

Changes to legislation: Freedom of Information Act 2000, SCHEDULE 3 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 04 January 2025. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 3

Section 55.

POWERS OF ENTRY AND INSPECTION

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** Sch. 3 applied (with modifications) (31.12.2009) by [The INSPIRE Regulations 2009 \(S.I. 2009/3157\)](#), {reg. 11(1)-(3)(9)}

Issue of warrants

- 1 (1) If a circuit judge is satisfied by information on oath supplied by the Commissioner that there are reasonable grounds for suspecting—
- (a) that a public authority has failed or is failing to comply with—
 - (i) any of the requirements of Part I of this Act,
 - (ii) so much of a decision notice as requires steps to be taken, or
 - (iii) an information notice or an enforcement notice, or
 - (b) that an offence under section 77 has been or is being committed,
- and that evidence of such a failure to comply or of the commission of the offence is to be found on any premises specified in the information, he may, subject to paragraph 2, grant a warrant to the Commissioner.
- (2) A warrant issued under sub-paragraph (1) shall authorise the Commissioner or any of his officers or staff at any time within seven days of the date of the warrant—
- (a) to enter and search the premises,
 - (b) to inspect and seize any documents or other material found there which may be such evidence as is mentioned in that sub-paragraph, and
 - (c) to inspect, examine, operate and test any equipment found there in which information held by the public authority may be recorded.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C2** Sch. 3 para. 1: powers of seizure extended (1.4.2003) by [2001 c. 16, ss. 50, 52-54, 68, 138\(2\)](#), [Sch. 1 Pt. 1 para. 73](#); [S.I. 2003/708, art. 2](#)

Commencement Information

- II** Sch. 3 para. 1 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 1 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 1 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by [S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2\(d\)\(e\)](#); Sch. 3 para. 1 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2](#) and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2](#)

- 2 (1) A judge shall not issue a warrant under this Schedule unless he is satisfied—

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- (a) that the Commissioner has given seven days' notice in writing to the occupier of the premises in question demanding access to the premises, and
- (b) that either—
 - (i) access was demanded at a reasonable hour and was unreasonably refused, or
 - (ii) although entry to the premises was granted, the occupier unreasonably refused to comply with a request by the Commissioner or any of the Commissioner's officers or staff to permit the Commissioner or the officer or member of staff to do any of the things referred to in paragraph 1(2), and
- (c) that the occupier, has, after the refusal, been notified by the Commissioner of the application for the warrant and has had an opportunity of being heard by the judge on the question whether or not it should be issued.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) shall not apply if the judge is satisfied that the case is one of urgency or that compliance with those provisions would defeat the object of the entry.

Commencement Information

I2 Sch. 3 para. 2 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 2 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 2 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 2 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

3 A judge who issues a warrant under this Schedule shall also issue two copies of it and certify them clearly as copies.

Commencement Information

I3 Sch. 3 para. 3 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 3 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 3 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 3 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

Execution of warrants

4 A person executing a warrant issued under this Schedule may use such reasonable force as may be necessary.

Commencement Information

I4 Sch. 3 para. 4 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 4 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 4 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 4 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

5 A warrant issued under this Schedule shall be executed at a reasonable hour unless it appears to the person executing it that there are grounds for suspecting that the evidence in question would not be found if it were so executed.

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Commencement Information

I5 Sch. 3 para. 5 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 5 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 5 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 5 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

- 6 (1) If the premises in respect of which a warrant is issued under this Schedule are occupied by a public authority and any officer or employee of the authority is present when the warrant is executed, he shall be shown the warrant and supplied with a copy of it; and if no such officer or employee is present a copy of the warrant shall be left in a prominent place on the premises.
- (2) If the premises in respect of which a warrant is issued under this Schedule are occupied by a person other than a public authority and he is present when the warrant is executed, he shall be shown the warrant and supplied with a copy of it; and if that person is not present a copy of the warrant shall be left in a prominent place on the premises.

Commencement Information

I6 Sch. 3 para. 6 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 6 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 6 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 6 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

- 7 (1) A person seizing anything in pursuance of a warrant under this Schedule shall give a receipt for it if asked to do so.
- (2) Anything so seized may be retained for so long as is necessary in all the circumstances but the person in occupation of the premises in question shall be given a copy of anything that is seized if he so requests and the person executing the warrant considers that it can be done without undue delay.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C3 Sch. 3 para. 7(2) applied (1.4.2003) by 2001 c. 16, ss. 57(1)(p), 138(2) (with s. 57(2)-(4)); S.I. 2003/708, art. 2

Commencement Information

I7 Sch. 3 para. 7 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 7 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 7 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 7 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

Matters exempt from inspection and seizure

- 8 The powers of inspection and seizure conferred by a warrant issued under this Schedule shall not be exercisable in respect of information which is exempt information by virtue of section 23(1) or 24(1).

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18 Sch. 3 para. 8 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 8 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 8 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 8 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

- 9 (1) Subject to the provisions of this paragraph, the powers of inspection and seizure conferred by a warrant issued under this Schedule shall not be exercisable in respect of—
- (a) any communication between a professional legal adviser and his client in connection with the giving of legal advice to the client with respect to his obligations, liabilities or rights under this Act, or
 - (b) any communication between a professional legal adviser and his client, or between such an adviser or his client and any other person, made in connection with or in contemplation of proceedings under or arising out of this Act (including proceedings before the Tribunal) and for the purposes of such proceedings.
- (2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies also to—
- (a) any copy or other record of any such communication as is there mentioned, and
 - (b) any document or article enclosed with or referred to in any such communication if made in connection with the giving of any advice or, as the case may be, in connection with or in contemplation of and for the purposes of such proceedings as are there mentioned.
- (3) This paragraph does not apply to anything in the possession of any person other than the professional legal adviser or his client or to anything held with the intention of furthering a criminal purpose.
- (4) In this paragraph references to the client of a professional legal adviser include references to any person representing such a client.

Commencement Information

19 Sch. 3 para. 9 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 9 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 9 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para. 9 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, art. 2 and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, art. 2

- 10 If the person in occupation of any premises in respect of which a warrant is issued under this Schedule objects to the inspection or seizure under the warrant of any material on the grounds that it consists partly of matters in respect of which those powers are not exercisable, he shall, if the person executing the warrant so requests, furnish that person with a copy of so much of the material in relation to which the powers are exercisable.

Commencement Information

110 Sch. 3 para. 10 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 10 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 10 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, art. 2(d)(e); Sch. 3 para.

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10 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, **art. 2** and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, **art. 2**

Return of warrants

- 11 A warrant issued under this Schedule shall be returned to the court from which it was issued—
- (a) after being executed, or
 - (b) if not executed within the time authorised for its execution;
- and the person by whom any such warrant is executed shall make an endorsement on it stating what powers have been exercised by him under the warrant.

Commencement Information

- I11** Sch. 3 para. 11 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 11 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 11 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, **art. 2(d)(e)**; Sch. 3 para. 11 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, **art. 2** and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, **art. 2**

Offences

- 12 Any person who—
- (a) intentionally obstructs a person in the execution of a warrant issued under this Schedule, or
 - (b) fails without reasonable excuse to give any person executing such a warrant such assistance as he may reasonably require for the execution of the warrant,
- is guilty of an offence.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C4** Sch. 3 para. 12 extended (31.12.2009) by The INSPIRE Regulations 2009 (S.I. 2009/3157), **reg. 11(13)**

Commencement Information

- I12** Sch. 3 para. 12 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 12 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 12 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, **art. 2(d)(e)**; Sch. 3 para. 12 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/1909, **art. 2** and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by S.I. 2004/3122, **art. 2**

Vessels, vehicles etc.

- 13 In this Schedule “premises” includes any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or hovercraft, and references to the occupier of any premises include references to the person in charge of any vessel, vehicle, aircraft or hovercraft.

Commencement Information

- I13** Sch. 3 para. 13 wholly in force at 1.1.2005; Sch. 3 para. 13 not in force at Royal Assent, see s. 87(3); Sch. 3 para. 13 in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by S.I. 2002/2812, **art. 2(d)(e)**; Sch. 3 para.

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13 in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/1909](#), [art. 2](#) and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/3122](#), [art. 2](#)

Scotland and Northern Ireland

- 14 In the application of this Schedule to Scotland—
- (a) for any reference to a circuit judge there is substituted a reference to the sheriff, and
 - (b) for any reference to information on oath there is substituted a reference to evidence on oath.

Commencement Information

I14 [Sch. 3 para. 14](#) wholly in force at 1.1.2005; [Sch. 3 para. 14](#) not in force at Royal Assent, see [s. 87\(3\)](#); [Sch. 3 para. 14](#) in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by [S.I. 2002/2812](#), [art. 2\(d\)\(e\)](#); [Sch. 3 para. 14](#) in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/1909](#), [art. 2](#) and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/3122](#), [art. 2](#)

- 15 In the application of this Schedule to Northern Ireland—
- (a) for any reference to a circuit judge there is substituted a reference to a county court judge, and
 - (b) for any reference to information on oath there is substituted a reference to a complaint on oath.

Commencement Information

I15 [Sch. 3 para. 15](#) wholly in force at 1.1.2005; [Sch. 3 para. 15](#) not in force at Royal Assent, see [s. 87\(3\)](#); [Sch. 3 para. 15](#) in force for certain purposes at 30.11.2002 by [S.I. 2002/2812](#), [art. 2\(d\)\(e\)](#); [Sch. 3 para. 15](#) in force for certain further purposes at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/1909](#), [art. 2](#) and otherwise in force at 1.1.2005 by [S.I. 2004/3122](#), [art. 2](#)

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to :

- Sch. 3 para. 1(1) words inserted by [2003 c. 39 Sch. 4 para. 13](#)