

*These notes refer to the Protection from Stalking Act (Northern Ireland) 2022 (c.17) which received Royal Assent on 26 April 2022*

# Protection from Stalking Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **OVERVIEW**

#### *First part – Offences*

8. This gives effect to the intention to improve the operation of the justice system by creating a specific offence of stalking that recognises the experience of victims and the behaviour associated with stalking. The Act recognises in law that stalking is often a course of behaviour which causes fear, alarm or substantial distress to the victim and includes conduct on two or more occasions.
9. The Act also includes the offence of threatening or abusive behaviour that can be made out after a single incident or a course of conduct. The offence can also be used as an alternative conviction when the facts do not amount to the offence of stalking in proceedings. The Act also provides that all victims of stalking will have automatic eligibility for assistance (such as the use of live links or screens at court) with giving evidence in proceedings.