



Magistrates' Courts Act 1980

1980 CHAPTER 43

PART VII

MISCELLANEOUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY

Rules

144 Rule committee and rules of procedure.

- (1) The Lord Chancellor may appoint a rule committee for magistrates' courts, and may on the advice of or after consultation with the rule committee make rules for regulating and prescribing the procedure and practice to be followed in magistrates' courts and by justices' clerks.
- (2) The rule committee shall consist of the Lord Chief Justice, the President of the Family Division of the High Court, the chief metropolitan stipendiary magistrate and such number of other persons appointed by the Lord Chancellor as he may determine.
- (3) Among the members of the committee appointed by the Lord Chancellor there shall be at least
 - [^{F1}(a) one justices' clerk;
 - (b) one person who has a Supreme Court qualification (within the meaning of section 71 of the Courts and Legal Services Act 1990); and
 - (c) one person who has been granted by an authorised body, under Part II of that Act, the right to conduct litigation in relation to all proceedings in the Supreme Court.]
- (4) The power to make rules conferred by this section shall be exercisable by statutory instrument which shall be subject to annulment by resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (5) In this section the expression "justices' clerk" means a clerk to the justices for a petty sessions area.

Status: Point in time view as at 01/07/1991. This version of this cross heading contains provisions that are not valid for this point in time.

Changes to legislation: Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, Cross Heading: Rules is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 05 July 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 144(3)(a)(b)(c) substituted for words from “one justice's clerk” to the end by [Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 \(c. 41, SIF 37, 82\)](#), s. 125(3), [Sch. 18 para. 25\(7\)\(a\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 144 extended by [Criminal Law Act 1977 \(c. 45, SIF 39:1\)](#), s. 48 (as amended by [Magistrates' Courts Act 1980 \(c. 43, SIF 82\)](#), s. 154(1), [Sch. 7 para. 151](#))
- C2** S. 144 extended by [Criminal Justice Act 1988 \(c. 33, SIF 39:1\)](#), ss. 28, 123(6), Sch. 2 para. 4(c), [Sch. 8 para. 16](#)
- C3** S. 144 extended (1.7.1991) by [Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 \(c. 41, SIF 82\)](#), s. 10(2); S.I. 1991/1364, [art. 2](#), Sch.
- C4** S. 144 extended by [Extradition Act 1989 \(c. 33, SIF 48\)](#), ss. 1(3), 7(3), 14(2), [Sch. 1 para. 9\(2\)](#)
- C5** S. 144 extended (prosp.) by [Criminal Justice Act 1988 \(c. 33, SIF 39:1\)](#), [ss. 29\(5\)\(c\)](#), 171(1) (with s. 123(6), [Sch. 8 para. 16](#)) (which s. 29 was repealed (10.6.1991) by [Criminal Justice \(International Co-operation\) Act 1990 \(c. 5\)](#), s. 31(3), [Sch. 5](#)); S.I. 1991/1072, [art. 2\(a\)](#), Part I, Appendix B)

VALID FROM 03/04/2006

[^{F2}144A Rules to be made if required by Lord Chancellor

- (1) This section applies if the Lord Chancellor gives the Lord Chief Justice written notice that he thinks it is expedient for rules made under section 144 to include provision that would achieve a purpose specified in the notice.
- (2) The Lord Chief Justice must make such rules as he considers necessary to achieve the specified purpose.
- (3) Those rules must be—
 - (a) made within a reasonable period after the Lord Chancellor gives notice to the Lord Chief Justice;
 - (b) made in accordance with section 144.
- (4) The Lord Chief Justice may nominate a judicial office holder (as defined in section 109(4) of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005) to exercise his functions under this section.]

Textual Amendments

- F2** S. 144A inserted (3.4.2006) by [Constitutional Reform Act 2005 \(c. 4\)](#), ss. 15, 148, [Sch. 4 para. 103](#) ; S.I. 2006/1014, [art. 2\(a\)](#)

145 Rules: supplementary provisions.

- (1) The power to make rules conferred by section 144 above shall, without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) of that section, include power to make provision—
 - (a) as to the practice and procedure of justices in exercising functions preliminary or incidental to proceedings before a magistrates' court;

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- (b) as to the service and execution of process issued by or for the purposes of a magistrates' court, including the service and execution in England and Wales of process issued in other parts of the United Kingdom;
 - (c) as to the keeping of records of proceedings before magistrates' courts and the manner in which things done in the course of, or as preliminary or incidental to, any such proceedings, or any proceedings on appeal from a magistrates' court to the Crown Court, may be proved in any legal proceedings;
 - (d) as to the extent to which a justices' clerk may engage in practice as a [^{F3}legal representative];
 - (e) as to the functions of officers of the Crown Court for the purposes of securing the attendance at a trial on indictment of persons in respect of whom conditional witness orders, or orders treated as conditional witness orders, have been made under section 1 of the ^{M1}Criminal Procedure (Attendance of Witnesses) Act 1965;
 - (f) as to the furnishing by any person having custody of the depositions of copies thereof, and of copies of the information if it is in writing, to a person committed for trial;
 - (g) as to what magistrates' court shall have jurisdiction to hear any complaint;
 - (h) as to the matters additional to those specified in section 53 above on complaint for which a magistrates' court shall have power to make an order with the consent of the defendant without hearing evidence;
 - (i) as to any other matters as to which immediately before the coming into force of section 15 of the Justices of the ^{M2}Peace Act 1949 provision was or could have been made by virtue of the enactments and parts of enactments repealed by Part II of Schedule 7 to the said Act of 1949.
- (2) Where any Act expressly confers jurisdiction on any magistrates' court to hear a complaint, rules made under subsection (1)(g) above shall not take away that jurisdiction, but may extend it to any other magistrates' court.
- (3) Any Act passed before 16th December 1949, in so far as that Act relates to matters about which rules may be made under section 144 above, shall have effect subject to any rules so made and may be amended or repealed by the rules accordingly; but nothing in the said section shall authorise the rules to reduce the number of justices required for any purpose by any Act.
- (4) No provision included in rules under section 144 above which dispenses with the need to prove that a summons issued under section 1 above and served in accordance with the rules has come to the knowledge of the accused shall apply to a summons for an indictable offence.
- (5) Any rules, directions, forms or other instrument having effect immediately before this subsection comes into force as if contained in rules made under section 15 of the Justices of the ^{M3}Peace Act 1949 by virtue of section 15(8) of that Act (rules etc. which previously had effect under the enactments repealed by Part II of Schedule 7 to that Act) shall have effect as if contained in rules made under section 144 above.

Textual Amendments

F3 Words substituted by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 37), s. 125(3), Sch. 18 para. 25(4)(c)

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Marginal Citations

- M1** 1965 c. 69.
M2 1949 c. 101.
M3 1949 c. 101.

VALID FROM 01/10/1991

[^{F4}145A Rules: costs order against legal representative.

- (1) In any civil proceedings, a magistrates' court may disallow or (as the case may be) order the legal or other representative concerned to meet the whole of any wasted costs or such part of them as may be determined in accordance with rules.
- (2) In subsection (1), "wasted costs" means any costs incurred by a party—
 - (a) as a result of any improper, unreasonable or negligent act or omission on the part of any legal or other representative or any employee of such a representative; or
 - (b) which, in the light of any such act or omission occurring after they were incurred, the court considers it is unreasonable to expect that party to pay.
- (3) In this section "legal or other representative", in relation to any proceedings, means any person who is exercising a right of audience, or a right to conduct litigation, on behalf of any party to the proceedings.
- (4) Rules made by virtue of this section may, in particular, make provision as to the destination of any payment required to be made under the rules (including provision for the reimbursement of sums paid by the Legal Aid Board).
- (5) Rules made by virtue of this section—
 - (a) shall require a magistrates' court which proposes to act under the rules against a legal or other representative to allow him a reasonable opportunity to appear before it and show cause why it should not do so;
 - (b) shall provide that action may be taken under the rules either on the application of any party to the proceedings or on the motion of the court;
 - (c) shall provide that no such action shall be taken after the end of the period of six months beginning with the date on which the proceedings are disposed of by the court; and
 - (d) shall provide that a legal or other representative against whom action is taken under the rules may appeal to the Crown Court.]

Textual Amendments

- F4** S. 145A inserted (1.10.1991) by Courts and Legal Services Act 1990 (c. 41, SIF 82), s. 112; S.I. 1991/1883, art.2.

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