

*These notes refer to the Human Trafficking and Exploitation  
(Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland)  
2015 (c.2) which received Royal Assent on 13 January 2015*

# Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) Act (Northern Ireland) 2015

---

## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### **Part 4**

Sections 22 to 24 are intended to protect victims of human trafficking and slavery-like offences in criminal investigations and proceedings.

Section 22 creates a statutory defence for victims of human trafficking and slavery-like offences who have been compelled to commit certain other offences as a direct consequence of their trafficking or slavery situation. The defence will not apply in cases where the offence in question would attract a maximum sentence of five years or more, with a limited number of exceptions. Section 23 places a duty on the Chief Constable to ensure that, during an investigation of a human trafficking or slavery-like offence, the complainant receives specific treatment aimed at preventing secondary victimisation. Section 24 amends the Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 to ensure that victims of human trafficking and slavery-like offences are automatically eligible for special measures in court when giving evidence.