)](#) amended by [1996 c. 26 s. 2\(3\)\(4\)](#)
- [arts.5\(2\)66A7\(1\)](#) revoked by [1998 c. 2 s.18\(2\)Sch.4](#)