STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2026 No. 125 (C. 5)

ROAD TRAFFIC AND VEHICLES

The Road Traffic (Amendment) (2016 Act) (Commencement No. 4) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026

Made - - - - 30th June 2026

The Department for Infrastructure(**a**) makes the following Order in exercise of the power conferred by section 26(1) of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016(**b**) and vested in it(**c**).

Citation and interpretation

1. This Order may be cited as the Road Traffic (Amendment) (2016 Act) (Commencement No. 4) Order (Northern Ireland) 2026.

Appointed day

2. The day appointed for the coming into operation of the provisions of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 specified in the Schedule is 1st October 2026.

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department for Infrastructure on 30th June 2026

L.S.

Chris Hughes
A senior officer of the
Department for Infrastructure

(**a**) Formerly the Department for Regional Development; see section 1(6) and (11) of, and Schedule 1 to, the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (2016 c. 5 (N.I.)). Pursuant to section 1(9) of that Act, the Department of the Environment is dissolved

(**b**) 2016 c.11 (N.I.)

(**c**) See Article 8(1)(b) of, and Part 2 of Schedule 5 to, the Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 76)

SCHEDULE

Article 2

Provisions coming into operation on 1st October 2026

Provisions of the Act	*Subject Matter*
Section 16	Minimum period of holding provisional licence in certain cases
Section 17 except subsections (3), (4)(c) and (5)(a)(ii), in so far as they relate to the insertion of new Article 13C	Training of provisional licence holders in certain cases etc.
Section 18	Revocation of licence: forged etc. logbook
Section 19	Changes to restrictions on learner and new drivers
Paragraphs 12-18 of Part 2, and Part 3 of Schedule 1 and section 24 insofar as it relates to those paragraphs	Transitional and saving provisions in relation to learner and new drivers
The following repeals in Schedule 2 and section 25 insofar as it relates to them-	Repeals
The Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 (N.I. 1)(**a**)-	
In Article 5, paragraphs (2A) and (5A)	
Article 19	
The Road Traffic Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1996(**b**)-	
In Part 1 of Schedule 1 the entry relating to Article 19 of the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981	
The Road Traffic (New Drivers) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998(**c**)-	
In Schedule 2, paragraphs 2 to 4	

(**a**) S.I. 1981/154 (N.I. 1)
(**b**) S.I. 1996/1320 (N.I. 10)
(**c**) S.I. 1998/1074 (N.I. 7)

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Order)

This Order brings into operation on the 1st October 2026 the provisions of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 specified in the Schedule.

Section 16 amends Articles 5 and 19D of the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 ("the 1981 Order") to specify that a person holding a provisional licence authorising him to drive a category B motor vehicle must hold that licence for a period of at least 6 months before being permitted to take the practical driving test unless he is exempt from the requirement. It also allows the Department to provide for further exemptions from the requirement.

Section 17 inserts a new Article 5A into the 1981 Order to specify that a person submitting himself for a practical test to drive a category B motor vehicle or a motor bicycle must produce a logbook (which will show that the person has completed an approved programme of training) before being permitted to take the test. It also allows the Department to provide for exemptions from that requirement. It inserts new Article13B which makes provision for approved programmes of training for category B motor vehicles and motor bicycles. In addition, Article 174 of the 1981 Order is amended to make it an offence to forge, alter or misuse a logbook. The subsections relating to the repositioning of Article 13(3A) are not being commenced at this time.

Section 18 empowers the Department to revoke a licence and require the person to surrender it following a conviction for an offence of forging, altering or misusing a logbook. Failure to surrender a licence in these circumstances will be an offence.

Section 19 omits Article 19 of the 1981 Order and by doing so removes the 45mph speed limit for learner and new drivers.

It also inserts new Articles 19AB and 19AC into the 1981 Order which impose restrictions on newly qualified drivers. Newly qualified drivers of category A (includes A, A1 and A2 motor bicycles) and category B motor vehicles must display a distinguishing plate for a period of 2 years, to be known as the "new driver period". There is also a restriction on newly qualified drivers of category B motor vehicles in relation to the carrying of passengers for a period of 6 months.

It also amends Article 177 of the 1981 Order so that police will have powers to ask the driver or passengers for the names, addresses, ages and relationship to the driver of any passengers. Failure of the driver to provide such details if so requested by the police will be an offence.

Section 24 and Part 2 (partially) and Part 3 of Schedule 1 are commenced insofar as they relate to transitional and saving provisions relating to learner and new drivers.

Section 25 and Schedule 2 are commenced insofar as they relate to relevant repeals in the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981, the Road Traffic Offenders (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 and the Road Traffic (New Drivers) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998.

NOTE AS TO EARLIER COMMENCEMENT ORDERS

(This note is not part of the Order)

The following provisions of the Road Traffic (Amendment) Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 have been brought into operation by commencement orders made before the date of this Order

Provision	*Date of Commencement*	*S.R. No.*
Sections 3, 4 and 21	25th November 2016	2016 No. 399 (C. 31)
Section 6	9th November 2020	2020 No. 240 (C. 7)
Section 24 insofar as it relates to paragraph 10 of Schedule 1	28th June 2021	2021 No. 146 (C. 4)

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