



# Northern Ireland Act 1998

## 1998 CHAPTER 47

### PART III

#### EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES

##### *Authorities*

#### **16 First Minister and deputy First Minister.**

- (1) Each Assembly shall, within a period of six weeks beginning with its first meeting, elect from among its members the First Minister and the deputy First Minister.
- (2) Each candidate for either office must stand for election jointly with a candidate for the other office.
- (3) Two candidates standing jointly shall not be elected to the two offices without the support of a majority of the members voting in the election, a majority of the designated Nationalists voting and a majority of the designated Unionists voting.
- (4) The First Minister and the deputy First Minister—
  - (a) shall not take up office until each of them has affirmed the terms of the pledge of office; and
  - (b) subject to the provisions of this Part, shall hold office until the conclusion of the next election for First Minister and deputy First Minister.
- (5) The holder of the office of First Minister or deputy First Minister may by notice in writing to the Presiding Officer designate a Northern Ireland Minister to exercise the functions of that office—
  - (a) during any absence or incapacity of the holder; or
  - (b) during any vacancy in that office arising otherwise than under subsection (7)(a);but a person shall not have power to act by virtue of paragraph (a) for a continuous period exceeding 6 weeks.

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*Status: Point in time view as at 02/12/1999. This version of this provision has been superseded.*

*Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 16. (See end of Document for details)*

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- (6) The First Minister or the deputy First Minister—
- (a) may at any time resign by notice in writing to the Presiding Officer; and
  - (b) shall cease to hold office if he ceases to be a member of the Assembly otherwise than by virtue of a dissolution.
- (7) If either the First Minister or the deputy First Minister ceases to hold office at any time, whether by resignation or otherwise, the other—
- (a) shall also cease to hold office at that time; but
  - (b) may continue to exercise the functions of his office until the election required by subsection (8).
- (8) Where the offices of the First Minister and the deputy First Minister become vacant at any time an election shall be held under this section to fill the vacancies within a period of six weeks beginning with that time.
- (9) Standing orders may make provision with respect to the holding of elections under this section.
- (10) In this Act “the pledge of office” means the pledge of office which, together with the code of conduct to which it refers, is set out in Annex A to Strand One of the Belfast Agreement (the text of which Annex is reproduced in Schedule 4).

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**Modifications etc. (not altering text)**

- C1** S. 16 amended (12.2.2000 with application when a restoration order is made) by 2000 c. 1, s. 3; S.I. 2000/396, art. 2
- C2** S. 16(5) excluded (12.2.2000) by 2000 c. 1, s. 1(8), Sch. para. 6; S.I. 2000/396, art. 2

**Status:**

Point in time view as at 02/12/1999. This version of this provision has been superseded.

**Changes to legislation:**

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 16.