

*These notes refer to the Social Security Fraud Act (Northern Ireland)  
2001 (c.17) which received Royal Assent on 15 November 2001*

# Social Security Fraud Act (Northern Ireland) 2001

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

#### *Section 4: Arrangements for payments in respect of information*

*Section 4* allows the Department to make payments for the information obtained from credit reference agencies and telecommunications providers. Payments may also be made to utility companies but only for the information they provide about the quantities of services supplied to residential properties. The Department need not make any payments if it does not think that this is appropriate. Any organisation that is added to the list of those who can be required to provide information may also be paid under the same terms.

*Section 4(1)* provides that it shall be the duty of the Department to ensure that such arrangements as it considers appropriate (if any) are in place to ensure that it can authorise such payments as it thinks appropriate and in cases that it thinks fit, in respect of organisations subject to “relevant obligations”. The organisations that may be paid under these arrangements are credit reference agencies, telecommunications, gas and electricity providers and the servants and agents of the above. Payments may also be made to persons added to the list in section 103B(2A) of the Administration Act by an order under section 1(4) and to their servants and agents.

*Section 4(2)* defines “relevant obligation” for the purposes of subsection (1).

*Section 4(2)(a)* provides that, in the case of credit reference agencies, telecommunication providers and persons added to the list at section 103B(2A) by an order, “relevant obligation” means any requirement to provide information under section 103B by virtue of their falling within the list in section 103B(2A). It also means any requirement to provide access to records in accordance with section 103BA or 104AA.

*Section 4(2)(b)* provides that, in the case of providers of gas and electricity, “relevant obligation” means any requirements imposed by the exercise of powers in section 103B as mentioned in section 103B(2D).

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*Section 4(3)* provides that the Department may make arrangements for payments to be made from money appropriated by Act of the Assembly in order to comply with its duty under this section.

*Section 4(4)* provides that the Housing Executive shall be under a duty to comply with any specific or general directions that the Department makes regarding payments in accordance with arrangements made under section 4(1).