



Suicide Act 1961

1961 CHAPTER 60 9 and 10 Eliz 2

An Act to amend the law of England and Wales relating to suicide, and for purposes connected therewith. [3rd August 1961]

1 Suicide to cease to be a crime.

The rule of law whereby it is a crime for a person to commit suicide is hereby abrogated.

2 Criminal liability for complicity in another's suicide.

- (1) A person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the suicide of another, or an attempt by another to commit suicide, shall be liable on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding fourteen years.
- (2) If on the trial of an indictment for murder or manslaughter it is proved that the accused aided, abetted, counselled or procured the suicide of the person in question, the jury may find him guilty of that offence.
- (3) The enactments mentioned in the first column of the First Schedule to this Act shall have effect subject to the amendments provided for in the second column (which preserve in relation to offences under this section the previous operation of those enactments in relation to murder or manslaughter).
- (4)^{F1}no proceedings shall be instituted for an offence under this section except by or with the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Textual Amendments

F1 Words repealed by [Criminal Law Act 1967 \(c. 58\)](#) , [Sch. 3 Pt. II](#) and [Criminal Jurisdiction Act 1975 \(c. 59\)](#) , [Sch. 6 Pt. I](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 S. 2(4) explained by [Criminal Jurisdiction Act 1975 \(c. 59\)](#) , [s. 12](#)

Status: Point in time view as at 01/02/1991.
Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Suicide Act 1961. (See end of Document for details)

3 Short title, repeal and extent.

(1) This Act may be cited as the Suicide Act 1961.

(2) F2

(3) This Act shall extend to England and Wales only, except as regards the amendments made by Part II of the First Schedule and except that the Interments (felo de se) Act 1882, shall be repealed also for the Channel Islands.

Textual Amendments

F2 S. 3(2), Sch. 2 repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1974 (c. 22), Sch. Pt. XI

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SCHEDULES

FIRST SCHEDULE

Sections 2 & 3.

ADAPTATION OF ENACTMENTS RELATING TO MURDER OR MANSLAUGHTER

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C2** The text of Sch. 1 Pt. II is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and, except as indicated, does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

PART I

AMENDMENTS LIMITED TO ENGLAND AND WALES

Enactment and subject matter

Amendment

...

The Children and Young Persons Act,
1933—

First Schedule (Offences to which special provisions of the Act apply).

The reference to the murder or manslaughter of a child or young person shall apply also to aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the suicide of a child or young person.

Textual Amendments

- F3** Entry repealed by [Criminal Law Act 1977 \(c. 45\)](#), [Sch. 13](#)

PART II

AMENDMENTS NOT LIMITED TO ENGLAND AND WALES.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C3** The text of Sch. 1 Pt. II is in the form in which it was originally enacted: it was not reproduced in Statutes in Force and, except as indicated, does not reflect any amendments or repeals which may have been made prior to 1.2.1991.

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Enactment and subject matter.	Amendment.
<p>... F4</p> <p>The Visiting Forces Act, 1952—</p> <p>Section seven (Effect on coroners' duties in England, Wales and Northern Ireland of certain proceedings for homicide).</p> <p>Paragraph 1 of the Schedule (Offences not triable by courts of England, Wales or Northern Ireland in the cases provided for by section three of the Act).</p> <p>The Army Act, 1955—</p> <p>Subsections (4) and (5) of section seventy (Exclusion of court-martial jurisdiction over certain offences committed in the United Kingdom).</p> <p>The Air Force Act, 1955—</p> <p>Subsections (4) and (5) of section seventy (Exclusion of court-martial jurisdiction over certain offences committed in the United Kingdom).</p> <p>The Naval Discipline Act, 1957—</p> <p>Subsection (2) of section forty-eight (Exclusion of court-martial jurisdiction over certain offences committed in the United kingdom).</p>	<p>The list of crimes shall include aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring suicide.</p> <p>The definition of “homicide” in subsection 96) shall have effect as if after the references to murder, manslaughter and infanticide there were inserted a reference to aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring suicide.</p> <p>In sub-paragraph (a) (which provides that murder and certain other offences are to be comprised in the expression “offences against the person”) after the word “assault” there shall be inserted the words “and any offence of aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring suicide or an attempt to commit suicide”.</p> <p>At the end of subsection (4) there shall be added the words— “In this and the following subsection the references to murder shall apply also to aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring suicide”.</p> <p>At the end of subsection (4) there shall be added the following words— “In this and the following subsection the references to murder shall apply also to aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring suicide”.</p> <p>At the end of the subsection there shall be added the words— “In this subsection the references to murder shall apply also to aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring suicide”.</p>

Textual Amendments

F4 Sch. 1 Pt. II entry relating to Extradition Act 1870 repealed by [Extradition Act 1989 \(c. 33, SIF 48\)](#), s. 37, [Sch. 2](#)

Status: Point in time view as at 01/02/1991.
Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding
effects for the Suicide Act 1961. (See end of Document for details)

F5F5 SECOND SCHEDULE

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Textual Amendments

F5 S. 3(2), Sch. 2 repealed by Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1974 (c. 22), Sch. Pt. XI

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Status:

Point in time view as at 01/02/1991.

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Suicide Act 1961.