Draft Regulations laid before Parliament under section 201(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, section 9(4) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000 and section 21(6) of the Recall of MPs Act 2015 for approval by resolution of each House of Parliament.

DRAFT STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2020 No.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE

The Representation of the People (Electronic Communications and Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020

Made - - - - ***

Coming into force in accordance with regulation 1(2)

The Secretary of State makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by the provisions set out in the Schedule to these Regulations.

In accordance with section 8(3) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000(**a**), the Secretary of State considers that the authorisation of the use of electronic communications by these Regulations for any purpose is such that the extent (if any) to which records of things done for that purpose will be available will be no less satisfactory in cases where use is made of electronic communications than in other cases.

The Secretary of State has consulted the Electoral Commission and the Information Commissioner and such other persons as the Secretary of State considered appropriate, in accordance with section 53(5) of the Representation of the People Act 1983(**b**) and section 7(1) of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000(**c**).

In accordance with section 201(2) of the Representation of the People Act 1983, section 9(4) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000 and section 21(6) of the Recall of MPs Act 2015(**d**), a draft of this instrument was laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.

(**a**) 2000 c. 7; by virtue of section 9(1)(a) the Secretary of State is the "appropriate Minister".
(**b**) 1983 c. 2; section 53(5) was inserted by paragraph 5 of Schedule 2 to the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (c.6).
(**c**) 2000 c. 41; section 7 was amended by paragraph 3(6) of Schedule 6 to the Recall of MPs Act 2015 (c. 25).
(**d**) 2015 c. 25.

PART 1

General

Citation and commencement

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Representation of the People (Electronic Communications and Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020.

(2) These Regulations come into force on the twenty-first day after the day on which they are made.

PART 2

Amendments to the Representation of the People Acts

The Representation of the People Act 1983

2. The Representation of the People Act 1983 is amended in accordance with regulations 3 to 7.

Section 9A (registration officers: duty to take necessary steps)

3.—(1) Section 9A(**a**) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (2)—

(a) after paragraph (za) insert—

"(zb) for the purposes of a register maintained by the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland under section 9—

(i) no earlier than 1 July in a year in which a canvass under section 10 is conducted, sending to any address a notice that includes the following information—

(aa) details of the canvass, including any time by which the form to be used for the purposes of the canvass is to be submitted,

(bb) an invitation to submit that form through the UK digital service, and

(cc) instructions on how to do so;

(ii) at any time after sending the notices under sub-paragraph (i), sending the form to be used for the purposes of the canvass to any non-responding registered person;";

(b) in paragraph (a)—

(i) at the beginning, insert "for the purposes of a register of local government electors in Scotland or in Wales,";

(ii) omit from "(in" to the end.

(3) After subsection (3) insert—

"(4) In this section—

"non-responding registered person", in relation to a canvass, means a person who—

(a) is registered in a register in respect of an address in Northern Ireland, and

(b) has not responded to the canvass;

(**a**) Section 9A was inserted by section 9(1) of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (c. 22); amended by paragraph 6 of Schedule 4 to the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (c. 6); amended by section 18(3) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 (c. 13); extended to Northern Ireland by section 18(1)(a) of that Act; and amended by S.I. 2019/1451.

"the UK digital service" has the same meaning as in section 10ZF below, and references to submitting a form through the UK digital service shall be construed in accordance with subsection (4) of that section.".

Section 10 (maintenance of registers: duty to conduct canvass in Northern Ireland)

4.—(1) Section 10(**a**) is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (4A), for "subsection (4B)" substitute "subsections (4B) and (4BZA)".

(3) After subsection (4B) insert—

"(4BZA) The requirement mentioned in subsection (4A)(a) above does not apply to forms that are submitted through the UK digital service.".

(4) For subsection (7) substitute —

"(7) In this section—

"residence" means residence for the purposes of section 4 above;

"the UK digital service" has the same meaning as in section 10ZF below, and references to submitting a form through the UK digital service shall be construed in accordance with subsection (4) of that section.".

Section 10ZF (digital registration in Northern Ireland)

5.—(1) Section 10ZF(**b**) is amended as follows.

(2) In the heading, after "Digital registration" insert "and canvass".

(3) In subsection (1)—

(a) for paragraph (a) substitute—

"(a) acting as an intermediary for the purposes of the receipt of—

(i) online canvass forms, and

(ii) online applications for registration,

in respect of addresses in Northern Ireland on behalf of the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland;";

(b) in paragraph (b), after "such" insert "forms or".

Section 10A (maintenance of the registers: registration of electors in Northern Ireland)

6.—(1) Section 10A(**c**) is amended as follows.

(2) After subsection (2A) insert—

"(2B) Where the form referred to in paragraph (a) of subsection (2) above is submitted through the UK digital service, the application referred to in that subsection shall be treated as having been submitted through the UK digital service.".

(3) In subsection (9), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "an application" substitute "a form or application".

(**a**) Section 10 was substituted by paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 2000 (c. 2); amended by section 1(2) of the Electoral Fraud (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 (c. 13); amended by paragraphs 5 and 105 of Schedule 1 to the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (c. 22); amended by section 2 of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 (c. 33); amended by paragraph 9 of Schedule 4 to the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (c. 6); amended by sections 13 and 14(1)(a)(iv) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 (c. 13); and amended in consequence of the amendments made to section 78(2) of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 by S.I. 2014/1116.

(**b**) Section 10ZF was inserted by S.I. 2018/699.

(**c**) Section 10A was inserted by paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 2000 (c. 2) and amended by section 1(3) of the Electoral Fraud (Northern Ireland) Act 2002 (c.13), paragraph 1 of Schedule 6 to the Political Parties and Elections Act 2009 (c. 12), paragraph 10 to Schedule 4 of the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (c. 6), section 14(1) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 (c. 13) and S.I. 2018/699.

Section 10B (register of electors in Northern Ireland: digital registration number)

7.—(1) Section 10B(**a**) is amended as follows.

(2) For subsection (1) substitute—

"(1) Where a person meets the condition in subsection (1A) or the condition in subsection (1B), the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland shall allocate a unique reference number (a "digital registration number") to the person if no such number has previously been allocated to that person.

(1A) A person meets the condition in this subsection if, following receipt of an application for registration made by the person in respect of an address in Northern Ireland and submitted through the UK digital service, the Chief Electoral Officer determines that the person is entitled to be registered in the register.

(1B) A person meets the condition in this subsection if—

(a) in connection with a canvass under section 10 above, the form completed in respect of any address specifies the person as a person who is entitled to be registered in a register,

(b) the form is submitted through the UK digital service,

(c) section 10A(2) above does not apply, and

(d) following receipt of the form, the Chief Electoral Officer determines that the person is entitled to be registered in the register.".

(3) In subsection (2)—

(a) in paragraph (a)—

(i) for "an applicant" substitute "a person";

(ii) at the end omit "or";

(b) for paragraph (b) substitute—

"(b) where, following—

(i) an application for registration in respect of an address in Northern Ireland submitted through the UK digital service by a person to whom a digital registration number has previously been issued, or

(ii) (where section 10A(2) above does not apply) the submission of a form in connection with a canvass under section 10 above through the UK digital service by such a person,

the Chief Electoral Officer determines that the person's registration in the register is to be amended in accordance with the application or form, or";

(c) after paragraph (b) insert—

"(c) where, following—

(i) an application for registration in respect of an address in Northern Ireland submitted through the UK digital service by a person to whom a digital registration number has previously been issued, or

(ii) the submission of a form in connection with a canvass under section 10 above through the UK digital service by such a person,

the Chief Electoral Officer determines that the person's registration in the register is not to be amended in accordance with the application or form.".

(4) In subsection (3)—

(a) in each place it occurs, for "applicant" substitute "person";

(b) for "by post" substitute "by the appropriate method (see subsection (3A))".

(**a**) Section 10B was inserted by S.I. 2018/699.

(5) After subsection (3) insert—

"(3A) In subsection (3), "by the appropriate method" means—

(a) in a case falling within subsection (2)(a) or (b), by post;

(b) in a case falling within subsection (2)(c) —

(i) by post, or

(ii) if the person has given an email address in the application or form, by email to that address.".

(6) In subsection (7)(b)(ii), for "the application for registration" substitute "an application or form mentioned in subsection (1A), (1B) or (2)".

(7) In subsection (9), after "references to" insert "a form or".

Representation of the People Act 1985

8. The Representation of the People Act 1985(**a**) is amended in accordance with regulations 9 and 10.

Section 6 (absent vote at elections for an indefinite period)

9.—(1) Section 6(**b**) is amended as follows.

(2) For subsection (7) substitute—

"(7) For the purposes of this section, a person is to be treated as a person who is or will be digitally registered if the person meets the condition in subsection (7A) or the condition in subsection (7B).

(7A) A person meets the condition in this subsection if—

(a) the person's registration in the register of parliamentary electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that application, any form has been completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the principal Act, the last such form was submitted through the UK digital service.

(7B) A person meets the condition in this subsection if—

(a) the last form to be completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the principal Act was submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that form, any application for registration in the register of parliamentary electors has been made in respect of the person, the last such application was submitted through the UK digital service.".

(3) In subsection (8), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "the reference to an application" substitute "references to a form or application".

Section 7 (absent vote at a particular election and absent voters list)

10.—(1) Section 7(**c**) is amended as follows.

(2) For subsection (6) substitute—

"(6) For the purposes of this section, a person is to be treated as a person who is or will be digitally registered if the person meets the condition in subsection (6A) or the condition in subsection (6B).

(6A) A person meets the condition in this subsection if—

(**a**) 1985 c. 50.
(**b**) Section 6 was amended by S.I. 2018/699.
(**c**) Section 7 was amended by S.I. 2018/699.

(a) the person's registration in the register of parliamentary electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that application, any form has been completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the principal Act, the last such form was submitted through the UK digital service.

(6B) A person meets the condition in this subsection if—

(a) the last form to be completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the principal Act was submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that form, any application for registration in the register of parliamentary electors has been made in respect of the person, the last such application was submitted through the UK digital service.".

(3) In subsection (7), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "the reference to an application" substitute "references to a form or application".

PART 3

Amendments to other legislation

Local Elections (Northern Ireland) Order 1985

11.—(1) Part 1 of Schedule 2 to the Local Elections (Northern Ireland) Order 1985(**a**) is amended as follows.

(2) In paragraph 1 (absent vote at local elections for an indefinite period)(**b**)—

(a) for sub-paragraph (7) substitute—

"(7) For the purposes of this paragraph, a person is to be treated as a person who is or will be digitally registered if the person meets the condition in sub-paragraph (7A) or the condition in sub-paragraph (7B).

(7A) A person meets the condition in this sub-paragraph if—

(a) the person's registration in the register of local electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that application, any form has been completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act, the last such form was submitted through the UK digital service.

(7B) A person meets the condition in this sub-paragraph if—

(a) the last form to be completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act was submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that form, any application for registration in the register of local electors has been made in respect of the person, the last such application was submitted through the UK digital service.";

(b) in sub-paragraph (8), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "the reference to an application" substitute "references to a form or application".

(3) In paragraph 2 (absent vote at a particular local election and absent voters list)(**c**)—

(a) for sub-paragraph (6) substitute—

(**a**) S.I. 1985/454.
(**b**) Paragraph 1 was substituted by S.I. 1987/168 and amended by S.I. 2018/699.
(**c**) Paragraph 2 was substituted by S.I. 1987/168 and amended by S.I. 2018/699.

"(6) For the purposes of this paragraph, a person is to be treated as a person who is or will be digitally registered if the person meets the condition in sub-paragraph (6A) or the condition in sub-paragraph (6B).

(6A) A person meets the condition in this sub-paragraph if—

(a) the person's registration in the register of local electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that application, any form has been completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act, the last such form was submitted through the UK digital service.

(6B) A person meets the condition in this sub-paragraph if—

(a) the last form to be completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act was submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that form, any application for registration in the register of local electors has been made in respect of the person, the last such application was submitted through the UK digital service.";

(b) in sub-paragraph (7), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "the reference to an application" substitute "references to a form or application".

Representation of the People (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008

12.—(1) The Representation of the People (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008(**a**) are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 27A (retention of information in connection with an application for registration)(**b**)—

(a) in the heading, for "information in connection with an application for registration" substitute "registration information";

(b) after paragraph (2), insert—

"(3) In respect of any relevant canvass form, until the end of the register alteration day, the registration officer—

(a) shall retain the canvass form or, in the case of a canvass form submitted through the UK digital service, the information contained in the form; and

(b) may retain any other documentation or information provided to the registration officer in connection with the submission of the form.

(4) After the register alteration day, the registration officer may continue to retain any information or document mentioned in paragraph (3) until such time as the officer considers that it is not required for or in connection with the exercise of the officer's functions.

(5) In this regulation—

"relevant canvass form" means a canvass form completed in respect of any address in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act;

"register alteration day" means, in respect of a relevant canvass form, the day on which the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland has determined what alterations to the officer's registers fall to be made as a result of the submission of that canvass form.".

(3) In regulation 42A (verification of information provided in an application)(**c**)—

(a) for "an application for registration", in each place where it occurs, substitute "a relevant application";

(**a**) S.I. 2008/1741.
(**b**) Regulation 27A was inserted by S.I. 2018/699.
(**c**) Regulation 42A was inserted by S.I. 2018/699.

(b) for paragraph (5) substitute—

"(5) The registration officer may take such results into account in determining—

(a) where the relevant application is a canvass form, what alterations to the officer's registers fall to be made as a result of the submission of that form, and

(b) where the relevant application is an application for registration, that application.";

(c) for paragraph (7) substitute —

"(7) In this regulation—

"relevant application" means—

(a) an application for registration; or

(b) a canvass form completed in respect of any address in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act;

"the Secretary of State" means the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.".

(4) In regulation 46B (retention of entries on the register following a canvass)(**a**), in paragraph (6), in the definition of "relevant period", for "third" substitute "second".

Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016

13.—(1) The Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016(**b**) are amended as follows.

(2) In regulation 46 (retention of documents: England and Wales and Northern Ireland)—

(a) in the heading, after "Retention" insert "and disposal";

(b) at the beginning, insert "—(1)";

(c) at the end insert—

"(2) The petition officer must retain for a year the documents referred to in regulation 44(2) (delivery of documents to the registration officer: Northern Ireland) and then, unless otherwise directed by order of the House of Commons or any court, must cause them to be destroyed.".

(3) In regulation 52 (absent signing at any petition for an indefinite period: Northern Ireland)(**c**)—

(a) for paragraph (9) substitute—

"(9) For the purposes of this regulation, a person is to be treated as a person who is or will be digitally registered if the person meets the condition in paragraph (9A) or the condition in paragraph (9B).

(9A) A person meets the condition in this paragraph if—

(a) the person's registration in the register of parliamentary electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that application, any form has been completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act, the last such form was submitted through the UK digital service.

(9B) A person meets the condition in this paragraph if—

(a) the last form to be completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act was submitted through the UK digital service, and

(**a**) Regulation 46B was inserted by S.I. 2013/1846 and amended by S.I. 2015/1939.
(**b**) S.I. 2016/295.
(**c**) Regulation 52 was amended by S.I. 2018/699.

(b) where, since the submission of that form, any application for registration in the register of parliamentary electors has been made in respect of the person, the last such application was submitted through the UK digital service.";

(b) in paragraph (10), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "the reference to an application" substitute "a reference to a form or application".

(4) In regulation 54 (absent signing at a particular petition: Northern Ireland)(**a**)—

(a) for paragraph (6) substitute—

"(6) For the purposes of this regulation, a person is to be treated as a person who is or will be digitally registered if the person meets the condition in paragraph (6A) or the condition in paragraph (6B).

(6A) A person meets the condition in this paragraph if—

(a) the person's registration in the register of parliamentary electors is or will be pursuant to an application submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that application, any form has been completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act, the last such form was submitted through the UK digital service.

(6B) A person meets the condition in this paragraph if—

(a) the last form to be completed in respect of the person in connection with a canvass under section 10 of the 1983 Act was submitted through the UK digital service, and

(b) where, since the submission of that form, any application for registration in the register of parliamentary electors has been made in respect of the person, the last such application was submitted through the UK digital service.";

(b) in paragraph (7), in the definition of "the UK digital service", for "the reference to an application" substitute "a reference to a form or application".

(5) In paragraph 1 of Schedule 3 (access to marked registers after a petition)—

(a) in sub-paragraph (1)—

(i) in paragraph (e)(i) omit "and Northern Ireland" where it first occurs,

(ii) after paragraph (e)(i) insert—

"(ia) for Northern Ireland—

(aa) forwarded to the registration officer under regulation 44 (delivery of documents to the registration officer: England and Wales and Northern Ireland), regulation 114 (forwarding of documents) or regulation 141 (public notice of early termination), or

(bb) retained by the petition officer under regulation 46(2) (retention and disposal of documents: England and Wales and Northern Ireland),";

(b) for sub-paragraph (2)(b) substitute—

"(b) for Northern Ireland—

(i) in relation to the marked register or lists to which sub-paragraph (1)(e)(ia)(aa) applies, the Clerk of the Crown for Northern Ireland;

(ii) in relation to the marked register or lists to which sub-paragraph (1)(e)(ia)(bb) applies, the petition officer;".

(6) The amendments made by paragraphs (2) and (5) apply only in relation to a petition, notice of which is given by the Speaker (under section 5 of the Recall of MPs Act 2015) on or after the date on which these regulations come into force.

(**a**) Regulation 54 was amended by S.I. 2018/699.

(7) For the purposes of paragraph (6), the date on which the notice is given is the date specified in the notice.

Name
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
Date Northern Ireland Office

SCHEDULE

Preamble

Enabling powers

The provisions referred to in the preamble are—

(a) sections 9A(3), 10A(7), 53(1)(c) and (3) and 201(3) of, and paragraphs 1A and 8C of Schedule 2 to, the Representation of the People Act 1983(**a**);

(b) sections 8 and 9(6) of the Electronic Communications Act 2000;

(c) sections 18(1)(a) and (3)(f) and 21(3) of the Recall of MPs Act 2015.

(**a**) Section 9A was inserted by section 9(1) of the Electoral Administration Act 2006 (c. 22) and extended to Northern Ireland by section 18(1)(a) of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2014 (c. 13) ("the 2014 Act"); section 10A was inserted by paragraph 4 of Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 2000 (c. 2) ("the 2000 Act") and subsections (1) and (6) were amended by paragraph 10(2) of Schedule 4 to the Electoral Registration and Administration Act 2013 (c. 6) ("the 2013 Act"); section 53 was amended by paragraph 13 of Schedule 4 to the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c. 50) and paragraph 13 of Schedule 1 to the 2000 Act; section 201(3) was inserted by paragraph 21 of Schedule 1 to the 2000 Act; paragraph 1A of Schedule 2 was inserted by paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 to the 2013 Act, amended by section 20(2) of the 2014 Act, and amended by paragraph 18(2) of Schedule 19 to the Data Protection Act 2019 (c. 12) ("the 2019 Act"); and paragraph 8C of Schedule 2 was inserted by paragraph 3 of Schedule 2 to the 2013 Act, amended by section 20(2) of the 2014 Act and amended by paragraph 18(1) of Schedule 19 to the 2019 Act. See section 202(1) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c. 2) for the meaning of "prescribed".

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations amend enactments relating to voter registration in Northern Ireland and the retention of and access to marked registers for a recall petition in Northern Ireland under the Recall of MPs Act 2015.

Part 2 amends the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c. 2) (the "1983 Act") and the Representation of the People Act 1985 (c. 50) (the "1985 Act").

Regulations 3 to 7 amend the 1983 Act to make provision for canvass to be conducted digitally in Northern Ireland. Regulation 3 amends the steps the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland is required to take as part of a canvass. These are amended so as to require the Chief Electoral Officer to send instructions detailing the process for digitally responding to the canvass to any addresses in Northern Ireland and send canvass forms to any non-responding people registered in Northern Ireland. Regulation 4 removes the requirement that a canvass form must include the signature of the person responding where that form is submitted digitally. Regulation 5 confers functions relating to the receipt and transmission of digital canvass forms on the Minister of the Crown responsible for the UK digital service. Regulation 6 provides that where a person digitally submits a canvass form and that person is to be treated as having made an application for registration (by virtue of section 10A(2) of the 1983 Act) the person shall be treated as having made an application for registration through the UK digital service. Regulation 7 provides for the issue of digital registration numbers ("DRNs") to persons who digitally submit an application for registration or a canvass form. It also provides for the notification of DRNs to all persons who have a DRN and digitally submit an application for registration or a canvass form.

Regulations 9 and 10 amend the definition of "digitally registered" in the provisions of the 1985 Act dealing with absent voting in Parliamentary elections so the definition includes certain individuals who have digitally submitted canvass forms.

Part 3 amends other enactments relating to Northern Ireland elections.

Regulation 11 amends the definition of "digitally registered" in the provisions of the Local Elections (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 dealing with absent voting in Northern Ireland local elections so the definition includes certain individuals who have digitally submitted canvass forms.

Regulation 12 amends the Representation of the People (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2008 (S.I. 2008/1741) (the "2008 Regulations"). Regulation 12(2) and (3) amend regulations 27A (retention of information in connection with an application for registration) and 42A (verification of information provided in an application for registration) of the 2008 Regulations so that they apply to completed canvass forms. Regulation 12(4) reduces the period for which the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland is authorised to retain certain electoral register entries following the conclusion of a canvass from three years to two.

Regulation 13 amends the Recall of MPs Act 2015 (Recall Petition) Regulations 2016 (S.I. 2016/295) (the "2016 Regulations"). The amendments made by Regulation 13(2) provide that the Chief Electoral Officer must retain, for a year, all marked copies and lists to which regulation 44(2) of the 2016 Regulations applies. Regulation 13(3) and (4) amend the definition of "digitally registered" in the provisions of the 2016 Regulations dealing with absent voting in recall petitions in Northern Ireland so the definition includes certain individuals who have digitally submitted canvass forms. Regulation 13(5) amends Schedule 3 to the 2016 Regulations (access to marked registers after a petition) so that it extends to the marked register or lists retained by the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland.

A full impact assessment has not been produced for this instrument as no significant impact on the private, voluntary or public sectors is foreseen.

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£6.90

UK202001161002 01/2020 19585

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/ukdsi/2020/9780111192146

ISBN 978-0-11-119214-6

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