
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2020 No. 1143

**The Marriage and Civil Partnership
(Northern Ireland) (No. 2) Regulations 2020**

PART 3

Civil Partnership and Marriage: Conversion from one into the other

Interpretation

5. In this Part—

“a conversion under this Part” means a conversion, pursuant to regulation 3(1)(a) or (3)(a), of—

- (a) a civil partnership into a marriage, or
- (b) a marriage into a civil partnership;

“conversion before an officiant” means a conversion under this Part which—

- (a) is from a civil partnership into a marriage, and
- (b) follows—
 - (i) the version of the two-stage procedure offered by regulation 7(6)(a) and (c)(iii),
 - (ii) the version of the special procedure offered by regulation 7(8)(a) and (b)(ii), or
 - (iii) the version of the procedure for detained persons offered by regulation 7(10)(a) and (b)(ii);

“conversion declaration” has the meaning given by regulation 10;

“hospital” means—

- (a) a hospital, or institution, managed by a Health and Social Care trust or the Regional Health and Social Care Board or the Department of Health in Northern Ireland,
- (b) a private hospital, or
- (c) special accommodation;

“officiant” means—

- (a) a person registered under Article 11 of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003(1) for marriages of parties who are of the same sex,
- (b) a person authorised under Article 14(1)(a) of that Order (as modified by regulation 15) to officiate at one or more specified conversions under this Part, or
- (c) a person authorised under Article 14(1)(b) of that Order for marriages of parties who are of the same sex;

“patient”, “private hospital” and “special accommodation” have the meaning given by Article 2(2) of the Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986(2);

“prison” includes a remand centre, a young offenders centre and a juvenile justice centre;

“registrar”—

- (a) in relation to a conversion under this Part of a civil partnership into a marriage, means a person appointed under Article 31 of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 for the district in which the conversion takes place, and
- (b) in relation to a conversion under this Part of a marriage into a civil partnership, means a person appointed under section 152 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 for the district in which the conversion takes place;

“the required information and evidence”, in relation to a conversion under this Part, has the meaning given by whichever of regulations 8 and 9 is applicable;

“responsible authority”, in relation to a conversion under this Part which follows the procedure for detained persons, means—

- (a) if any part of the procedure is to take place in a prison, the governor or other officer in charge of the prison,
- (b) if any part of the procedure is to take place in a hospital that is neither a private hospital nor special accommodation, the trust or other authority managing the hospital,
- (c) if any part of the procedure is to take place in special accommodation, the Department of Health, and
- (d) if any part of the procedure is to take place in a private hospital, the person in charge of the hospital;

“standard procedure”, “two-stage procedure”, “special procedure” and “procedure for detained persons”, and “first part” and “second part” in relation to any of those procedures, have the meaning given by regulation 7.

Period of 3 years during which conversions may take place

6. A conversion under this Part is effective only if the signing of the conversion declaration as mentioned in regulation 10(6)(a) and (b), or regulation 10(7)(a) and (b), takes place before the end of the 3 years beginning with the day these Regulations come into force.

Conversion procedure

7.—(1) A conversion under this Part must follow one of the procedures described in this regulation.

(2) Each procedure has two parts.

(3) The first part is—

- (a) the provision of the required information and evidence to a registrar, and
- (b) where the signing of the conversion declaration is to take place after the year beginning with the day these Regulations come into force, the payment of the fee prescribed under regulation 17(1)(a).

(4) The second part is the signing of the conversion declaration.

(2) [S.I. 1986/595 \(N.I. 4\)](#). In Article 2(2) there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations. Article 90(2) (which defines “private hospital”) was amended by [S.I. 1994/429 \(N.I. 2\)](#) and paragraph 1(1)(d) of Schedule 6 to the [Health and Social Care \(Reform\) Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2009 \(c. 1 \(N.I.\)\)](#).

(5) Under the standard procedure, the couple attend together before a registrar at a registrar's office and both parts of the procedure take place there on that occasion.

(6) Under the two-stage procedure—

- (a) the couple attend together before a registrar at a registrar's office, and the first part of the procedure takes place there on that occasion,
- (b) the second part of the procedure is to take place on the date specified under regulation 8(3)(a) or 9(3), which must be in the year beginning with the date of the first part of the procedure, and
- (c) the second part of the procedure takes place when, on that specified date, the couple attend together—
 - (i) before a registrar at a registrar's office,
 - (ii) before a registrar at an approved place,
 - (iii) before an officiant at a place in Northern Ireland, except that this third option is available only if the conversion is from a civil partnership into a marriage, or
 - (iv) before a registrar at a place specified in a direction given by the Registrar General.

(7) The special procedure is for use where—

- (a) by reason of serious illness or serious bodily injury, a party ought not to move or be moved from the place where that party is, and
- (b) the signing of the conversion declaration is, with the approval of the Registrar General, to take place at the place where that party is,

but the procedure may not be used where that party (“the immovable party”) is detained in a prison or as a patient in a hospital.

(8) Under the special procedure—

- (a) the first part of the procedure takes place when—
 - (i) a party attends before a registrar at a registrar's office, or
 - (ii) a registrar attends the couple together at the place where the immovable party is, and
- (b) the second part of the procedure takes place later the same day, or on a later day, when—
 - (i) a registrar attends the couple together at the place where the immovable party is, or
 - (ii) an officiant attends the couple together at the place where the immovable party is, except that this second option is available only if the conversion is from a civil partnership into a marriage.

(9) The procedure for detained persons is for use where—

- (a) a party is detained in a prison or as a patient in a hospital, and
- (b) the signing of the conversion declaration is to take place in the prison or hospital.

(10) Under the procedure for detained persons—

- (a) the first part of the procedure take place when—
 - (i) a party attends before a registrar at a registrar's office, or
 - (ii) a registrar attends the couple together at the prison or hospital, and
- (b) the second part of the procedure takes place later the same day, or on a later day, when—
 - (i) a registrar attends the couple together at the prison or hospital, or
 - (ii) an officiant attends the couple together at the prison or hospital, except that this second option is available only if the conversion is from a civil partnership into a marriage.

(11) Where the signing of the conversion declaration takes place before a registrar, no religious service is to be used while the registrar is officiating at the signing.

(12) In paragraph (6)(c)(ii) “approved place”—

- (a) in relation to a conversion under this Part of a civil partnership into a marriage, means a place approved under Article 18(2) of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, and
- (b) in relation to a conversion under this Part of a marriage into a civil partnership, means a place approved under section 144(3) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

Required information and evidence: conversion of a civil partnership into a marriage

8.—(1) The following are the required information and evidence for a conversion under this Part of a civil partnership into a marriage.

(2) A document issued under section 155(3)(b) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 relating to the registration of the civil partnership.

(3) Except where the standard procedure is to be followed—

- (a) the place where, and date when, the conversion declaration is to be signed, and
- (b) if the conversion is to be a conversion before an officiant—
 - (i) that person’s name, address and denomination, and
 - (ii) that person’s signature to indicate that they are willing to officiate at the signing of the conversion declaration.

(4) For each party—

- (a) current forenames and surname,
- (b) any former forenames and former surnames,
- (c) present or last occupation,
- (d) whether or not retired,
- (e) date of birth,
- (f) their sex,
- (g) address and postcode of usual residence, and
- (h) passport or other documents to prove identity.

(5) For each parent of each party—

- (a) current forenames and surname,
- (b) any former forenames and former surnames,
- (c) present or last occupation,
- (d) whether or not retired, and
- (e) whether or not living.

(6) If the conversion is to follow the special procedure, a statement in the form set out in Schedule 6 to the Marriage Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003(3)—

- (a) either omitting or ignoring the reference to Article 18(6) of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, and
- (b) modified, where the statement is made in the last 3 months of the 3-year period fixed by regulation 6, to refer to the remainder of that 3-year period instead of the 3 months following the date of the statement.

- (7) If the conversion is to follow the procedure for detained persons, a statement made—
- (a) by or on behalf of the responsible authority,
 - (b) not more than 21 days before the date on which the required information and evidence is provided to a registrar, and
 - (c) in the form set out in Schedule 11 to the Marriage Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003, either omitting or ignoring—
 - (i) the reference to Article 29 of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, and
 - (ii) the sentence about the statement having to be made not more than 21 days before the date on which the marriage notice is given.
- (8) Where it appears to a registrar that a party is unable to provide certain of the information required by paragraphs (4)(a) to (g) and (5), a registrar may issue a conversion declaration—
- (a) without having been provided with that information, and
 - (b) without including that information in the declaration (so far as it is information which would otherwise have to be included),
- if it is reasonable to do so.

Required information and evidence: conversion of a marriage into a civil partnership

9.—(1) The following are the required information and evidence for a conversion under this Part of a marriage into a civil partnership.

(2) A document issued under Article 35(3)(b) of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 relating to the registration of the marriage.

(3) Except where the standard procedure is to be followed, the place where, and date when, the conversion declaration is to be signed.

- (4) For each party—
- (a) current forenames and surname,
 - (b) any former forenames and former surnames,
 - (c) present or last occupation,
 - (d) whether or not retired,
 - (e) date of birth,
 - (f) their sex,
 - (g) address and postcode of usual residence, and
 - (h) passport or other documents to prove identity.
- (5) For each parent of each party—
- (a) current forenames and surname,
 - (b) any former forenames and former surnames,
 - (c) present or last occupation,
 - (d) whether or not retired, and
 - (e) whether or not living.

(6) If the conversion is to follow the special procedure, a certificate in the form set out in Schedule 4 to the Civil Partnership Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005(4)—

- (a) either omitting or ignoring the reference to section 144(6) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004, and
 - (b) modified, where the statement is made in the last 3 months of the 3-year period fixed by regulation 6, to refer to the remainder of that 3-year period instead of the 3 months following the date of the statement.
- (7) If the conversion is to follow the procedure for detained persons, a statement made—
- (a) by or on behalf of the responsible authority,
 - (b) not more than 21 days before the date on which the required information and evidence is provided to a registrar, and
 - (c) in the form set out in Schedule 7 to those Regulations, either omitting or ignoring—
 - (i) the reference to section 149 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004, and
 - (ii) the sentence about the statement having to be made not more than 21 days before the date on which the civil partnership notice is given.
- (8) Where it appears to a registrar that a party is unable to provide certain of the information required by paragraphs (4)(a) to (g) and (5), a registrar may issue a conversion declaration—
- (a) without having been provided with that information, and
 - (b) without including that information in the declaration (so far as it is information which would otherwise have to be included),
- if it is reasonable to do so.

Conversion declarations and their signing

- 10.**—(1) This regulation applies in relation to a conversion under this Part.
- (2) The conversion declaration is a document containing—
- (a) the following information (subject to regulations 8(8) and 9(8))—
 - (i) the date and place of the signing of the declaration,
 - (ii) if the conversion is a conversion before an officiant, that person’s name,
 - (iii) the forenames, surname, status (which is to be “civil partner” if the conversion is from a civil partnership into a marriage, and is to be “married” if the conversion is from a marriage into a civil partnership), date of birth, country of birth and usual address of each party,
 - (iv) the full names, and maiden surname (if any) and occupation, of each parent of each party, and
 - (v) the date when, and place where, the couple’s civil partnership was registered or (as the case may be) their marriage was solemnised,
 - (b) if the conversion is from a civil partnership into a marriage, a declaration by each party in the following terms: “I solemnly and sincerely declare that we are in a civil partnership with each other and I know of no legal reason why we may not convert our civil partnership into a marriage. I understand that on signing this document we will be converting our civil partnership into a marriage and you will become my lawful wife [*or husband*].”,
 - (c) if the conversion is from a marriage into a civil partnership, a declaration by each party in the following terms: “I solemnly and sincerely declare that we are married to each other and I know of no legal reason why we may not convert our marriage into a civil partnership. I understand that on signing this document we will be converting our marriage into a civil partnership and you will become my lawful civil partner.”, and

- (d) a declaration by each party that the party believes that all the information and evidence provided for the purposes of the conversion is true.
- (3) If the conversion is a conversion before an officiant—
 - (a) the conversion declaration is to be prepared by a registrar, and issued at a registrar’s office to a party within a period of 14 days before the date of signing,
 - (b) the signing of the declaration may take place only on the date, before the officiant and at the place specified in the declaration, subject to sub-paragraphs (c) to (e),
 - (c) sub-paragraph (b) does not impose any obligation on an officiant to officiate at the signing,
 - (d) if for any reason the declaration cannot be signed at the place specified in it, a registrar may substitute, or direct the officiant to substitute, the new place in the declaration, and
 - (e) if, because of the sudden death, sudden illness or unavoidable delay of the officiant specified in the declaration, that officiant cannot officiate at the signing then another officiant may officiate but, where that happens, that other officiant must in the declaration substitute their own name.
- (4) Before the conversion declaration is signed by the couple, the person officiating must confirm with the couple that the information contained in the declaration is complete and correct and, if it is not, amend it as necessary.
- (5) Any amendment of the information on the conversion declaration must be initialled by the party to whom that information relates and by the person officiating.
- (6) If the conversion is from a civil partnership into a marriage, the couple are (subject to regulation 11(7)) to be regarded as having converted their civil partnership into a marriage when, having followed one of the procedures described in regulation 7—
 - (a) at the invitation of the person officiating, and in the presence of that person and of each other, each of them has signed the conversion declaration, and
 - (b) the person officiating has signed the conversion declaration in the presence of the couple.
- (7) If the conversion is from a marriage into a civil partnership, the couple are to be regarded as having converted their marriage into a civil partnership when, having followed one of the procedures described in regulation 7—
 - (a) at the invitation of the person officiating, and in the presence of that person and of each other, each of them has signed the conversion declaration, and
 - (b) the person officiating has signed the conversion declaration in the presence of the couple.
- (8) As well as signing the conversion declaration as mentioned in paragraph (6)(a) or (7)(a), the couple may, if they wish, say the words of the declaration in paragraph (2)(b) or (c) to each other in the presence of the person officiating.
- (9) Where either party signs the conversion declaration by making a mark, the person officiating must enter against the mark the words “The mark of” together with the forenames and surname of the party.
- (10) If the person officiating considers it necessary or desirable, the person officiating may use the services of an interpreter (not being a party) at the signing of the conversion declaration.
- (11) If the person officiating uses the services of an interpreter at the signing of the conversion declaration, the interpreter—
 - (a) before acting, must sign a statement that the interpreter understands, and is able to converse in, the languages to be interpreted, and
 - (b) immediately after acting, must give to the person officiating a document signed by the interpreter, and written in English, certifying that the interpreter has faithfully interpreted at the signing of the conversion declaration.

- (12) In this regulation “the person officiating”—
- (a) in the case of a conversion before an officiant, means the officiant specified in the conversion declaration or, where another officiant deputises pursuant to paragraph (3)(e), that other officiant, and
 - (b) in the case of any other conversion under this Part, means a registrar.

Conversion before an officiant: returning the signed declaration

- 11.—(1) This regulation applies in relation to a conversion before an officiant.
- (2) The couple must arrange for the conversion declaration, signed in accordance with regulation 10, to be delivered to a registrar within 3 days of its being signed.
- (3) Subject to paragraph (4), a registrar may not register the marriage resulting from the conversion if the registrar does not receive the signed conversion declaration.
- (4) The Registrar General may, if satisfied that the conversion declaration was signed in accordance with regulation 10(6) but has been lost or destroyed or damaged, direct a registrar to—
- (a) make arrangements for each party, and the person officiating (as defined in regulation 10(12)), to sign a copy of the declaration originally signed, and
 - (b) register the marriage resulting from the conversion.
- (5) Where the conversion declaration has not been received by a registrar before the expiry of 21 days from the date of signing entered on the declaration, a registrar may serve a notice on either party requiring that party to arrange for the declaration to be delivered to a registrar within 8 days from the date of service of the notice.
- (6) If the party on whom a notice has been served under paragraph (5) fails to comply with the notice, a registrar may serve on that party a second notice requiring that party to attend personally at a registrar’s office, within 8 days from the date of service of the second notice, for the purpose of delivering the conversion declaration to a registrar.
- (7) Where a party fails to attend as required by a notice under paragraph (6), and the signed conversion declaration has not been delivered to a registrar before the end of the time allowed under that paragraph for that attendance, the couple’s civil partnership is to be treated (at all times after the signing) as not having ended and not having been converted into a marriage.
- (8) Paragraph (7) does not apply if—
- (a) the Registrar General for Northern Ireland considers that there is a reasonable excuse for the failure, and
 - (b) the signed conversion declaration is delivered to a registrar or a direction is given under paragraph (4).
- (9) Section 24(1) and (2)(a) to (c) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954(5) (modes of service on individuals, and effect of service by post) apply for the purposes of paragraphs (5) and (6) as they apply for the purposes of an enactment as defined by section 1 of that Act.

Duty to register a marriage, or record a civil partnership, resulting from a conversion

- 12.—(1) Where a civil partnership is converted under this Part into a marriage—

(5) 1954 c. 33 (N.I.). The reference to registered post in section 24(1) includes the recorded delivery service: see the [Recorded Delivery Service Act \(Northern Ireland\) 1963 \(c. 5 \(N.I.\)\)](#). The meaning of “registered post” and “recorded delivery service” are modified by Part 1 of Schedule 8 to the [Postal Services Act 2000 \(c. 26\)](#): that Part extends to Northern Ireland and applies to the 1954 and 1963 Acts (see section 131 of the 2000 Act, and the definition of “enactment” in section 125(1) of the 2000 Act). In section 1 of the 1954 Act, the definition of “enactment” is affected by the amendment of section 1(a) by [S.I. 1999/663](#).

- (a) if the conversion is a conversion before an officiant, a registrar must register the marriage as soon as practicable after a registrar receives the signed conversion declaration;
- (b) in any other case, the registrar who signed the conversion declaration in accordance with regulation 10 must cause the marriage to be registered as soon as practicable after the signing.

(2) Where a marriage is converted under this Part into a civil partnership, the registrar who signed the conversion declaration in accordance with regulation 10 must cause the civil partnership to be recorded as soon as practicable after the signing.

Conversions to be noted on records and mentioned on certificates and extracts

13.—(1) As soon as practicable after—

- (a) a marriage resulting from a conversion under this Part is registered, or
- (b) the Registrar General is notified of a conversion under Part 3 or 4 of the 2014 Regulations (conversions abroad at British consular premises or where at least one party has an armed-forces connection),

the Registrar General must ensure that the record of the registration of the civil partnership that has been converted is annotated with the date and place of the conversion.

(2) After—

- (a) a marriage resulting from a conversion under this Part is registered, or
- (b) the Registrar General is notified of a conversion under Part 3 or 4 of the 2014 Regulations,

neither the Registrar General, nor a person appointed under section 152 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (registrars), may issue a document under section 155(3)(b) or 156(1) of that Act (certificates and extracts) relating to the civil partnership that has been converted unless the document includes the annotation under paragraph (1).

(3) As soon as practicable after—

- (a) a civil partnership resulting from a conversion under this Part is recorded, or
- (b) the Registrar General is notified of a conversion under Part 4 or 5,

the Registrar General must ensure that the record of the registration of the marriage that has been converted is annotated with the date and place of the conversion.

(4) After—

- (a) a civil partnership resulting from a conversion under this Part is recorded, or
- (b) the Registrar General is notified of a conversion under Part 4 or 5,

neither the Registrar General, nor a person appointed under Article 31 of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (registrars), may issue a document under Article 35(3)(b) or 36(1) of that Order (certificates and extracts) relating to the marriage that has been converted unless the document includes the annotation under paragraph (3).

Verification of information and evidence

14.—(1) A registrar may obtain, from a person mentioned in paragraph (2) and for a purpose mentioned in paragraph (3), information relating to persons seeking a conversion under this Part.

(2) The persons from whom information may be obtained are—

- (a) a person appointed under Article 31 of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, or under section 152 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004, for any district in Northern Ireland;
- (b) the Registrar General.

- (3) The purposes for which information may be obtained are—
- (a) in the case of a conversion from a civil partnership into a marriage—
 - (i) to verify the formation and existence of the civil partnership;
 - (ii) to verify any of the information and evidence provided by the civil partners;
 - (b) in the case of a conversion from a marriage into a civil partnership—
 - (i) to verify the formation and existence of the marriage;
 - (ii) to verify any of the information and evidence provided by the spouses.
- (4) A registrar may interview each of the persons seeking a conversion under this Part individually.
- (5) Nothing in this regulation limits any other power under which information may be disclosed or obtained.

Modifications of Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and Civil Partnership Act 2004

15.—(1) The Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003⁽⁶⁾ has effect with the following modifications—

- (a) the reference in Article 12(3) to not solemnising a marriage is to be read (except for the purposes of Article 38(2)(d)) as if it included a reference to not officiating at a relevant conversion;
 - (b) the reference in Article 14(1)(a) to solemnising one or more specified marriages is to be read as if it included a reference to officiating at one or more specified relevant conversions;
 - (c) a reference in Article 14(1A) to solemnising marriages of parties who are of the same sex is to be read as if it included a reference to officiating at relevant conversions;
 - (d) the reference in Article 17A(1)(b) to solemnising one or more particular marriages between parties of the same sex is to be read as if it included a reference to officiating at one or more particular relevant conversions;
 - (e) a reference in the Order (as modified by paragraphs (a) to (d)) to officiating at a relevant conversion is to be read as a reference to officiating at the signing of the conversion declaration in a conversion before an officiant;
 - (f) the reference to the Order in Article 26(1) is to be read as if it included a reference to this Part and, in relation to a marriage resulting from the conversion of a convertible Northern Ireland civil partnership, Parts 3 and 4 of the 2014 Regulations;
 - (g) the reference in Article 26(3) to both parties having been present at the marriage ceremony is to be read in the case of a marriage resulting from a conversion under this Part, or in the case of a marriage resulting from a conversion under Part 3 or 4 of the 2014 Regulations of a convertible Northern Ireland civil partnership, to both parties having been present at the signing of the conversion declaration;
 - (h) the reference in Article 27(2) to a void marriage is to be read as if it included a marriage resulting from a purported conversion under this Part, or a purported conversion under Part 3 or 4 of the 2014 Regulations of a convertible Northern Ireland civil partnership, that has been found by a court to be ineffective;
 - (i) the reference to the Order in Article 31(3) is to be read as if it included a reference to this Part.
- (2) The Civil Partnership Act 2004 has effect with the following modifications—

⁽⁶⁾ Article 14 was amended, and Article 17A was inserted, by [S.I. 2020/742](#).

- (a) the reference to the Act in section 146(2) is to be read as if it included a reference to this Part and Parts 4 and 5;
- (b) the reference in section 147(2) to a void civil partnership is to be read as if it included a civil partnership resulting from a purported conversion under this Part, or Part 4 or 5, that has been found by a court to be ineffective;
- (c) the reference to Part 4 of the Act in section 152(3) is to be read as if it included a reference to this Part.

Conversions: protection from compulsion

16.—(1) A religious body, or a person acting on behalf of or under the auspices of a religious body, may not be compelled—

- (a) to allow religious premises to be used as the place at which any part of a conversion before an officiant takes place,
- (b) to officiate at any part of a conversion before an officiant, or
- (c) to facilitate, arrange, participate in or be present at any part of a conversion before an officiant,

where the reason for not doing that thing is that the body or person does not want to do things of that sort in relation to any conversion before an officiant.

(2) A religious body, or a person acting on behalf of or under the auspices of a religious body, may not be compelled—

- (a) to allow religious premises to be used as the place at which a ceremony or event is held to mark—
 - (i) a conversion under—
 - (aa) this Part or Part 4 or 5, or
 - (bb) Part 2, 3 or 4 of the 2014 Regulations(7), or
 - (ii) a change under—
 - (aa) the Marriage Between Civil Partners (Procedure for Change and Fees) (Scotland) Regulations 2014(8), or
 - (bb) Part 5 of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 and Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2014(9), or

- (b) to provide, facilitate, arrange, participate in or be present at such a ceremony or event,

where the reason for not doing that thing is that the body or person does not want to do things of that sort in relation to conversions and changes generally, in relation to conversions and changes from civil partnerships into marriages or in relation to conversions and changes from marriages into civil partnerships.

(3) In this regulation—

“compelled” means compelled by any means (including by the enforcement of a contract or a statutory or other legal requirement);

(7) Part 2 of the 2014 Regulations was amended by [S.I. 2016/911](#). Parts 3 and 4 of the 2014 Regulations are extended to Northern Ireland, and amended, by regulation 31 of these Regulations.

(8) [S.S.I. 2014/361](#).

(9) [S.I. 2014/3229](#).

“person acting on behalf of or under the auspices of a religious body” includes any person registered under Article 11, or temporarily authorised under Article 14, of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003(10);

“religious body” means an organised group of people meeting regularly for common religious worship;

“religious premises” means premises which—

- (a) are owned, or controlled, by a religious body or a person acting on behalf of or under the auspices of a religious body, and
- (b) are not premises where the sole or main purpose for which they are used is commercial.

Fees and charges

17.—(1) The Department of Finance in Northern Ireland may by order make regulations prescribing—

- (a) the amount of the fee payable under regulation 7(3);
- (b) fees for attendance by a registrar at a registrar’s office for the purpose of officiating at the signing of the conversion declaration in a conversion under this Part—
 - (i) on Saturdays or Sundays, or days that are bank holidays in Northern Ireland under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971(11), or
 - (ii) after 5 p.m. on other days.

(2) Section 17(2), (3) and (5) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954 (implied power to amend or revoke, incidental power and power to make differential provision) apply in relation to power under paragraph (1) as if it were power conferred by an Act of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

(3) Orders under paragraph (1) are statutory rules for the purposes of the Statutory Rules (Northern Ireland) Order 1979(12).

(4) An order under paragraph (1) may only be made if a draft has been laid before and approved by a resolution of the Northern Ireland Assembly.

(5) If a statutory rule contains only an order under paragraph (1)(a), and the regulations made by the order prescribe for the fee payable under regulation 7(3) an amount that is not more than £30 or revoke regulations made by a previous order under paragraph (1)(a) (or do both)—

- (a) paragraph (4) does not apply to the order;
- (b) the order is subject to negative resolution within the meaning of section 41(6) of the Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954(13).

(6) The fees in force under the Schedule to the General Register Office (Fees) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016(14) for attendance by the registrar at the registrar’s office at times on Monday to Friday after 5 p.m., or at times at weekends or on bank holidays, for the purpose of solemnising a civil marriage apply also for attendance by a registrar at a registrar’s office at corresponding times for the purpose of officiating at the signing of the conversion declaration in a conversion under this Part.

(7) Paragraphs (1)(b) and (6) apply even where the attendance is in the year beginning with the day these Regulations come into force; and a fee under paragraph (1)(b) for attendance at a particular time is payable in place of any fee payable by virtue of paragraph (6) for attendance at that time.

(10) Articles 11 and 14 were amended by S.I. 2020/742, and Article 14 is modified by regulation 15 of these Regulations.

(11) 1971 c. 80. See section 1, which was amended by the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973 (c. 36).

(12) S.I. 1979/1573 (N.I. 12).

(13) Section 41(6) was amended by S.I. 1999/663.

(14) S.R. 2016/205. The footnotes to the Schedule were amended by S.I. 2019/1514. The fees for out-of-hours attendance are currently £126 (weekday evenings and Saturday daytime) and £180 (Saturday evenings, and Sundays and bank holidays).

(8) In relation to a conversion under this Part of a civil partnership into a marriage following the version of the two-stage procedure offered by regulation 7(6)(a) and (c)(ii), regulation 27 of the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2003(15) (charge for attendance by registrar at approved places) has effect with the following modifications—

- (a) the reference to an intended civil marriage is to be read as a reference to the intended conversion, and
- (b) the reference to the solemnisation of the marriage is to be read as a reference to the date specified under regulation 8(3)(a).

(9) In relation to a conversion under this Part of a marriage into a civil partnership following the version of the two-stage procedure offered by regulation 7(6)(a) and (c)(ii), regulation 19 of the Civil Partnership Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005(16) (charge for attendance by registrar at approved places) has effect with the following modifications—

- (a) the reference to an intended civil partnership registration is to be read as a reference to the intended conversion, and
- (b) the reference to the registration of the civil partnership is to be read as a reference to the date specified under regulation 9(3).

(10) Paragraph (8) or (9) applies even where the date mentioned in sub-paragraph (b) of that paragraph is in the year beginning with the day these Regulations come into force.

Agreements to convert not enforceable at law

18.—(1) A conversion agreement does not have effect as a contract giving rise to legal rights.

(2) No action lies for breach of a conversion agreement, whatever the law applicable to the agreement.

(3) In this regulation “conversion agreement” means an agreement between two people—

- (a) to convert their civil partnership into a marriage, or to convert their marriage into a civil partnership, under—
 - (i) this Part or Part 4 or 5, or
 - (ii) Part 2, 3 or 4 of the 2014 Regulations, or
- (b) to change their civil partnership into a marriage under—
 - (i) the Marriage Between Civil Partners (Procedure for Change and Fees) (Scotland) Regulations 2014, or
 - (ii) Part 5 of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Act 2014 and Civil Partnership Act 2004 (Consequential Provisions and Modifications) Order 2014.

(4) This regulation does not affect any action commenced before it comes into force.

(15) S.I. 2003/468. Regulation 27 was amended by S.R. 2014/296.

(16) S.I. 2005/482. Regulation 19 was amended by S.R. 2014/297.