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SCOTTISH STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2010 No. 416**

**Act of Sederunt (Sheriff Court Rules)  
(Miscellaneous Amendments) (No. 2) 2010**

**Lay support for party litigants**

- 2.—(1) The Ordinary Cause Rules are amended in accordance with the following subparagraph.  
(2) After rule 1.3 (representation)(1) insert—

**“Lay support**

**1.3A.**—(1) At any time during proceedings the sheriff may, on the request of a party litigant, permit a named individual to assist the litigant in the conduct of the proceedings by sitting beside or behind (as the litigant chooses) the litigant at hearings in court or in chambers and doing such of the following for the litigant as he or she requires—

- (a) providing moral support;
- (b) helping to manage the court documents and other papers;
- (c) taking notes of the proceedings;
- (d) quietly advising on—
  - (i) points of law and procedure;
  - (ii) issues which the litigant might wish to raise with the sheriff;
  - (iii) questions which the litigant might wish to ask witnesses.

(2) It is a condition of such permission that the named individual does not receive from the litigant, whether directly or indirectly, any remuneration for his or her assistance.

(3) The sheriff may refuse a request under paragraph (1) only if—

- (a) the sheriff is of the opinion that the named individual is an unsuitable person to act in that capacity (whether generally or in the proceedings concerned); or
- (b) the sheriff is of the opinion that it would be contrary to the efficient administration of justice to grant it.

(4) Permission granted under paragraph (1) endures until the proceedings finish or it is withdrawn under paragraph (5); but it is not effective during any period when the litigant is represented.

(5) The sheriff may, of his or her own accord or on the motion of a party to the proceedings, withdraw permission granted under paragraph (1); but the sheriff must first be of the opinion that it would be contrary to the efficient administration of justice for the permission to continue.

(6) Where permission has been granted under paragraph (1), the litigant may—

- (a) show the named individual any document (including a court document); or
- (b) impart to the named individual any information,

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which is in his or her possession in connection with the proceedings without being taken to contravene any prohibition or restriction on the disclosure of the document or the information; but the named individual is then to be taken to be subject to any such prohibition or restriction as if he or she were the litigant.

(7) Any expenses incurred by the litigant as a result of the support of an individual under paragraph (1) are not recoverable expenses in the proceedings.”.