



Department of  
**Health, Social Services  
and Public Safety**

[www.dhsspsni.gov.uk](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk)

## **Equality Screening, Disability Duties and Human Rights Assessment Template**

Part 1 – Policy scoping

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**Guidance notes are available to assist with completing this template. For further help please contact the Equality and Human Rights Unit ext 20539.**

## Part 1. Policy scoping

### 1.1 Information about the policy / decision

1.1.1 What is the name of the policy / decision?

Firefighters' Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

1.1.2 Is this an existing, revised or a new policy / decision?

This is a new policy. The policy is necessary as a consequence of the Public Service Pension Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

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

The Policy proposes to reform firefighter's pension's provisions in order to make them more affordable, sustainable and fairer to members of the pension's schemes and the taxpayer.

1.1.4 If there are any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy, please explain how.

The Policy will only affect firefighters within the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service. It will have no adverse differential impact on equality of opportunity and will impose no additional costs on businesses, charities or the voluntary sector.

1.1.5 Who initiated or wrote the policy?

The policy was developed and written by the DHSSPS as a result of its responsibilities detailed in the Public Service Pension Act (Northern Ireland (2014)

1.1.6 Who owns and who implements the policy?

The Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) has responsibility for the policy, and implementation of associated legislation. The

Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service have responsibility for the day to day operational implementation of the provisions resulting from the legislation.

## 1.2 Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision? If yes, are they

Financial

Legislative

Other

No

## 1.3 Main stakeholders affected

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

Staff

Service users

Other public sector organisations

Voluntary/community/trade unions

Other, please specify

Firefighters within the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service.  
  
Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS) who administer the scheme,  
  
Firefighter Trade Unions

#### 1.4 Other policies with a bearing on this policy / decision. If any:

Policy	Owner(s) of the policy
Department of Health Social Services & Public Safety (DHSSPS) has policy responsibility for Firefighters' pensions, which are administered by the Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service (NIFRS). Firefighters' pensions have, in line with other public sector pension schemes in Northern Ireland, operated on the basis of parity with their counterparts in Great Britain.	DHSSPS

#### 1.5 Available evidence

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

Section 75 category	Details of evidence/information
Religious belief	Religion will have no bearing on uptake of the legislation
Political opinion	Political opinion will have no bearing on uptake of the legislation
Racial group	Ethnicity will have no bearing on uptake of the legislation
Age	There is no evidence to support any age group taking up the legislation differently although those under or above working age are less likely to be affected by the Order as it only applies to NIFRS personnel who are engaged as firefighters.
Marital status	Marital status will have no bearing on uptake of the legislation

Sexual orientation	Sexual orientation will have no bearing on uptake of the legislation
Gender (Men and women generally)	The legislation will apply equally to people of either gender working as firefighters.
Disability (with or without)	There will be no bearing on equality or disability
Dependants (with or without)	Dependent status will have no bearing on uptake of the legislation

\* **Qualitative data** – refers to the experiences of individuals related in their own terms, and based on their own experiences and attitudes. Qualitative data is often used to complement quantitative data to determine why policies are successful or unsuccessful and the reasons for this.

**Quantitative data** - refers to numbers (that is, quantities), typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed either using descriptive statistics (which summarise patterns), or inferential statistics (which are used to infer from a sample about the wider population).

## 1.6 Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information recorded in 1.1 to 1.5, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

<b>Section 75 category</b>	<b>Details of needs/experiences/priorities</b>
Religious belief	There is no evidence that different religions will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Political opinion	There is no evidence that different political opinions will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Racial group	There is no evidence that different racial groups will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Age	There is no evidence that different age groups will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Marital status	There is no evidence that those of different marital status will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Sexual orientation	There is no evidence that those with different sexual orientation will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Gender (Men and women generally)	There is no evidence that different genders will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Disability (with or without)	There is no evidence that people with disabilities will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.
Dependants (with or without)	There is no evidence that those of different dependant status will have any different needs, experiences, priorities or issues in relation to the legislation.

## Part 2. Screening questions

2.1 What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)		
Section 75 category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact? minor/major/none
Religious belief	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Political opinion	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Racial group	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Age	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Marital status	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Sexual orientation	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Gender (Men and women generally)	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Disability (with or without)	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None
Dependants (with or without)	No impact on equality of opportunity.	None



<b>2.2</b> Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?		
Section 75 category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide reasons
Religious belief	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Political opinion	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Racial group	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Age	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Marital status	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Sexual orientation	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Gender (Men and women generally)	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Disability (with or without)	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Dependants (with or without)	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes

2.3 To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? (minor/major/none)		
Good relations category	Details of policy impact	Level of impact minor/major/none
Religious belief	The policy will not impact on good relations.	None
Political opinion	The policy will not impact on good relations.	None
Racial group	The policy will not impact on good relations.	None

2.4 Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?		
Good relations category	If <b>Yes</b> , provide details	If <b>No</b> , provide reasons
Religious belief	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Political opinion	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes
Racial group	-	The order will only affect members of the Firefighters' Pension Schemes

## 2.5 Additional **considerations**

### **Multiple identity**

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities (e.g. minority ethnic people with a disability, women with a disability, young protestant men, young lesbian, gay or bisexual persons). Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

There will be no impact on multiple identity

2.6 Was the original policy / decision changed in any way to address any adverse impacts identified either through the screening process or from consultation feedback? If so please provide details.

No. There has been no evidence from previous consultations that any relevant group has been adversely affected.

A consultation was conducted for the legislation by the Department from 6 October 2014 to 16 November 2014. The information from the consultation was considered and there was no evidence that any relevant groups will be adversely affected by the policy.

### Part 3. Screening decision

3.1 How would you summarise the impact of the policy / decision?

No impact  
Minor impact  
Major impact

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Consider mitigation (3.4 – 3.5)

3.2 Do you consider that this policy / decision needs to be subjected to a full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?

Yes - screened in  
No - screened out

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3.3 Please explain your reason for making your decision at 3.2.

This Policy will impact on all sections of the community equally. The proposed Firefighters' Pensions Scheme 2015 will not create any significant adverse impact on any of the Section 75 groups.

## Mitigation

If you have concluded at 3.1 and 3.2 that the likely impact is '**minor**' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, you must consider mitigation (or scope for further mitigation if some is already included as per 2.6) to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

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

Yes

No

3.5 If you responded "**Yes**", please give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

## Part 4. Monitoring

Monitoring is an important part of policy development and implementation. Through monitoring it is possible to assess the impacts of the policy / decision both beneficial and adverse.

4.1 Please detail how you will monitor the effect of the policy / decision?

Opt out rates and ongoing review of costs will be used to monitor the effect of the policy

4.2 What data will you collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy / decision?

The NIFRS is required to review the rate of opt outs from the firefighter pension schemes and this will be used to monitor the effect of the scheme

**Please note:** - For the purposes of the annual progress report to the Equality Commission you may later be asked about the monitoring you have done in relation to this policy and whether that has identified any Equality issues.

## Part 5. Disability Duties

5.1 Does the policy/decision in any way promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and/or encourage their participation in public life?

The policy has no impact

5.2 Is there an opportunity to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people or encourage their participation in public life by making changes to the policy/decision or introducing additional measures?

There is no opportunity to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people or encourage their participation in public life by changing or introducing additional measures to the legislation

## Part 6. Human Rights

6.1 Please complete the table below to indicate whether the policy / decision affect anyone's Human Rights?

ARTICLE	POSITIVE IMPACT	NEGATIVE IMPACT = human right interfered with or restricted	NEUTRAL IMPACT
Article 2 – Right to life			✓
Article 3 – Right to freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment			✓
Article 4 – Right to freedom from slavery, servitude & forced or compulsory labour			✓
Article 5 – Right to liberty & security of person			✓
Article 6 – Right to a fair & public trial within a reasonable time			✓
Article 7 – Right to freedom from retrospective criminal law & no punishment without law.			✓
Article 8 – Right to respect for private & family life, home and correspondence.			✓
Article 9 – Right to freedom of thought, conscience & religion			✓
Article 10 – Right to freedom of expression			✓
Article 11 – Right to freedom of assembly & association			✓
Article 12 – Right to marry & found a family			✓
Article 14 – Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of the convention rights			✓
1 <sup>st</sup> protocol Article 1 – Right to a peaceful enjoyment of possessions & protection of property			✓
1 <sup>st</sup> protocol Article 2 – Right of access to education			✓



6.2 If you have identified a likely negative impact who is affected and how?

No negative impacts were identified within the legislation

*At this stage we would recommend that you consult with your line manager to determine whether to seek legal advice and to refer to Human Rights Guidance to consider:*

- *whether there is a law which allows you to interfere with or restrict rights*
- *whether this interference or restriction is necessary and proportionate*
- *what action would be required to reduce the level of interference or restriction in order to comply with the Human Rights Act (1998)?*

6.3 Outline any actions which could be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or to ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy/decision.

No actions can be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy

## Part 7 - Approval and authorisation

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Date</b>
Screened completed by	Jacqui Todorov	SO	12/02/15
Approved by <sup>1</sup>	John Millar	Grade 7	22/07/15
Forwarded to E&HR Unit <sup>2</sup>	Peter Devine	SO	

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> The Screening Template should be approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy this would normally be at least Grade 7.

<sup>2</sup> When the Equality and Human Rights Unit receive a copy of the final screening it will be placed on the Department's website and will be accessible to the public from that point on. In addition, consultees who elect to receive it, will be issued with a quarterly listing all screenings completed during each three month period.