



Consultation on the PPS Victim and Witness Expenses Policy

The document can be downloaded from the consultation area of the PPS website at www.ppsni.gov.uk.

Comments are invited and should be emailed to the address below (or sent by post if you prefer), **by Friday 17 March 2017**.

By Email: info@ppsni.gsi.gov.uk

By Post:
Equality and Governance Officer
Central Management Unit
Public Prosecution Service
Belfast Chambers
93 Chichester Street
Belfast
BT1 3JR

13 December 2016

Dear Consultee,

You are invited to take part in a consultation on a new Court Witness Expense Policy which has been developed by the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland (PPS).

Background

The Public Prosecution Service (PPS) is required to call the victims and witnesses of crime to court to give evidence in the prosecution of cases.

When victims and witnesses are required to attend court the PPS wish to make this process as easy for them as possible. PPS will pay travel and subsistence expenses, compensate witnesses for loss of earnings in attending and provide additional support services to witnesses who are considered to be particularly vulnerable in different ways.

PPS will only pay expenses to parties where they have been required to attend at the request of the PPS.

The revised Court Witness Expenses policy sets out PPS policies with regard to inviting and supporting members of the public as victims and witnesses in the prosecution of crimes and reimbursing their expenses. They have been drafted in compliance with victims' rights as set out in the EU Victims Directive, and the Victims' Charter.

Consultation Responses

The PPS would welcome comments from any interested individuals or groups regarding the scope and content of the Court Witness Expense Policy.

The document can be downloaded from the consultation area of the PPS website at www.ppsni.gov.uk. It will also be made available in hard copy on request, using any of the contact methods below (see 'Further Information'). It should be noted that initial equality screening has been carried out and no differential impacts were identified. However comments will also be welcomed from any person or organisations representing Section 75 groups

that can highlight any aspect of the policy which may result in an unintentional impact. The initial screening form is available via the Equality area of the PPS website.

Confidentiality

At the end of the consultation period, copies of responses received by the PPS may be made publicly available. The information will also be published in a summary of responses which will be made available on the PPS website. If you do not want all or part of your response or name made public, please state this clearly in your response. Any confidentiality disclaimer that may be generated by you or your organisation's IT system or included as a general statement in your fax cover sheet, will be taken to apply only to information in your response for which confidentiality has been specifically requested.

Any personal data which you provide will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. Respondents should also be aware that the PPS's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 may require that responses not subject to specific exemptions in the Act may be communicated to third parties on request.

Further Information

If you need any further information regarding this consultation or wish to request an alternative format of the document (for example large print or Braille), please contact:

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