STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2026 No. 68

SOCIAL SECURITY

The Social Security (Removal of Two Child Limit) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026

Made - - - -	*30th March 2026*
Coming into operation	*6th April 2026*

The Department for Communities(**a**) makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by sections 122(1)(a) and (d), 131(1), 132(3) and (4)(b), 133 and 171(1), (3) and (4) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992(**b**), Articles 2, 6(5), 14(1) and 4(b) and 36(2) of the Jobseekers (Northern Ireland) Order 1995(**c**), and now vested in it(**d**), and paragraph 1(1) of Schedule 6 to the Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015(**e**).

Regulation 2 and regulation 4(c) are made with the consent of the Department of Finance(**f**).

Citation, commencement and interpretation

1.—(1) These Regulations may be cited as the Social Security (Removal of Two Child Limit) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026 and shall come into operation on 6th April 2026.

(2) The Interpretation Act (Northern Ireland) 1954(**g**) shall apply to these Regulations as it applies to an Act of the Assembly.

Amendment of the Housing Benefit Regulations

2.—(1) The Housing Benefit Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006(**h**) are amended in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3).

(2) In regulation 20 (applicable amounts)—

(**a**) The Department for Social Development was renamed the Department for Communities in accordance with section 1(7) of the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (c. 5 N.I.)

(**b**) 1992 c. 7. Section 171 was amended by paragraph 28(2) of Schedule 3 to the Social Security Contributions (Transfer of Functions, etc.) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/671) and paragraph 5 of Schedule 4 to the Tax Credits Act 2002 (c. 21)

(**c**) S.I. 1995/2705 (N.I. 15); Article 2 is cited for the meaning of 'prescribed' and 'regulations', Article 36(2) was amended by paragraph 55 to Schedule 3 to the Social Security Contributions (Transfer of Functions, etc.) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/671)

(**d**) See Article 8(b) of S.R. 1998 No. 481

(**e**) S.I. 2015/2006 (N.I. 1); see Article 2 of the Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015 (cessation of Transitory Provisions) Order 2020 (S.I. 2020/927)

(**f**) See section 171(6A) of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 as inserted by Article 3(3) of the Social Security (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1993 (S.I. 1993/1579) (N.I. 8); see also Article 6(b) of S.R. 1999 No. 481 and section 1(4) of the Departments Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (c. 5 N.I.)

(**g**) 1954 c. 33 (N.I.)

(**h**) S.R. 2006 No. 405; relevant amending Regulations are S.R. 2017 No. 79

(a) in paragraph (1)(b) for "up to two individuals who are either children or young persons and" substitute "children or young persons";

(b) omit paragraphs (2) to (5).

(3) In regulation 21 (polygamous marriages)—

(a) in paragraph 1(c) for "up to two individuals who are either children or young persons and" substitute "children or young persons";

(b) omit paragraphs (2) to (5).

Amendment of the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations

3. In the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016(**a**) omit—

(a) regulation 42 (availability of the child element where maximum exceeded – continuation of exception from a previous award of child tax credit, income support or old style JSA);

(b) regulation 43 (evidence for non-consensual conception where claimant previously had an award of child tax credit).

Amendment of the Social Security (Restrictions on Amounts for Children and Qualifying Young Persons) (Amendment) Regulations

4. In the Social Security (Restrictions on Amounts for Children and Qualifying Young Persons) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017(**b**) omit—

(a) regulation 4 (restrictions on amounts for children and qualifying young persons – consequential changes to income support);

(b) regulation 5 (restrictions on amounts for children and qualifying young persons – consequential changes to jobseeker's allowance); and

(c) regulation 8 (housing benefit – transitional provisions for restrictions on amounts for children and qualifying young persons).

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department for Communities on 30th March 2026

(L.S.)

Cherrie Arnold
A senior officer of the Department for Communities

The Department of Finance hereby consents to regulations 2 and 4(c)

Sealed with the Official Seal of the Department of Finance on 30th March 2026

(L.S.)

Patrick Neeson
A senior officer of the Department of Finance

EXPLANATORY NOTE

(This note is not part of the Regulations)

These Regulations make amendments consequential on the Universal Credit (Removal of Two Child Limit) Act 2026 (2026 c. 13). They come into operation on the same day as that Act, 6th April 2026.

(**a**) S.R. 2016 No. 226; relevant amending Regulations are S.R. 2017 No. 79
(**b**) S.R. 2017 No. 79 to which there are amendments not relevant to these Regulations

Regulation 2 amends the Housing Benefit Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006 (S.R. 2006 No. 405) by removing the provisions that apply the two child limit to housing benefit.

Regulation 3 omits two regulations in the Universal Credit (Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016 No. 226) that make transitional provision in relation to claimants with more than two children on moving to universal credit.

Regulation 4 omits regulations 4, 5 and 8 of the Social Security (Restrictions on Amounts for Children and Qualifying Young Persons) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 (S.R. 2017 No. 79). Regulations 4 and 5 modify the Income Support (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1987 (S.R. 1987 No. 459) and the Jobseeker's Allowance Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996 (S.R. 1996 No. 198) by introducing a maximum of two children in the applicable amount in relation to those benefits. Regulation 8 is a transitional provision relating to the application of the two child limit to housing benefit.

These Regulations make in relation to Northern Ireland provision corresponding to provision contained in Regulations made by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in relation to Great Britain and accordingly, by virtue of section 149(3) of, and paragraph 10 of Schedule 5 to, the Social Security Administration (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (c. 8), are not subject to the requirement of section 149(2) of that Act for prior reference to the Social Security Advisory Committee.

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