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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2003 No. 413**

**The Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003**

*Preliminaries to marriage*

**Objections**

6.—(1) Any person may at any time before the solemnisation of a marriage in Northern Ireland make an objection in writing to the registrar.

(2) If the registrar is satisfied that the objection relates to no more than a misdescription or inaccuracy in the marriage notice, he shall—

- (a) notify the parties to the intended marriage;
- (b) make such inquiries as he thinks fit; and
- (c) subject to the approval of the Registrar General, make any necessary correction to any document relating to the marriage.

(3) In any other case the registrar shall—

- (a) notify the Registrar General of the objection;
- (b) pending consideration of the objection by the Registrar General, suspend the issue of the marriage schedule (if it has not been issued);
- (c) in the case of a religious marriage, if the marriage schedule has already been issued and it is practicable to do so—
  - (i) notify the officiant of the objection, and
  - (ii) advise the officiant not to solemnise the marriage pending consideration of the objection by the Registrar General.

(4) If the Registrar General is satisfied that there is a legal impediment to the marriage, he shall direct the registrar to—

- (a) notify the parties; and
- (b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that the marriage does not take place.

(5) If paragraph (4) does not apply, the Registrar General shall direct the registrar to proceed under Article 7.

(6) For the purposes of this Article and Article 7 there is a legal impediment to a marriage if—

- (a) that marriage would be void by virtue of Article 18 of the [Family Law \(Miscellaneous Provisions\) \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1984 \(NI 14\)](#) (prohibited degrees of relationship);
- (b) one of the parties is, or both are, already married;
- (c) one or both of the parties will be under the age of 16 on the date of solemnisation of the intended marriage;
- (d) one or both of the parties is or are incapable of understanding the nature of a marriage ceremony or of consenting to marriage; or
- (e) both parties are of the same sex.

(7) An objection on the ground mentioned in paragraph (6)(d) shall be accompanied by a supporting certificate signed by a medical practitioner.

(8) A person who has submitted an objection may withdraw it at any time, but the Registrar General may have regard to an objection which has been withdrawn.