STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

1996 No. 38

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Public Use of the Records (Management and Fees) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1996

Made - - - -	*13th February 1996*
Coming into operation	*1st April 1996*

The Department of the Environment, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 9 of the Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923(**1**) and paragraph 2(1) of Schedule 1 to the Northern Ireland Act 1974(**2**) and now vested in it(**3**) and of every other power enabling it in that behalf, hereby makes the following Rules:—

Citation and commencement

1. These Rules may be cited as the Public Use of the Records (Management and Fees) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1996 and shall come into operation on 1st April 1996.

Interpretation

2. In these Rules—

"Deputy Keeper" means the Deputy Keeper of the Records of Northern Ireland;

"Exhibition Area" means that part of the Office specifically provided as an area where members of the public may see exhibited material and where Office staff may lecture groups of readers or other users;

"Issue Desk" means that part of the Office where records are issued to members of the public, and where members of the public return records to the Office;

"Office" means the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland;

"Reading Rooms" means those parts of the Office where the records are inspected;

"Reception Area" means that part of the Office where a member of the public is required to sign his name in the book provided, be issued with a reader's ticket on his first visit, and to leave articles;

(**1**) 1923 c. 20 (N.I.)
(**2**) 1974 c. 28
(**3**) *See*S.I. 1982/338 (N.I. 6)Art. 5

"Search Room" means that part of the Office where indexes, catalogues, calendars and such other searching aids as are provided for consultation are kept;

"Waiting Area" means that part of the Office where a member of the public waits until such time as he has completed the entrance formalities.

Payment of fees

3. The fees, as numbered in the first column of the Schedule, payable for the items or use of the records which are prescribed in the second column thereof, shall be the amounts in the third column of the Schedule.

4. Payment of fees for the inspection of any records may be dispensed with in cases where the Deputy Keeper, or where he is unavailable his deputy, is satisfied that the inspection is desired by a person who is undertaking study or research otherwise than for reward or in the course of his business.

Rules governing admission

5. Every member of the public seeking admission to the Search Room or the Reading Rooms, shall, on the first occasion of making such a request in any year—

(a) produce evidence of identity;

(b) register, providing such details as shall be specified;

(c) sign a Reader's Declaration Form giving an undertaking to adhere to these Rules; and

(d) receive a numbered reader's ticket valid for the length of time specified therein.

6. A member of the public may be refused admittance to the Office unless he agrees in writing that upon leaving the Office he will produce for inspection his bag, papers and such other personal belongings as may be specified.

7. Every member of of the public visiting the Exhibition Area shall have his name and full permanent address placed in the attendance book provided and shall sign that book or have it signed on his behalf.

8. Every member of the public visiting the Waiting Area, Search Room or Reading Rooms shall have his name, permanent address and reader's ticket number placed in the attendance book provided and shall sign that book or have it signed on his behalf.

9. Every member of the public seeking admission to the Search Room or Reading Rooms on the first occasion, shall view any visual aids supplied for the information of readers and may consult such printed aids as are provided for the like purpose.

10. No overcoats, umbrellas, bags, parcels, boxes, cameras, bulky, awkward or sharp objects, newspapers or other publications shall be taken by a member of the public into the Exhibition Area, Waiting Area, Search Room or the Reading Rooms, without the prior permission of the officer in charge of those areas, but shall be left in the lockers provided. Folders, files, ring binders, pencil cases and erasers may be brought into the Waiting Area and Search Room but only the contents of one folder may be brought into the Reading Rooms.

11.—(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), tape recorders, laptop computers or any other electrically or battery-operated device may be used in any part of the Office open to the public.

(2) Such equipment shall not be used in the Search Room without the permission of the Officer in charge of that room.

(3) Such equipment shall not be used in the Reading Rooms except at the allocated tables or carrels.

12. Every members of the public seeking to enter the Search Room or the Reading Rooms shall produce for checking his reader's ticket and submit for inspection items being brought into those rooms; such checking and inspection to be undertaken by a member of staff.

13. No member of the public shall consume any food, or smoke or drink in the Office except in an area designated for that purpose.

14. All members of the public inspecting records in the Reading Rooms shall avoid making unnecessary noise or engaging in behaviour likely to distract other persons in the Reading Room.

15. For records ordered manually the relevant dockets, one for each record or item required, must be completed by or on behalf of any member of the public wishing to inspect or consult any record in the Reading Room and those dockets must be submitted to the Issue Desk in the Reading Rooms. When ordering documents on computer the requisitioning form must be completed in full on screen.

16. No member of the public shall have more than five records out at a time, save by special permission of the officer in charge of the Reading Rooms.

17. Records which are in a fragile state will not be issued to the public and will not be copied.

18. The Deputy Keeper may issue specific directions as to the handling of records for the purpose of ensuring the preservation of their condition.

19. Records which are not described in the indexes, catalogues, calendars or such other searching aids as may be provided for public use shall only be produced at the discretion of the Deputy Keeper.

20. No member of the public shall make any mark on, fold or lean upon any record or index, catalogue, calendar or other searching aid, shall make use of any supports or any other protective device provided for that purpose.

21. Members of the public must only use pencil in the Reading Rooms.

22. Tracings of records shall not be made by any member of the public without the specific permission from the officer in charge of the Reading Rooms and only with such protective sheeting as may be provided.

23. Members of the public inspecting records are responsible for those records and if such persons leave the Reading Room they should return the records to the Issue Desk or the Reading Room invigilator.

24. Documents which have been requested will not be left by members of staff at unattended tables.

25. Any member of the public in a Reading Room who leaves his or her table for a period of one hour or more or his or her microfilm reader/cubicle for twenty minutes or more shall remove all personal property and his seat may be reallocated.

26. On completion of a search or inspection, the records must be returned to the officer in charge of the Issue Desk.

27. Members of the public consulting the indexes, catalogues, calendars or other searching aids should, after use, replace them on the shelves or other places where they are normally located.

28. Members of the public may be excluded from the Office for any of the following reasons:—

(a) breach of these Rules;

(b) damage to any record, index, catalogue, calendar or other searching aid or other article or property belonging to the Office; or

(c) conduct or language offensive to persons on the premises of the Office.