

Children Order Bulletin

April to June 2011

serving the community through the administration of justice

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Summary

During April - June 2011:

- There were 1,461 applications entered during the period, of which:
 - 155 = Public
 - 1,306 = Private

This represents an increase of 8% on the same period last year (1,355).
- There were 1,230 applications dealt with during the period, of which:
 - 130 = Public
 - 1,100 = Private

This represents an increase of 6% on the same period last year (1,159).
- There were 168 cases transferred during the period with 178 reasons for transfer. This is a 9% increase on the April to June 2010 figures, when 154 cases were transferred with 161 reasons.
- During the period there were 188 own motion orders made, and 5% were in relation to Contact issues. This is a 16% decrease compared with the 223 own motion orders made between April – June 2010.
- There were 4,268 interim orders made, and the majority were in relation to Contact (2,251) and Care (1,384) issues. This represents a 4% decrease on the same period last year (4,434).
- There were 472 sittings spent on Children Order business between April and June 2011, this indicates a 5% decrease compared with April to June 2010 (497 sittings). The court times were spent on Children Order business between April – June 2011:
 - Total time = 1137 hours 08 minutes
 - Average sitting time = 2 hrs 25 minutes
- There were 2,930 final orders made between April and June 2011, this is a 6% increase on the 2,768 orders made between April to June 2010.
- The average waiting time in weeks from lodgement to disposal for public law cases was 38 weeks, compared with 36 weeks for April – June 2010.
- The average waiting time in weeks between lodgement to disposal for private law cases was 28 weeks, compared with 25 weeks for April – June 2010.
- There were 1,742 children involved in Children Order Proceedings during the period, which was a 21% increase on April to June 2010 (1437).
- 41% of children involved in Children Order Proceedings were under the age of five. In April to June 2010, 37% were under the age of five.

Table 1a: Applications entered and disposed

		Number of applications entered	Number of disposals
Private Law	Family Proceedings Court	1185	925
	Family Care Centre	38	106
	High Court	83	69
	Total	1306	1100
Public Law	Family Proceedings Court	138	75
	Family Care Centre	9	29
	High Court	8	26
	Total	155	130

Private law = residence, contact, specific issues, prohibited steps, parental responsibility, financial contribution, guardianship, family assistance, non-molestation and occupation orders

Table 1b: Applications entered and disposed by processing office

		Public Law		Private Law	
		Number of applications entered	Number of disposals	Number of applications entered	Number of disposals
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	0	3	4	66
	Armagh	0	0	2	1
	Ballymena	22	7	138	44
	Bangor	0	0	2	2
	Belfast	36	18	360	254
	Coleraine	0	0	18	6
	Craigavon	7	4	67	57
	Downpatrick	0	0	5	4
	Dungannon	21	15	59	61
	Larne	0	0	0	3
	Limavady	0	0	1	0
	Lisburn	6	2	108	76
	Londonderry	13	5	147	106
	Magherafelt	0	0	0	0
	Newry	15	11	108	105
	Newtownards	17	10	166	140
	Omagh	1	0	0	0
	Venue total	138	75	1185	925
Family Care Centre	Belfast	6	18	26	57
	Craigavon	3	8	12	36
	Dungannon	0	0	0	0
	Londonderry	0	3	0	13
	Venue total	9	29	38	106
High Court	Royal Courts of Justice	8	26	83	69
	Venue total	8	26	83	69

Private law = residence, contact, specific issues, prohibited steps, parental responsibility, financial contribution, guardianship, family assistance, non-molestation and occupation orders.

Table 1c: Applications entered and disposed

	Public Law		Private Law	
	Number of applications entered	Number of disposals	Number of applications entered	Number of disposals
Northern Ireland	155	130	1306	1100

Table 2: Reasons for transfer [1]

Transferred from		Complexity	Consolidation	Convenience	Gravity	Jurisdiction	Returned to Lower Court	Separate Representation for Child	Urgency	Point of Law	Public Interest	Other	Total
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	2	1	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
	Armagh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ballymena	19	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	31
	Belfast	25	3	1	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	33
	Coleraine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Craigavon	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7
	Downpatrick	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Dungannon	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Larne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Lisburn	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
	Londonderry	11	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
	Newry	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	7
	Newtownards	8	2	1	1	2	0	2	2	1	0	0	19
	Omagh	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Venue total	78	19	2	3	26	0	4	3	4	0	0	139
Family Care Centre	Belfast	8	1	2	2	4	3	0	0	2	0	0	22
	Craigavon	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
	Dungannon	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Londonderry	4	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	Venue total	15	1	2	4	5	3	0	1	2	0	0	33
High Court	Office of Care and Protection	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Matrimonial Office	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Venue total	0	0	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	6
Northern Ireland Total		93	20	4	7	32	8	4	4	6	0	0	178

[1] Total number of reasons for transfer. There may be more than one reason for each case. There were 168 cases transferred during the period.

Table 3: Total own motion orders

	Own motion orders
Parental Responsibility	0
Contact: Permission	9
Contact: Refusal	0
Residence	8
Prohibited Steps	2
Specific Issues	3
Family Assistance	0
Care	51
Supervision	1
Education Supervision	0
Declaration of Parentage	0
Child Assessment	3
Emergency Protection	0
Extension of EPO	0
Recovery	0
Secure Accommodation	0
Article 53 Contract	0
Appointment of Guardian	51
Contribution and other Financial	0
Non-Molestation Order	0
Occupation Articles	0
Article 56 Investigations	0
Exclusion Requirement	0
Ex Parte Application refused	0
Other orders, applications etc	60
Total	188

Table 4: Total interim orders

	Interim orders
Parental Responsibility	6
Contact: Permission	2251
Contact: Refusal	0
Residence	386
Prohibited Steps	100
Specific Issues	23
Family Assistance	0
Care	1384
Supervision	50
Education Supervision	0
Child Assessment	0
Emergency Protection	0
Extension of EPO	0
Recovery	0
Secure Accommodation	59
Article 53 Contract	0
Appointment of Guardian	0
Contribution and other Financial	0
Non-Molestation Order	9
Occupation Articles	0
Article 56 Investigations	0
Exclusion Requirement	0
Other orders, applications etc	0
Total	4268

Table 5a: Sitting times disposed of by court venue

		Total sitting time	Average sitting time	Total sittings
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	24:50	03:33	7
	Ballymena	32:30	02:43	12
	Ballymena@Antrim	03:25	03:25	1
	Bangor	00:10	00:10	1
	Belfast	183:35	03:32	52
	Coleraine	28:55	04:49	6
	Craigavon	48:55	03:46	13
	Dungannon	25:55	02:53	9
	Larne	13:35	03:24	4
	Limavady	00:10	00:10	1
	Lisburn	43:10	03:05	14
	Londonderry	78:25	03:44	21
	Newry	49:55	03:20	15
	Newtownards	85:35	02:19	37
	Omagh	43:40	03:22	13
	Venue total	662:45	03:13	206
Family Care Centre	Armagh	05:30	05:30	1
	Belfast	177:37	01:58	90
	Craigavon	100:31	05:35	18
	Dungannon	10:46	01:32	7
	Lisburn	02:00	02:00	1
	Londonderry	33:30	01:27	23
	Omagh	00:10	00:10	1
	Venue total	330:04	02:20	141
High Court	Royal Courts of Justice	144:19	1:09	125
	Venue total	144:19	1:09	125

Table 5b: Sitting times and business disposed of in Northern Ireland

	Total sitting time	Average sitting time	Total sittings
Northern Ireland	1137:08	02:25	472

[1] Total sittings include both minority and majority sittings

Table 6: Orders Made

		Orders Made		Total
		By Consent	Other	
Orders Made	Adjourn Generally	0	3	3
	Appointment of Guardian	0	1	1
	Article 20 Non-Molestation Order	0	2	2
	Article 53 Contact with a Child in Care	0	6	6
	Care Order	48	72	120
	Contact Order	689	196	885
	Declaration of Parentage	18	9	27
	Discharging a Care Order	3	5	8
	Discharge Contact Order	11	14	25
	Discharge Emergency Protection Order	2	0	2
	Discharge Non Molestation Occupation Order	0	4	4
	Discharge Prohibited Steps Order	2	0	2
	Discharge Residence Order	2	4	6
	Dismiss Order (Children Order)	0	64	64
	Education Supervision Order	0	8	8
	Emergency Protection Order	2	7	9
	Emergency Protection Order - Out of Hours	0	1	1
	Extension of an Emergency Protection Order	1	0	1
	Financial Provision	1	3	4
	Leave to change surname by which child is known	3	2	5
	Leave to remove Child from the UK	2	0	2
	Leave to withdraw	159	81	240
	Non Molestation Order	0	1	1
	Order of No Order (Final Order)	62	16	78
	Order for Leave of Court	0	43	43
	Order terminating appointment of GAL	101	28	129
	Other Order	44	299	343
	Parental Responsibility Order	52	17	69
	Proceedings dismissed without prejudice (Final Order)	23	29	52
	Prohibited Steps Order	6	66	72
	Recovery of a Child	1	0	1
	Refusal of Article 3 Certification	0	8	8
	Residence Order	338	167	505
Secure Accommodation Order	7	1	8	
Specific Issues Order	47	33	80	
Strike out	33	48	81	
Supervision Order	11	24	35	
Total	1668	1262	2930	

Table 7a: Average time in weeks from lodgement to disposal of cases by processing office

		Public law		Private law	
		Average time weeks	Number of cases	Average time weeks	Number of cases
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	16.8	3	19.5	66
	Armagh	0	0	0	1
	Ballymena	43.3	7	35.9	44
	Bangor	0	0	18.4	2
	Belfast	25.4	18	20.3	254
	Coleraine	0	0	1.8	6
	Craigavon	11.6	4	25.8	57
	Downpatrick	0	0	2.1	4
	Dungannon	47.9	15	20.5	61
	Larne	0	0	20.4	3
	Lisburn	13.3	2	25.7	76
	Londonderry	51.2	5	24.7	106
	Newry	33.6	11	21.8	105
	Newtownards	18.9	10	32.7	140
	Total	32.2	75	24.1	925
Family Care Centre	Belfast	32.0	18	54.4	57
	Craigavon	51.7	8	52.3	36
	Dungannon	0	0	0	0
	Londonderry	103.1	3	73.3	13
	Total	44.8	29	56.0	106
High Court	Royal Courts of Justice	49.3	26	39.8	69
	Total	49.3	26	39.8	69

N.B. Cases disposed will include time spent at the lower court tier.

Table 7b: Average time in weeks from lodgement to disposal of cases in Northern Ireland

	Public law		Private law	
	Average time weeks	Number of cases	Average time weeks	Number of cases
Northern Ireland	38.4	130	28.2	1100

N.B. Cases disposed will include time spent at the lower court tier.

Table 8: Age and gender of children

	0-4	5-8	9-12	13-16	Total
Male	406	232	190	78	906
Female	310	242	181	103	836
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0
Total	716	474	371	181	1742

Appendix 1 - Average time in weeks from lodgement to disposal by venue for Care Cases

		Average time in weeks	Number of cases
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	0	0
	Ballymena	51.3	5
	Belfast	39.1	10
	Craigavon	0	0
	Dungannon	60.0	11
	Lisburn	25.7	1
	Londonderry	148.3	1
	Newtownards	28.6	5
	Newry	43.2	8
	Total	48.0	41
Family Care Centre	Belfast	32.1	15
	Craigavon	57.2	7
	Dungannon	0	0
	Londonderry	103.1	3
	Total	47.7	25
High Court	Office of Care & Protection	71.1	12
	Total	71.1	12

N.B. Cases disposed will include time spent at the lower court tier. This table includes all care applications irrespective of the order made.

Appendix 1 - Average time in weeks from lodgement to disposal for Care Cases

	Average time weeks	Number of cases
Northern Ireland	51.5	78

N.B. Cases disposed will include time spent at the lower court tier. This table includes all care applications irrespective of the order made.

Appendix 2 - Average time in weeks spent at the court tier in which the case was finally disposed

		Public Law	Private Law	
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	16.8	19.2	
	Armagh	0	0	
	Ballymena	40.2	35.6	
	Bangor	0	18.4	
	Belfast	25.4	19.7	
	Coleraine	0	1.8	
	Craigavon	11.6	25.8	
	Downpatrick	0	2.1	
	Dungannon	47.9	20.5	
	Larne	0	20.4	
	Lisburn	13.3	25.7	
	Londonderry	51.2	24.7	
	Newry	33.6	20.7	
	Newtownards	18.9	32.5	
	Omagh	0	0	
	Total	31.9	23.7	
	Family Care Centre	Belfast	24.6	38.0
		Craigavon	35.8	34.6
Dungannon		0	0	
Londonderry		72.5	41.7	
Total		32.6	37.3	
High Court	Royal Courts of Justice	42.8	31.0	
	Total	42.8	31.0	

Appendix 2 - Average time in weeks spent at the court tier in which the case was finally disposed

	Public Law	Private Law
Northern Ireland	34.3	25.5

Data source and validations:

Data from the Integrated Courts Operations System (ICOS) are used for this publication. This system has been chosen as it is the main system within the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS). The data are input to this system on a daily basis. A download from this system is supplied to the Statistics and Research team on a weekly basis on flat files.

This information is downloaded via SPSS and validations are produced from this system to ensure that the data are reliable and robust for use. Any inconsistencies are reported back to individual court offices and if required, any necessary amendments are made to the data. Once, these amendments have been checked, computer syntax is then used to produce the tables in the bulletin. The aggregated total figures in the bulletin are produced from the computer syntax. The data are broken down by court location as this is the established way of producing and presenting these data.

To ensure that timely data are used, the latest available extract is used to compile this bulletin.

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