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STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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**2005 No. 255**

**The Pensions (Northern Ireland) Order 2005**

PART VI

OCCUPATIONAL AND PERSONAL PENSION  
SCHEMES: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

*Safeguarding pension rights*

**Paternity leave and adoption leave**

**242.**—(1) In Schedule 5 to the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (NI 13) (employment-related schemes for pensions or other benefits: equal treatment), after paragraph 5 insert—

*“Unfair paternity leave provisions*

**5A.**—(1) Where an employment-related benefit scheme includes any unfair paternity leave provisions (irrespective of any differences on the basis of sex in the treatment accorded to members under those provisions), then—

- (a) the scheme shall be regarded to that extent as not complying with the principle of equal treatment; and
- (b) subject to sub-paragraph (3), this Schedule shall apply accordingly.

(2) In this paragraph “unfair paternity leave provisions”, in relation to an employment-related benefit scheme, means any provision—

- (a) which relates to continuing membership of, or the accrual of rights under, the scheme during any period of paid paternity leave in the case of any member who is (or who, immediately before the commencement of such a period, was) an employed earner and which treats such a member otherwise than in accordance with the normal employment requirement; or
- (b) which requires the amount of any benefit payable under the scheme to or in respect of any such member, to the extent that it falls to be determined by reference to earnings during a period which included a period of paid paternity leave, to be determined otherwise than in accordance with the normal employment requirement.

(3) In the case of any unfair paternity leave provision—

- (a) the more favourable treatment required by paragraph 3(1) is treatment no less favourable than would be accorded to the member in accordance with the normal employment requirement; and
- (b) paragraph 3(2) does not authorise the making of any such election as is there mentioned;

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but, in respect of any period of paid paternity leave, a member shall only be required to pay contributions on the amount of contractual remuneration or statutory paternity pay actually paid to or for him in respect of that period.

(4) In this paragraph—

“period of paid paternity leave”, in the case of a member, means a period—

- (a) throughout which the member is absent from work in circumstances where sub-paragraph (5), (6) or (7) applies, and
- (b) for which the employer (or if he is no longer in his employment, his former employer) pays him any contractual remuneration or statutory paternity pay; and

“the normal employment requirement” is the requirement that any period of paid paternity leave shall be treated as if it were a period throughout which the member in question works normally and receives the remuneration likely to be paid for doing so.

(5) This sub-paragraph applies if—

- (a) the member's absence from work is due to the birth or expected birth of a child, and
- (b) the member satisfies the conditions prescribed under section 167ZA(2)(a)(i) and (ii) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 in relation to that child.

(6) This sub-paragraph applies if—

- (a) the member's absence from work is due to the placement or expected placement of a child for adoption under the law of any part of the United Kingdom, and
- (b) the member satisfies the conditions prescribed under section 167ZB(2)(a)(i) and (ii) of that Act in relation to that child.

(7) This sub-paragraph applies if—

- (a) the member's absence from work is due to the adoption or expected adoption of a child who has entered the United Kingdom in connection with or for the purposes of adoption which does not involve the placement of the child for adoption under the law of any part of the United Kingdom, and
- (b) the member satisfies the conditions prescribed under section 167ZB(2)(a)(i) and (ii) of that Act (as applied by virtue of section 167ZK of that Act (adoption cases not involving placement under the law of the United Kingdom)) in relation to that child.

#### *Unfair adoption leave provisions*

**5B.—**(1) Where an employment-related benefit scheme includes any unfair adoption leave provisions (irrespective of any differences on the basis of sex in the treatment accorded to members under those provisions), then—

- (a) the scheme shall be regarded to that extent as not complying with the principle of equal treatment; and
- (b) subject to sub-paragraph (3), this Schedule shall apply accordingly.

(2) In this paragraph “unfair adoption leave provisions”, in relation to an employment-related benefit scheme, means any provision—

- (a) which relates to continuing membership of, or the accrual of rights under, the scheme during any period of paid adoption leave in the case of any member who is (or who, immediately before the commencement of such a period, was) an employed earner and

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which treats such a member otherwise than in accordance with the normal employment requirement; or

- (b) which requires the amount of any benefit payable under the scheme to or in respect of any such member, to the extent that it falls to be determined by reference to earnings during a period which included a period of paid adoption leave, to be determined otherwise than in accordance with the normal employment requirement.

(3) In the case of any unfair adoption leave provision—

- (a) the more favourable treatment required by paragraph 3(1) is treatment no less favourable than would be accorded to the member in accordance with the normal employment requirement; and

(b) paragraph 3(2) does not authorise the making of any such election as is there mentioned; but, in respect of any period of paid adoption leave, a member shall only be required to pay contributions on the amount of contractual remuneration or statutory adoption pay actually paid to or for him in respect of that period.

(4) In this paragraph—

“period of paid adoption leave”, in the case of a member, means a period—

- (a) throughout which the member is absent from work in circumstances where sub-paragraph (5) or (6) applies, and
- (b) for which the employer (or, if he is no longer in his employment, his former employer) pays him any contractual remuneration or statutory adoption pay; and

“the normal employment requirement” is the requirement that any period of paid adoption leave shall be treated as if it were a period throughout which the member in question works normally and receives the remuneration likely to be paid for doing so.

(5) This sub-paragraph applies if—

- (a) the member's absence from work is due to the placement, or expected placement, of a child for adoption under the law of any part of the United Kingdom, and
- (b) the member is a person with whom the child is, or is expected to be, placed for such adoption.

(6) This sub-paragraph applies if—

- (a) the member's absence from work is due to the adoption or expected adoption of a child who has entered the United Kingdom in connection with or for the purposes of adoption which does not involve the placement of the child for adoption under the law of any part of the United Kingdom, and
- (b) the member is a person by whom the child has been or is expected to be adopted.” .

(2) The provision that may be made under section 142(1) of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (c. 38) (power to make consequential etc. provision to give full effect to any provision of that Act) includes provision modifying paragraph 5A or 5B of Schedule 5 to the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (NI 13) (as inserted by paragraph (1)).

### **Inalienability of occupational pension**

**243.**—(1) Article 89 of the 1995 Order (inalienability of occupational pension) is amended as follows.

(2) In paragraph (5) (exceptions to the rule of inalienability) at the end add—

- “(f) subject to paragraph (6), a charge or lien on, or set-off against, the person in question's entitlement, or right, for the purpose of discharging some monetary obligation due from

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the person in question to the scheme arising out of a payment made in error in respect of the pension.” .

(3) In paragraph (6) (limits on the charge, lien or set-off under paragraph (5)(d) or (e)) for “or (e)” substitute “, (e) or (f)”.

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