

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

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Part 1 - Adoption

Chapter 3 - Placement for Adoption and Adoption Orders

Section 62: Counselling

Section 62 makes provision in respect of counselling for those seeking information under these sections, those considering consenting to or objecting to the disclosure of information, and those considering an agreement for the sharing of protected information under section 56(5). *Subsection (1)* provides a power to make regulations to require adoption agencies to provide information about access to counselling services and *subsection (2)* provides for regulations to require adoption agencies to make arrangements to secure the provision of counselling to those seeking information in prescribed circumstances. The intention is to make counselling available to an adopted person, if they wish to access it, where they apply to the agency for the disclosure of protected information about another person. *Subsection (3)* provides a power to make regulations to enable adoption agencies to disclose the information that is needed by the counselling agency for the purposes of providing the counselling. Where the counselling is to be provided outside the United Kingdom, the adoption agency may require the person who is to receive the counselling to pay a prescribed fee. The regulations may require an adoption authority or an appropriate voluntary organisation to provide counselling for the purposes of arrangements under subsection (2) (*subsection (4)*).