



Estate Agents Act 1979

1979 CHAPTER 38

Information, entry and inspection

11 Powers of entry and inspection.

- (1) A duly authorised officer of an enforcement authority, at all reasonable hours and on production, if required, of his credentials may—
 - (a) if he has reasonable cause to suspect that an offence has been committed under this Act, in order to ascertain whether it has been committed, enter any premises (other than premises used only as a dwelling);
 - (b) if he has reasonable cause to suspect that an offence has been committed under this Act, in order to ascertain whether it has been committed, require any person—
 - (i) carrying on, or employed in connection with, a business to produce any books or documents relating to it, or
 - (ii) having control of any information relating to a business recorded otherwise than in a legible form, to provide a document containing a legible reproduction of the whole or any part of the information;and take copies of, or of any entry in, the books or documents;
 - (c) seize and detain any books or documents which he has reason to believe may be required as evidence in proceedings for an offence under this Act;
 - (d) for the purpose of exercising his powers under this subsection to seize books and documents, but only if and to the extent that it is reasonably necessary for securing that the provisions of this Act are duly observed, require any person having authority to do so to break open any container and, if that person does not comply, break it open himself.
- (2) An officer seizing books or documents in exercise of his powers under this section shall not do so without informing the person from whom he seizes them.
- (3) If and so long as any books or documents which have been seized under this section are not required as evidence in connection with proceedings which have been begun for an offence under this Act, the enforcement authority by whose officer they were seized shall afford to the person to whom the books or documents belong and to any

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person authorised by him in writing reasonable facilities to inspect them and to take copies of or make extracts from them.

- (4) If a justice of the peace, on sworn information in writing, or, in Scotland, a sheriff or a justice of the peace, on evidence on oath,—
- (a) is satisfied that there is reasonable ground to believe either—
 - (i) that any books or documents which a duly authorised officer has power to inspect under this section are on any premises and their inspection is likely to disclose evidence of the commission of an offence under this Act, or
 - (ii) that an offence under this Act has been, or is being or is about to be, committed on any premises; and
 - (b) is also satisfied either—
 - (i) that admission to the premises has been or is likely to be refused and that notice of intention to apply for a warrant under this subsection has been given to the occupier, or
 - (ii) that an application for admission, or the giving of such a notice, would defeat the object of the entry or that the premises are unoccupied or that the occupier is temporarily absent and it might defeat the object of the entry to wait for his return,
- the justice or, as the case may be, the sheriff may by warrant under his hand, which shall continue in force for a period of one month, authorise an officer of an enforcement authority to enter the premises, by force if need be.
- (5) An officer entering premises by virtue of this section may take such other persons and equipment with him as he thinks necessary, and on leaving premises entered by virtue of a warrant under subsection (4) above shall, if the premises are unoccupied or the occupier is temporarily absent, leave them as effectively secured against trespassers as he found them.
- (6) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that, in cases specified in the regulations, an officer of a local weights and measures authority is not to be taken to be duly authorised for the purposes of this section unless he is authorised by the [F1OFT] .
- (7) The power to make regulations under subsection (6) above shall be exercisable by statutory instrument which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (8) Nothing in this section shall be taken to require a person who has acted as counsel or solicitor for any person to produce a document containing a privileged communication made by or to him in that capacity or authorises the seizing of any such document in his possession.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Word in s. 11(6) substituted (1.4.2003) by [Enterprise Act 2002 \(c. 40\), s. 279, Sch. 25 para. 9\(9\)\(a\)](#); [S.I. 2003/766, art. 2, Sch.](#) (with [art. 3](#)) (as amended (20.7.2007) by [S.I. 2007/1846, reg. 3\(2\), Sch.](#))

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 11(1)(c) powers of seizure extended (1.4.2003) by [Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 \(c. 16\), ss. 50, 138\(2\), Sch. 1 para. 24](#) (with [ss. 52-54, 68](#)); [S.I. 2003/708, art. 2\(a\)](#)
- C2** S. 11(3) applied (1.4.2003) by [Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 \(c. 16\), s. 138\(2\), Sch. 2 para. 5](#) (with [s. 61](#)); [S.I. 2003/708, art. 2\(k\)](#)

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C3 S. 11(8) extended (E.W.) by [Administration of Justice Act 1985 \(c. 61, SIF 98\)](#), s. **34(2)(e)**

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