

*These notes refer to the Adoption and Children Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (c.18) which received Royal Assent on 27 April 2022*

# Adoption and Children Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

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## EXPLANATORY NOTES

### COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

#### **Part 1 - Adoption**

#### *Chapter 3 - Placement for Adoption and Adoption Orders*

#### *Section 24: Contact: supplementary*

Section 24 makes supplemental provision in relation to contact. *Subsection (1)* provides that an order under section 23 has effect while the adoption agency is authorised to place the child for adoption or while the child is placed for adoption. Only the child, the adoption agency or a person named in the order may apply to the court for the order to be varied or revoked.

There may be cases where it is inappropriate for contact to take place even though provided for under an order. *Subsection (2)* enables the adoption agency to refuse contact for a period of not more than 7 days if it is satisfied that it is appropriate to do so in order to safeguard the child's welfare. Regulations may set out the steps to be taken by an adoption agency which has exercised its power under subsection (2), the circumstances in which the terms of any order made under section 23 may be departed from, and the notification by an adoption agency of any variation or suspension of arrangements made with a view to allowing any person contact with the child (*subsection (3)*).

*Subsection (4)* imposes a duty on the court when making a placement order to consider the arrangements the agency has made or proposes to make in relation to contact and under *subsection (5)* the court may impose any conditions on a contact order made under section 23 as it thinks appropriate.