

Assembly Members (Independent Remuneration Board) Act (Northern Ireland) 2025

CHAPTER 5

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Assembly Members (Independent Remuneration Board) Act (Northern Ireland) 2025

2025 CHAPTER 5

An Act to amend the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 to make provision about the name, functions and membership of the Independent Financial Review Panel; and for connected purposes. [16th September 2025]

BE IT ENACTED by being passed by the Northern Ireland Assembly and assented to by His Majesty as follows:

Independent Financial Review Panel

Independent Financial Review Panel renamed as Independent Remuneration Board

1. The Independent Financial Review Panel is renamed the Independent Remuneration Board.

Removal of function of determining allowances

2.—(1) In section 2 of the 2011 Act (functions of the Panel)—

(a) in subsection (1)(a) omit "and allowances";

(b) in subsection (1)(b) for "pensions, gratuities and allowances" substitute "pensions and gratuities"; and

(c) omit subsection (2)(c), and the word "and" immediately preceding it.

(2) In the heading to section 12 (contents of determinations: salaries and allowances) omit "and allowances".

(3) In section 13 (contents of determinations: pensions, gratuities and allowances)—

(a) in the heading, for "pensions, gratuities and allowances" substitute "pensions and gratuities"; and

(b) in subsection (2)(a) for "pensions, gratuities or allowances" substitute "pensions or gratuities".

Consideration of salaries in other legislatures

3. After section 2(2) of the 2011 Act (objectives of Panel in determining salaries of members) insert—

"(2A) In exercising its function under subsection (1)(a), the Board must have regard to the salaries payable to members of—

(a) the House of Commons;

(b) the Scottish Parliament;

(c) Senedd Cymru (the Welsh Parliament); and

(d) Dáil Éireann (the House of Representatives of Ireland) and Seanad Éireann (the Senate of Ireland).".

Temporary appointments

4. After section 6 of the 2011 Act insert—

"Temporary appointments

6A.—(1) The Commission may appoint a temporary Chair where a person ceases to be Chair (whether at the end of their term of appointment or otherwise) and—

(a) a replacement has not been appointed; or

(b) the replacement's appointment has not yet taken effect.

(2) The Commission may appoint a temporary member of the Board where a person ceases to be a Board member (whether at the end of their term of appointment or otherwise) and—

(a) a replacement has not been appointed; or

(b) the replacement's appointment has not yet taken effect.

(3) A temporary appointment lapses—

(a) when the appointment of the replacement takes effect; and

(b) in any event, at the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the date on which the temporary appointment takes effect.

(4) Where a temporary appointment lapses under subsection (3)(b) the Commission may renew it or make a new temporary appointment.

(5) Temporary appointments are to be disregarded for the purposes of section 4(3).

(6) But a person must not be appointed as a temporary appointment if the person is not eligible to be appointed as a Board member by reason of section 4(3).

(7) The Commission may by order make provision about appointments under this section.

(8) An order under subsection (7) shall not be made unless a draft of the order has been laid before and approved by resolution of the Assembly.

(9) Subject to the preceding provisions of this section, a temporary appointment is to be treated for all purposes (including, for example, for the purposes of section 5) as if it were an appointment under section 4(1).

(10) But an order under subsection (7) may disapply or modify a provision of this Act (other than section 4(4)) in its application to a temporary appointment.".

Membership

5.—(1) In paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 to the 2011 Act (disqualification from membership of the Panel) omit sub-paragraph (d) (former member of the Assembly).

(2) In section 4 of the 2011 Act (appointments to the Panel) at the end add—

"(4) At any one time no more than one Board member may be a former member of the Assembly.".

Determinations

6.—(1) Section 11 of the 2011 Act (determinations: exercise of functions) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (4) (determinations to be made in advance of Assembly election) for "before the date of the poll" substitute "at least 6 months before the date of the poll".

(3) After subsection (5) insert—

"(5A) Before making a determination under section 2(1) the Board shall—

(a) publish a draft determination;

(b) consult the following on the draft—

(i) members of the Assembly;

(ii) the Commission;

(iii) the trustees of any pension scheme established in accordance with a previous determination and still in operation; and

(iv) any other persons the Board thinks appropriate.".

(4) After subsection (8) insert—

"(8A) Before forming such an opinion as is referred to in subsection (3)(b), the Board must consult the Commission.".

Minor and consequential amendments

7.—(1) In section 6(2)(b) of the 2011 Act (termination of membership of the Panel) for "of him" substitute "of them".

(2) In section 12(3) of the 2011 Act (double jobbing) for "either House of Parliament" substitute "the House of Lords".

(3) The following have effect—

(a) in sections 1(1) and 15 of the 2011 Act, and the heading of Part 1, for "Independent Financial Review Panel" substitute "Independent Remuneration Board";

(b) for the word "Panel" in the 2011 Act, in each place other than Schedule 5 (including headings but excluding the long title), substitute "Board";

(c) for the word "Panel's" in the 2011 Act, in each place, substitute "Board's";

(d) in the following provisions, for "The Independent Financial Review Panel" substitute "The Independent Remuneration Board"—

(i) Schedule 3 to the Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016; and

(ii) Part 7 of Schedule 1 to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (public bodies and offices: Northern Ireland).

Supplementary provisions

Continuity of the law

8.—(1) Subsection (2) applies to any determination ("the original determination") made under—

(a) section 47 or 48 of the 1998 Act (including a determination made in exercise of powers conferred by resolution of the Assembly);

(b) any provision of the 2011 Act;

in respect of salaries, allowances, pensions or gratuities for, or in respect of, members or former members of the Assembly.

(2) The original determination shall continue to have effect in accordance with its terms except to the extent (if any) that it—

(a) has expired (expressly or by implication); or

(b) has been revoked or superseded (expressly or by implication) by a new determination under the provisions referred to in subsection (1);

whether or not the original determination could have been made under the provisions of the 2011 Act as amended by this Act.

(3) In any enactment, instrument or other document a reference to "the Independent Financial Review Panel" under section 1 of the 2011 Act shall be construed as being or including a reference to the Panel by its new title "the Independent Remuneration Board" if and in so far as necessary for the purposes of its continuing to have effect in accordance with its terms.

Interpretation

9. In this Act—

"the 1998 Act" means the Northern Ireland Act 1998; and

"the 2011 Act" means the Assembly Members (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011.

Commencement

10. This Act comes into operation on the day after the day on which it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

11. This Act may be cited as the Assembly Members (Independent Remuneration Board) Act (Northern Ireland) 2025.

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