



11 HOW TO Find Northern Ireland Law

Primary Legislation

Below is a summary of Northern Ireland legislation since 1921.

1921-1972 primary legislation enacted in Belfast, by Parliament of Northern Ireland, or at Westminster.

1972-1999 (except for four 1974 Measures passed by a Northern Ireland Assembly). Primary legislation in Northern Ireland was either Acts made at Westminster, in which 'Northern Ireland' comes before 'Act', e.g. The *Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1991*, or Orders in Council, which have both an SI number and a Northern Ireland (NI) number, e.g. *The Airports (Northern Ireland) Order 1994*, SI 1994/426 (NI 1).

2000 to 14 October 2002 Northern Ireland Acts passed in Belfast by the Northern Ireland Assembly, apart from Feb-May 2000 when the Assembly was suspended. Some legislation still made by Westminster. The Assembly was suspended from midnight on 14 October 2002 and dissolved in April 2003. Westminster took over Assembly functions.

8 May 2007 onwards The Assembly was restored on 8 May 2007, however Westminster still legislates on reserved matters such as defense.

Locating Northern Ireland primary legislation

Northern Ireland Public General Acts / Statutes 1921-2015 is located at Bay 192.

Public and General Acts (for legislation passed at Westminster since 1972) is located at Bay 168.

Recent Westminster Acts can be found at legislation.gov.uk

Justis.com is a subscription service providing the original versions of Westminster Acts and Orders in Council, covering either all of the UK or only Northern Ireland. It also includes Acts of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Amendments, repeals and annotations are not included. This database is available in the Library.

LexisLibrary is a subscription service providing updated versions of Westminster Acts and selected Orders in Council applying exclusively or primarily to Northern Ireland. This database is available in the Library.

Westlaw is subscription service providing updated versions of post 1991 Westminster Acts and Orders in Council applying exclusively or primarily to Northern Ireland. This database is available in the Library.

Original, unamended versions of selected Westminster Acts and Orders in Council applying exclusively or primarily to Northern Ireland are available on the legislation.gov.uk website.

Acts of the Northern Ireland Assembly are also available. The official online revised edition of Westminster Acts and Orders in Council applying exclusively or primarily to Northern Ireland, and Acts of the Northern Ireland Assembly are also available on legislation.gov.uk. However, many acts are not generally up-to-date so always check the 'Changes to legislation' note at the beginning of each section.

Unamended Acts of the Northern Ireland Assembly are available on the subscription service Public Information Online.

How to find legislation on a subject

Index to the Statutes Northern Ireland covering the legislation to December 31, 1996 has a subject arrangement. This is located at Bay 192.

Current Law Monthly Digests and the *Current Law Yearbooks* have a subject section that includes Northern Ireland and lists new Orders in Council. This is located at Bay D.



How to find whether legislation has been amended or repealed

Statutes Revised Northern Ireland (up to 2016 in hard copy) contains consolidated amended legislation in force in 1981. Use the cumulative supplement to update legislation found in volumes A-D 1226-1920. Does not contain updating information for post 1921 Westminster Acts. Located at Bay 191. *Chronological table of the Statutes Northern Ireland* lists legislation with amendments. Located at Bay 193. *LexisLibrary* and *Westlaw* (post 1991 legislation) both provide updated versions and are available in the Library.

The legislation.gov.uk website has updated versions. However, many acts are not generally up-to-date so always check the 'Changes to legislation' note at the beginning of each section.

How to find the commencement of legislation

Chronological table of the Statutes Northern Ireland Part IV lists the appointed day and SI/SR. Located at Bay 192.

Current Law Monthly Digests check the Northern Ireland section. Located at Bay D. Use the Advanced Search option on legislation.gov.uk and search the Statutory Rules for recent commencement orders.

LexisLibrary provides information on commencement at the end of each section in the annotations. Westlaw contains commencement information for post 1991 legislation under Legislation Analysis.

How to find equivalent legislation

Dickson, Concordance of English, Northern Irish and Irish legislation (1997). Located at Bay 192F.

Secondary Legislation

Secondary legislation will be either Statutory Rules and Orders (SR&Os) made locally, e.g. *Airports (Nominated Successor Company) Order (Northern Ireland) SR 1994 No. 194* or Statutory Instruments (SIs) enacted at Westminster, e.g. *The Local Elections (Variations of Limits of Candidates' Election Expenses) (Northern Ireland) Order 1994 No 763*, distinguished from primary legislation by the absence of an N.I. number.

Locating Northern Ireland secondary legislation

Northern Ireland Statutory Rules (1922-1990) are available at Bay 120, (1991-) at Bay 193-194
HMSO bound volumes of *Statutory Instruments* for Westminster SIs at Bays 171-177.

LexisLibrary is subscription service providing updated versions of Westminster Statutory Instruments applying exclusively or primarily to Northern Ireland (see above).

Westlaw is a subscription service providing updated versions of Westminster Statutory Instruments applying exclusively or primarily to Northern Ireland (see above).

Justis.com is a subscription service providing the original versions of Statutory Rules and Orders made locally or Statutory Instruments enacted at Westminster (see above).

Original, unamended versions of SIs (1987-) and SR&Os (selected SR&Os from 1991-, from 1998- all SR&Os) are available on legislation.gov.uk.

How to find secondary legislation on a subject

Index to the Statutory Rules and Orders Northern Ireland is arranged by subject. Located at Bay 194. Use the advanced search on legislation.gov.uk.

The Northern Ireland section of *Current Law* is arranged by subject and includes SR&Os. Located at Bay D
For both recent SR&Os and Westminster statutory instruments, use the monthly *HMSO List of Statutory Publication*. Located at Bay N10.

Justis.com, LexisLibrary or Westlaw (see above).

How to find whether secondary legislation has been amended or repealed

For Statutory Rules, use the *Chronological table of statutory rules: Northern Ireland*. Located at Bay 194
For Westminster Statutory Instruments the *LexisLibrary* and *Westlaw* databases contain selected SIs.



Law reports and journals

Locations

Northern Ireland Law Reports (1925-2016) is the official series for the NI Supreme Court. Located at Bay 189.
Northern Ireland Judgments Bulletin is the unofficial series. Located at Bay 188 and on LexisLibrary.
[Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service](#) website publishes its *Judicial Decisions* from 1999.
A selection of CA and High Court decisions on the [BAILII](#) website.

How to find a case

Index to cases decided in the courts of Northern Ireland 1921-70, with supplements covering 1971-5 and 1975-85 are the only published cumulative indexes. Located at Bay 192.
Bulletin of Northern Ireland Law 1981- 2012 has a subject arrangement. Located at Bay 190.

Journals

Northern Ireland Legal Quarterly, 1964-2016 . Located at Bay 190.
Writ: Journal of Law Society of Northern Ireland, 1995- .Bound volumes located at Bay 191 and recent issues on journals rack.

Useful websites

British and Irish Legal Information Institute: <http://www.bailii.org>
Legislation.gov.uk: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>
Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service <http://www.courtsni.gov.uk>