



# Child Support Act 1991

## 1991 CHAPTER 48

### *Information*

#### **15 Powers of inspectors.**

- [<sup>F1</sup>(1) The [<sup>F2</sup>Secretary of State] may appoint, on such terms as [<sup>F2</sup>the Secretary of State] thinks fit, persons to act as inspectors under this section.
- (2) The function of inspectors is to acquire information which the [<sup>F3</sup>the Secretary of State] needs for any of the purposes of this Act.
- (3) Every inspector is to be given a certificate of his appointment.
- (4) An inspector has power, at any reasonable time and either alone or accompanied by such other persons as he thinks fit, to enter any premises which—
- (a) are liable to inspection under this section; and
  - (b) are premises to which it is reasonable for him to require entry in order that he may exercise his functions under this section,
- and may there make such examination and inquiry as he considers appropriate.

[<sup>F4</sup>(4ZA) But the power under subsection (4) to enter any premises is exercisable only under the authority of a warrant issued under section 15A if—

- (a) the premises are occupied, and
  - (b) an inspector has applied for admission to the premises for the purposes of exercising the power under that subsection but admission has been refused.]
- (4A) Premises liable to inspection under this section are those which are not used wholly as a dwelling house and which the inspector has reasonable grounds for suspecting are—
- (a) premises at which a non-resident parent is or has been employed;
  - (b) premises at which a non-resident parent carries out, or has carried out, a trade, profession, vocation or business;
  - (c) premises at which there is information held by a person (“A”) whom the inspector has reasonable grounds for suspecting has information about a non-resident parent acquired in the course of A’s own trade, profession, vocation or business.]

*Status: Point in time view as at 04/07/2019.*

*Changes to legislation: Child Support Act 1991, Section 15 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 30 May 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

- (5) An inspector exercising his powers may question any person aged 18 or over whom he finds on the premises.
- (6) If required to do so by an inspector exercising his powers, [<sup>F5</sup>any such person] shall furnish to the inspector all such information and documents as the inspector may reasonably require.
- (7) No person shall be required under this section to answer any question or to give any evidence tending to incriminate himself or, in the case of a person who is married [<sup>F6</sup>or is a civil partner], his or her spouse [<sup>F7</sup>or civil partner].
- (8) On applying for admission to any premises in the exercise of his powers, an inspector shall, if so required, produce his certificate.
- (9) [<sup>F8</sup>Subject to subsection (9A),] if any person—
  - (a) intentionally delays or obstructs any inspector exercising his powers; or
  - (b) without reasonable excuse, refuses or neglects to answer any question or furnish any information or to produce any document when required to do so under this section,
 he shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

[<sup>F9</sup>(9A) A person is guilty of an offence under subsection (9)(a) as a result of intentionally delaying or obstructing an inspector’s entry to premises that are occupied only if, at the time of the delay or obstruction, entry to the premises is authorised by a warrant issued under section 15A.]

- (10) In this section—
  - “certificate” means a certificate of appointment issued under this section;
  - “inspector” means an inspector appointed under this section;
  - “powers” means powers conferred by this section; <sup>F10</sup>...

[<sup>F11</sup>(11) In this section, “premises” includes—

- (a) moveable structures and vehicles, vessels, aircraft and hovercraft;
- (b) installations that are offshore installations for the purposes of the Mineral Workings (Offshore Installations) Act 1971; and
- (c) places of all other descriptions whether or not occupied as land or otherwise, and references in this section to the occupier of premises are to be construed, in relation to premises that are not occupied as land, as references to any person for the time being present at the place in question.]

| Textual Amendments |  |
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| <b>F1</b>          | S. 15(1)-(4A) substituted for s. 15(1)-(4) (31.1.2001) by <a href="#">Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 (c. 19)</a> , <b>ss. 14(2)</b> , 86(1)(a)(2) (with <b>ss. 28, 83(6)</b> ); S.I. 2000/3354, art. 2(1)(a) |
| <b>F2</b>          | Words in s. 15(1) substituted (1.8.2012) by <a href="#">The Public Bodies (Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission: Abolition and Transfer of Functions) Order 2012 (S.I. 2012/2007)</a> , art. 1(2), <b>Sch. para. 10(a)</b> |
| <b>F3</b>          | Words in s. 15(2) substituted (1.8.2012) by <a href="#">The Public Bodies (Child Maintenance and Enforcement Commission: Abolition and Transfer of Functions) Order 2012 (S.I. 2012/2007)</a> , art. 1(2), <b>Sch. para. 10(b)</b> |

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- F4** S. 15(4ZA) inserted (4.7.2019) by The Child Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1084), regs. 1(3), **11(a)**
- F5** Words in s. 15(6) substituted (31.1.2001) by Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 (c. 19), **ss. 14(3)**, 86(1)(a)(2) (with ss. 28, 83(6)); S.I. 2000/3354, art. 2(1)(a)
- F6** Words in s. 15(7) inserted (5.12.2005) by Civil Partnership Act 2004 (c. 33), s. 263(8)(d), **Sch. 24 para. 2(a)**; S.I. 2005/3175, art. 2(1), Sch. 1
- F7** Words in s. 15(7) inserted (5.12.2005) by Civil Partnership Act 2004 (c. 33), s. 263(8)(d), **Sch. 24 para. 2(b)**; S.I. 2005/3175, art. 2(1), Sch. 1
- F8** Words in s. 15(9) inserted (4.7.2019) by The Child Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1084), regs. 1(3), **11(b)**
- F9** S. 15(9A) inserted (4.7.2019) by The Child Support (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2019 (S.I. 2019/1084), regs. 1(3), **11(c)**
- F10** Words in s. 15(10) repealed (2.4.2001) by Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 (c. 19), s. 86(1)(e)(2), **Sch. 9 Pt. 1** (with s. 83(6)); S.I. 2001/1252, art. 2(1)(d)(i)
- F11** S. 15(11) inserted (31.1.2001) by Child Support, Pensions and Social Security Act 2000 (c. 19), **ss. 14(4)**, 86(1)(a)(2) (with ss. 28, 83(6)); S.I. 2000/3354, art. 2(1)(a)

**Modifications etc. (not altering text)**

- C1** S. 15 amended (5.4.1993) by The Child Support (Northern Ireland Reciprocal Arrangements) Regulations 1993 (S.I. 1993/584), reg. 2(2), **Sch. 2**

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