

*These notes refer to the Justice Act (Northern Ireland)
2015 (c.9) which received Royal Assent on 24 July 2015*

Justice Act (Northern Ireland) 2015

EXPLANATORY NOTES

OVERVIEW

Violent Offences Prevention Orders

30. Part 8 makes provision for the introduction of a new civil preventative measure – a Violent Offences Prevention Order (VOPO) – to help mitigate the risk of violent re-offending from certain offenders.
31. The VOPO will allow the court to place relevant conditions on the behaviour of a violent offender, and those subject to the order would also be made automatically subject to notification requirements. This involves the requirement to notify specified personal details to police (similar to those notified by sex offenders under the terms of the Sexual Offences Act 2003).
32. A VOPO can be made by the court in two ways: on conviction; or following application made by the police at a subsequent stage. It does not form part of a person's sentence nor is it automatically applied to all violent offenders. Rather, it can only be made following a determination by the court on the basis of the information and evidence presented to it. Specifically, an order can only be made where the court is satisfied that it is necessary for the purpose of protecting the public from the risk of serious violent harm caused by the offender.
33. The VOPO has been developed similar to the legislative framework of the Sexual Offences Prevention Order (SOPO) and is intended to complement existing public protection measures, such as public protection sentences.