

SCHEDULE 1

PART IVC

MISCELLANEOUS PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE ORDER OF 1987

Custody, inspection and disclosure of documents and information

4C.7.—(1) All documents relating to proceedings under the Order of 1987 (or under any previous enactments relating to adoption) shall, while they are in the custody of the court, be kept in a place of special security.

(2) A party who is an individual and is referred to in a confidential report supplied to the court by an adoption agency, a Board or a guardian ad litem may inspect, for the purposes of the hearing, that part of any such report which refers to him, subject to any direction given by the court that –

- (a) no part of one or any of the reports shall be revealed to that party, or
- (b) the part of one or any of the reports referring to that party shall be revealed only to that party's legal advisers, or
- (c) the whole or any other part or any of the reports shall be revealed to that party.

(3) Any person who obtains any information in the course of, or relating to, any proceedings mentioned in paragraph (1) shall treat that information as confidential and shall only disclose it if –

- (a) the disclosure is necessary for the proper exercise of his duties, or
- (b) the information is requested –
 - (i) by a court or public authority (whether in Northern Ireland or not) having power to determine adoptions and related matters, for the purpose of the discharge of its duties in that behalf, or
 - (ii) by the Registrar General, or a person authorised in writing by him, where the information requested relates only to the identity of any adoption agency which made the arrangements for placing the child for adoption in the home of the applicants, and of any Board which was notified of the applicant's intention to apply for an adoption order in respect of the child, or
 - (iii) by a person who is authorised in writing by the Department to obtain the information for the purposes of research.

(4) Save as required or authorised by a provision of any enactment or of these Rules or with the leave of the court, no document or order held by or lodged with the court in proceedings under the Order of 1987 (or under any previous enactment relating to adoption) shall be open to inspection by any person, and no copy of any such document or order, or of an extract from any such document or order, shall be taken by or issued to any person.