



Department of
Justice

An Roinn Dlí agus Cirt

Mánnystrie o tha Laa

DOJ Section 75

EQUALITY SCREENING FORM

Title of Policy:

Enabling Access to Justice Criminal Legal Aid Fees:

Directly Committed Cases to the Crown Court

Date: May 2026

The Legal Background – Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:

- between person of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- between men and women generally;
- between persons with a disability and persons without; and,
- between persons with dependants and persons without.

Without prejudice to the obligations set out above, the Department is also required to:

- **have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group; and**
- meet legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

Introduction

Part 1. Policy scoping – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

Part 2. Screening questions – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories.

Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

Part 3. Screening decision – guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or to introduce measures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

Part 4. Monitoring – provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

Part 5. Approval and authorisation – verifies the public authority's approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

The [flowchart](#) details the equality screening process.

Part 1. Policy Scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step-by-step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy:

Enabling Access to Justice Criminal Legal Aid Fees:

Directly Committed Cases to the Crown Court

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

This is a new policy.

What is it trying to achieve? (Intended aims/outcomes)

For Committal Reform the Criminal Justice (Committal Reform) Act (NI) 2022 was implemented to simplify the committal process. In phase 1 the use of oral evidence during committal proceedings was eliminated for new cases. Direct Committal is phase 2 of the Committal Reform Programme, being introduced to speed up justice and is overseen by the Criminal Justice Board and is part of a wider Speeding up Justice Programme.

Direct Committal removes the traditional committal process for the most serious offences from the magistrates' court, with most cases being directly transferred to the Crown Court at the first court appearance (depending on the complexity of the case). The aim is to reduce the number of hearings and ensure the serious offences

are dealt with more efficiently and expeditiously. Therefore reducing costs and delays, improving the experience of victims and witnesses, and lowering attrition rates.

The role of Enabling Access to Justice Directorate is to support the Justice Performance Team and the Speeding up Justice Programme by developing and introducing legal aid fees for directly committed cases. This includes remuneration for:

- a Direct Committal Hearing in the magistrates' court
- additional Case Management Hearings in the Crown Court
- Discontinuance for those cases in the Crown Court
- an application to dismiss for those cases in the Crown Court.

It is anticipated that Direct Committal will commence in November 2026.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

The policy will not alter the eligibility of citizens for legal aid and therefore there will be no change to the existing profile of beneficiaries. The fee will apply equally to all practitioners.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Enabling Access to Justice Division, Department of Justice.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

Enabling Access to Justice Division, Department of Justice.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

Yes

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate) financial / legislative / other, please specify:

Criminal barristers in Northern Ireland have taken part in withdrawal of services as part of a dispute over legal aid remuneration since November 2024. This is having an ongoing impact on access to justice for citizens, speeding up justice and agreement for setting fees.

The proposed changes to remuneration are subject to economic approval and stakeholder consultation.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

Staff / service users / other public sector organisations / voluntary / community / trade unions / other, please specify:

This policy will impact on internal stakeholders in the Justice Performance Team who are taking forward the work through the Speeding up Justice Programme Board. Other members of the group include external stakeholders from the Northern Ireland Court Service, PPS, Police and other external stakeholders including the judiciary, solicitors and barristers.

The Bar and Law Society have recently had detailed discussions regarding Direct Committal with the Justice Performance Team (JPT), their support is vital.

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

Better Case Management (now repurposed to other early engagement projects).

- who owns them?

PPS/JPT

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#).

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

Religious belief evidence / information:

Legal Profession:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession¹ include: 49% Roman Catholic, 16% Presbyterian, 9% Church of Ireland, 1% Methodist, 2% Agnostic, 4% Other, 15% have no religious belief, and 4% who preferred not to say.

A similar breakdown for the Criminal Bar is not available to the Department. However, the 2021 Census shows the breakdown of the general population as 45.7% Catholic, 43.5% Protestant and 10.8% other/No Religion. Within the Legal Professionals portion of the community these proportions are 57.6% Catholic, 36.2% Protestant and 6.2% Other/No Religion although this is not broken down by solicitor/barrister.

As part of his review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those responding, 21.88% identified themselves as not

¹ Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession, The Law Society, [med_8957432_new8345688diversityandequality200922poc.pdf](https://www.lawsocty.org.uk/med_8957432_new8345688diversityandequality200922poc.pdf)

belonging to any religion, 34.48% identified as 'Christian – Catholic' and 43.75% as 'Christian – Protestant'.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 released by LSANI do not include Section 75 data on assisted persons by religious belief.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

Legal Profession:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession² identified as 52% Irish, 36% Northern Irish, 30% British, 1% Other, and 1% who preferred not to say. The survey also indicated 1 in 20 solicitors identified with all three identities.

A similar breakdown for the criminal bar is not available.

As part of his review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those responding, 15.62% identified themselves as 'British', 46.88% as Irish, and a further 11% as Northern Irish.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 released by LSANI do not include Section 75 data on assisted persons by political opinion/identity.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Racial Group evidence / information:

Legal Profession:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession: 98% of respondents recorded their ethnic group as 'white'.

Population Statistics:³ indicate that at the time of recording of the 2021 Census, the Northern Ireland population was: 1,903,170. Of these, 1,837,575 identified

² Diversity and Equality Study of the Legal Profession, Law Society of Northern Ireland, [nav_8879445_new8345688diversityandequality200922poc.pdf](#)

³ Census 2021 Main Statistics Ethnicity Tables, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), [Census 2021 main statistics ethnicity tables | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)

as White, 32,478 Asian, 11,031 Black, 14,381 Mixed, and 7,705 Other.

As part of his criminal legal aid review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those responding, 100% of those identified as 'White'.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 released by LSANI do not include Section 75 data on assisted persons by racial group so there is no way to identify how many from the Asian, Black, mixed or other ethnic groups needed to access legal advice or representation.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Age evidence / information:

Legal Profession:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession indicated 60% of those on the Solicitor's Roll in 2022 were admitted after 2000. Analysis of the responses on age indicate that over 50% of solicitors working outside Belfast were over the age of 45; with the majority of those working in Belfast being under the age of 45. The survey also indicated sole practitioners were substantially older than those in other roles. The study noted *'the age profile of those working as sole practitioners is substantially older than those in other roles'*.⁴ The Law Society noted their concern that an ageing workforce within the legal profession could impact adversely on access to justice for local communities in terms of the local availability of solicitor practices.

There is no detailed data available to the Department in relation to the criminal bar.

The Census 2021 shows that in relation to the general population 8% were in the 18-24 years old age group; 13% the 25 to 34 group; 13% the 35 to 44 group; 13% the 45 to 54 age bracket; 13% the 55 to 64 and 9% 65 to 74 age category.

As part of his criminal legal aid review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those responding, 87.5% of those indicated they were within the 16-29 age group whilst 12.5% advised they were

⁴ Diversity and Equality Study of the Legal Profession, Law Society of Northern Ireland, nav.8879445_new8345688diversityandequality200922poc.pdf

in the 30-44 age bracket.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 do not provide data on the age of assisted persons.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Marital Status evidence / information:

Legal Profession:

As part of his criminal legal aid review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those responding, 90.62% reported as single (never married or in a civil partnership); 6.25% reported as married and 3.12% reported as being divorced.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 do not provide data on the marital status of assisted persons.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

Legal Profession:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession indicated 95% of respondents described their sexual orientation as heterosexual; 4% as LGBTQ and less than 10 individuals identified as transgender. The survey respondents identifying as LGBTQ members were more likely to be male and working in support roles or as sole practitioners. In relation to the general population, Census 2021 shows 90% as heterosexual.

Data is not available in relation to the criminal bar.

As part of his review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those who responded, 93.75% advising Heterosexual/Straight with 6.25% identifying as Gay/Lesbian.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 do not provide data on the sexual orientation of assisted persons.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

Legal Practitioners:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession indicated that there was a gender balance within the legal profession (52% to 48% in favour of women) however the survey had highlighted several concerns on gender disparity in terms of career advancement and pay equality. The survey notes that the Roll of Solicitors indicates men make up greater proportion of partners and senior consultants in private practice whilst the public sector and in-house legal roles are primarily female.

Judge Burgess reports that the Criminal Bar Association is made up of 267 members, with 145 members responding to a survey indicating 73% were male and 27% female.

As part of his criminal legal services review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those who contributed, 65.62% were female and 34.38% were male.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 indicate that the number of grants made to solicitors during 2023/24 were slightly higher for males than females at 10.6, and 10, per 1,000 population respectively.

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of gender or any other Section 75 category.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Disability evidence / information:

Legal Practitioners:

Respondents to a Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession indicated 1 in 20 (4%) responding identified themselves as having a disability, whilst 1 in 5 reported some form of long-term health condition.

Of these 4% described their current occupational role as Private Sector, 8% Public Sector, 3% Other, 3% Partners/Directors, 4% Solicitors, 4% Sole Practitioners, and 7% Trainees.

As part of his criminal legal services review, Judge Burgess conducted a survey of law students in 2024 to gain their views on their interest and aspirations in working within the criminal law field. Of those who contributed, 6.25% reported that their ability to work was limited a little by their disability or long-term health condition and 3.12% indicated their ability to work was limited a lot. With the remaining 90.62% indicated that their ability to work was not limited by a disability or long-term health condition.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 do not provide data on disability statistics of assisted persons.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Dependants' evidence / information:

Legal Practitioners:

Respondents to Diversity and Equality Study of the Northern Ireland Solicitor Profession indicated 45% of respondents reported having dependents, the majority of which were children. Of those who contributed, 2 in 5 respondents were the primary carer for children and were more likely to be female, working part-time in the public sector.

There is no specific data available from the criminal bar in relation to dependents.

Assisted Persons:

The Legal Aid Annual Statistics to March 2024 do not provide data on dependents of assisted persons.

There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below:

Religious belief:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of religious belief or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Political Opinion:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of political opinion or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Racial Group:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of racial group or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Age:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of age or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Marital status:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of marital status or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75

category.

Sexual orientation:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of sexual orientation or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Men and Women Generally:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of men and women generally or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Disability:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of disability or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Dependants:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of dependants or any other Section 75 category. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases to the Crown Court. There is no evidence to indicate that the proposals will adversely impact on this section 75 category.

Part 2. Screening Questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are detailed below.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

This policy relates to the remuneration of practising defence representatives providing legal aid services. The authorisation of expenditure under legislation is available to legal practitioners providing access to legal aid regardless of Section 75 status.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

No

Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief – If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Age - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Marital Status - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Sexual Orientation - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Men and Women generally - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Disability - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Dependants - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives do not differentiate in terms of Section 75 category.

What is the level of impact? Minor / Major / None (Underline as appropriate)

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

No

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Political Opinion - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Racial Group - If Yes, provide details: If **No**, provide reasons:

The remuneration rate for defence representatives will impact on all equally.

Additional Considerations Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

None are apparent. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for directly committed cases.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

N/A

Part 3. Screening Decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details.

This policy has been screened out and it is considered that there will be no adverse impact relating to any group. The objective of the policy is to remunerate for direct committed cases to the Crown Court. This policy is anticipated to have a neutral impact.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

Not applicable. It is not expected that any section 75 categories would be adversely impacted by this proposed change.

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been '**screened in**' for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

N/A

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion [Author pick 1, 2 or 3 if a full EQIA is to take place] Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations:

social need / effect on people's daily lives / relevance to a public authority's functions

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority's Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Further advice on monitoring can be found at: [ECNI Monitoring Guidance for Public Authorities](#)

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Linda Arneill

Position/Job Title: DP

Date: 15/04/2026

Approved by: Steven Allison

Position/Job Title: Grade 5

Date: 27/04/2026

Prior to final approval the Screening Form should be forwarded to DOJESSS@justice-ni.gov.uk for comment/quality assurance. Contact the branch should you require advice or have any queries prior to this stage.

Any NIPS forms should also be forwarded to darren.smyth@justice-ni.gov.uk.

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the DoJ website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

Separately from undertaking screening of the policy, consideration must also be given in respect of undertaking a Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA). This is to ensure that public authorities comply with their duty under Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016. Full information including templates and a useful checklist are available on the DEARA Website: [Templates | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

The RNIA Form should be forwarded to DOJESSS@justice-ni.gov.uk for comment/quality assurance. Contact the branch should you require advice or have any queries prior to this stage.