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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2020 No. 742**

**The Marriage and Civil Partnership  
(Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020**

**PART 3**

**Protection from Compulsion**

**Ceremonies and events to mark civil partnerships: protection from compulsion**

**12.** In the Civil Partnership Act 2004(1), in Part 4 (civil partnership: Northern Ireland), after section 204 insert—

**“Ceremonies and events to mark civil partnerships: protection from compulsion**

**204A.**—(1) A religious body, or a person acting on behalf of or under the auspices of a religious body, may not be compelled—

- (a) to provide, arrange or facilitate a ceremony or event to mark the formation of a civil partnership,
- (b) to allow religious premises to be used as the place at which such a ceremony or event is held, or
- (c) to participate in, or be present at, such a ceremony or event,

where the reason for not doing that thing is that the body or person does not wish to do things of that sort in relation to civil partnerships generally, in relation to civil partnerships between parties who are of the same sex or in relation to civil partnerships between parties who are not of the same sex.

(2) In this section—

“compelled” means compelled by any means (including by the enforcement of a contract or a statutory or other legal requirement);

“religious body” means an organised group of people meeting regularly for common religious worship;

“religious premises” means premises which—

- (a) are owned, or controlled, by a religious body or a person acting on behalf of or under the auspices of a religious body, and
- (b) are not premises where the sole or main purpose for which they are used is commercial.”.