



2022 CHAPTER 18

PART 3

Miscellaneous and supplementary

*Northern Ireland Adoption and Children Act Register*

**Disclosure of information**

**148.**—(1) Information entered in the register, or compiled from information entered in the register, may only be disclosed under subsection (2), (3) or (4), section 149 or section 150.

(2) Prescribed information entered in the register may be disclosed by the Department or the registration organisation—

- (a) where an adoption agency is acting on behalf of a child who is suitable for adoption or for whom an adoption authority is considering adoption, to the agency to assist in finding prospective adopters with whom it would be appropriate for the child to be placed;
- (b) where an adoption agency is acting on behalf of prospective adopters who are suitable to adopt a child, to the agency to assist in finding a child appropriate for adoption by them.

(3) Regulations may make provision permitting the disclosure of prescribed information entered in the register, or compiled from information entered in the register—

- (a) to an adoption agency or to an English, a Welsh or a Scottish adoption agency for any prescribed purpose; or

- (b) for the purpose of enabling the information to be entered in a register which is maintained in respect of England, Wales or Scotland and which contains information about children who are suitable for adoption or prospective adopters who are suitable to adopt a child.
- (4) Prescribed information entered in the register, or compiled from information entered in the register, may be disclosed by the Department or the registration organisation to any prescribed person for use for statistical or research purposes, or for other prescribed purposes.
- (5) Regulations may prescribe the steps to be taken by adoption agencies in respect of information received by them by virtue of subsection (2) or (3).
- (6) Subsection (1) does not apply to a disclosure of information with the authority of the Department.
- (7) Information disclosed to any person under subsection (2), (3) or (4) may be given on any prescribed terms or conditions.
- (8) Regulations may, in prescribed circumstances, require a prescribed fee to be paid to the Department or the registration organisation—
- (a) by a prescribed adoption agency in respect of information disclosed under subsection (2) or (3);
  - (b) by a prescribed English, Welsh or Scottish adoption agency in respect of information disclosed under subsection (3); or
  - (c) by a person in respect of information disclosed under subsection (4).
- (9) If any information entered in the register is disclosed to a person in contravention of subsection (1), the person disclosing it is guilty of an offence.
- (10) A person guilty of an offence under subsection (9) is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months, or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale, or both.