

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order establishes the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission, a body with responsibility for funding civil legal services and criminal defence services.

The Order requires the Commission to fund civil legal services (as defined in Article 10) in accordance with a funding code prepared by the Commission. Article 17 makes provision about the terms on which civil legal services are to be funded. Articles 18 to 20 make provision about awards of costs in cases where such services are funded by the Commission.

The Order requires the Commission to fund criminal defence services (as defined in Article 21) in accordance with Articles 23 to 29.

The Order provides for the Commission to operate a registration scheme for persons eligible to provide civil legal services and criminal defence services (Article 36).

Part III of the Order makes other provision about legal services. Articles 37 to 42 permit certain conditional fee agreements and litigation funding agreements to be enforceable. Part III also makes provision about costs orders (Articles 43 and 44).

The Order repeals the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981.