

*These notes refer to the Family Law Act (Northern Ireland)  
2001 (c.12) which received Royal Assent on 17 July 2001*

# Family Law Act (Northern Ireland) 2001

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **OPTION SELECTED**

11. Having considered the response to the consultation paper it has been decided that the best way forward is to confer parental responsibility on unmarried fathers who jointly register the birth of the child with the mother. This was the option put forward which commanded the greatest degree of support from those who commented on the consultation paper. This recognises in law that joint registration demonstrates a public statement by the man that he is the father of the child and that he accepts the responsibility of parenthood. The Act will also deal with the ancillary question of the acquisition of parental responsibility by step-parents.