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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Regulations.)*

These Regulations amend the Social Security (Claims and Payments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 (“the Claims and Payments Regulations”) and the Housing Benefit (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 (“the Housing Benefit Regulations”) in respect of benefit claims.

Regulation 2 amends the Claims and Payments Regulations to –

- enable a person of qualifying age for state pension credit to make a claim for attendance allowance, bereavement benefit, carer’s allowance, disability living allowance, incapacity benefit, retirement pension, a winter fuel payment or income support at an office designated by the Department for Social Development (“the Department”) for accepting such claims or at an authorised office of an authority administering housing benefit;

- make consequential amendments in respect of claims for state pension credit at such an office;

- fix the date of claim where a person of qualifying age for state pension credit –

- notifies such an office of intent to claim state pension credit or, transitionally, income support,

- makes a claim for another benefit from such an office, or

- asks the office for a claim form for disability living allowance or attendance allowance;
  - and

- make a minor technical amendment to correct a numbering error.

Regulation 3 amends the Housing Benefit Regulations to enable a person of qualifying age for state pension credit to make a claim for housing benefit at an office nominated by the Department and authorised by the relevant authority to accept such claims.

These Regulations make in relation to Northern Ireland only provision corresponding to provision contained in Regulations made by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to Great Britain and accordingly, by virtue of section 149(3) of, and paragraph 10 of Schedule 5 to, the Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992, are not subject to the requirement of section 149(2) of that Act for prior reference to the Social Security Advisory Committee.

These Regulations do not impose a charge on business.