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STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

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**2006 No. 439**

**The Equality Act (Sexual Orientation)  
Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006**

**Power to obtain information**

**32.**—(1) For the purpose of a formal investigation the Commission, by notice in the prescribed form served on him in the prescribed manner —

- (a) may require any person to furnish such written information as may be described in the notice, and may specify the time at which, and in the manner and form in which, the information is to be furnished;
- (b) may require any person to attend at such time and place as is specified in the notice and give oral information about, and produce all documents in his possession or control relating to, any matter specified in the notice.

(2) Except as provided by regulation 39, a notice shall be served under paragraph (1) only where —

- (a) service of the notice was authorised by an order made by the Department; or
- (b) the terms of reference of the investigation state that the Commission believes that person named in them may have done or may be doing acts of all or any of the following descriptions —
  - (i) unlawful acts of discrimination or harassment;
  - (ii) contraventions of regulation 19; and
  - (iii) contraventions of regulations 20, 21 or 22, and confine the investigation to those acts.

(3) A notice under paragraph (1) shall not require a person —

- (a) to give information, or produce any documents, which he could not be compelled to give in evidence, or produce, in civil proceedings before the High Court; or
- (b) to attend at any place unless the necessary expenses of his journey to and from that place are paid or tendered to him.

(4) If a person fails to comply with a notice served on him under paragraph (1) or the Commission has reasonable cause to believe that he intends not to comply with it, the Commission may apply to a county court for an order requiring him to comply with it or with such directions for the like purposes as may be contained in the order.

(5) If a person fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with an order made by the county court under paragraph (4), he may be dealt with by the county court as if he had failed to comply with a witness summons issued in accordance with county court rules.

(6) A person who —

- (a) wilfully alters, suppresses, conceals or destroys a document which he has been required by a notice or order under this regulation to produce; or
- (b) in complying with such a notice or order, knowingly or recklessly makes any statement which is false in a material particular,

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shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

(7) Proceedings for an offence under paragraph (6) may (without prejudice to any jurisdiction exercisable apart from this paragraph) be instituted —

- (a) against any person at any place at which he has an office or other place of business;
- (b) against an individual at any place where he resides, or at which he is for the time being.