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Northern Ireland Court Service

Children's Order Quarterly Bulletin

April – June 2009

(Provisional Figures)



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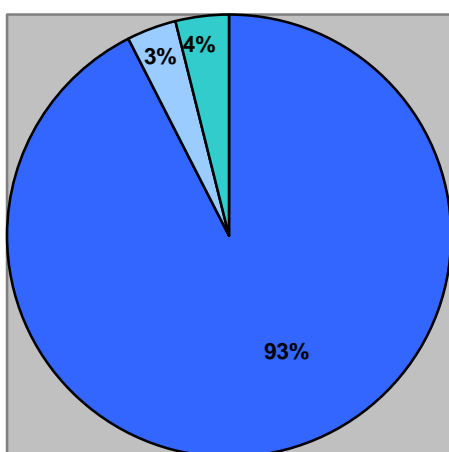


Northern Ireland
Statistics &
Research
Agency

Summary

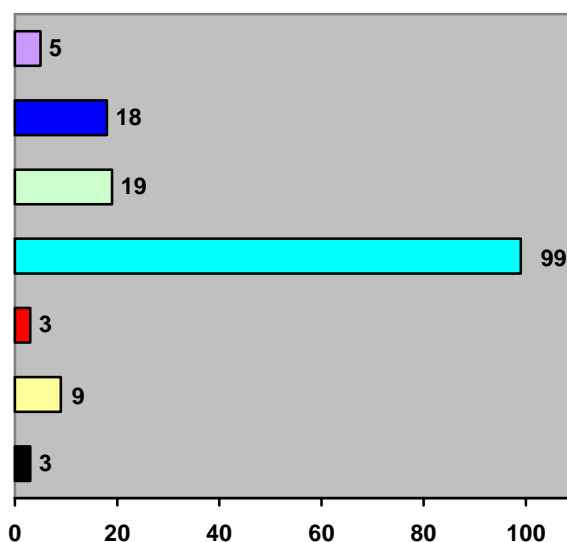
- There were 1175 applications entered during the period, of which:
149 = Public
1,026 = Private
- There were 896 applications dealt with during the period, of which:
101 = Public
795 = Private
- There were 156 cases transferred during the period.
- Of the own motion orders made, 20% were in relation to Care issues.
- The majority of interim orders made were in relation to Contact and Care issues.
- Court time spent on Children Order business between April - June 2009:
Total time = 1,116 hours 58 minutes
Ave. sitting time = 2 hours 35 minutes
- There were 2,062 orders made between April - June 2009.
- The average waiting time in weeks between lodgement to disposal for public law cases was 43 weeks.
- The average waiting time in weeks between lodgement to disposal for private law cases was 28 weeks.
- There were 1,206 children involved in Children Order Proceedings during the period, of which 35% were under the age of five.

Figure 1: Number of applications received by court tier



■ Family Proceedings = 93%
■ Family Care Centre = 3%
■ High Court = 4%

Figure 2: Reasons for Transfer



■ Returned to Lower Court
■ Jurisdiction
■ Consolidation
■ Complexity
■ Gravity
■ Convenience
■ Urgency

Table 1a: Applications entered and disposed

		Number of applications entered	Number of disposals
Private Law	Family Proceedings Court	949	697
	Family Care Centre	37	54
	High Court	40	44
	Total	1026	795
Public Law	Family Proceedings Court	139	63
	Family Care Centre	4	19
	High Court	6	19
	Total	149	101

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	0	3	1
	Armagh	0	0	2	1
	Ballymena	9	5	92	66
	Banbridge	0	0	1	1
	Belfast	40	13	271	182
	Coleraine	2	2	6	1
	Craigavon	10	5	73	48
	Dungannon	26	14	45	50
	Larne	0	0	2	1
	Lisburn	11	5	85	79
	Londonderry	9	2	121	85
	Newry	13	10	92	67
	Newtownards	19	7	156	115
	Venue total	139	63	949	697
Family Care Centre	Craigavon	1	5	17	17
	Londonderry	0	5	0	13
	Belfast	3	9	16	20
	Dungannon	0	0	4	4
	Venue total	4	19	37	54
High Court	Matrimonial	0	0	2	1
	Office of Care & Protection	6	19	38	41
	Laganside Courts	0	0	0	2
	Venue total	6	19	40	44

[1] 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	149	101	1026	795

Table 2: Reasons for transfer [1]

Transferred from													Total	
		Complexity	Consolidation	Convenience	Gravity	Jurisdiction	Returned to Lower Court	Separate Representation for Child	Urgency	Point of Law	Public Interest	Other		
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Armagh	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Ballymena	6	1	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
	Belfast	27	4	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34
	Coleraine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Craigavon	8	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
	Dungannon	3	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	Larne	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Lisburn	7	1	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
	Londonderry	11	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	14
	Newry	6	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
	Newtownards	5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
	Omagh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Venue total	74	16	3	3	14	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	111
Family Care Centre	Belfast	15	1	4	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	23
	Craigavon	4	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
	Dungannon	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Londonderry	5	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
	Venue total	25	3	6	0	3	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	40
High Court	Office of Care and Protection	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
	Venue total	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Northern Ireland Total		99	19	9	3	18	5	0	3	0	0	0	0	156

Where a court tier / venue is omitted, this indicates a nil return for the period to date.

[1] Total number of reasons for transfer. There may be more than one reason for each case.

Table 3: Total own motion orders

	Own motion orders
Parental Responsibility	5
Contact: Permission	127
Contact: Refusal	0
Residence	63
Prohibited Steps	9
Specific Issues	5
Family Assistance	3
Care	97
Supervision	0
Education Supervision	0
Declaration of Parentage	5
Child Assessment	5
Emergency Protection	3
Extension of EPO	1
Recovery	0
Secure Accommodation	10
Article 53 Contract	0
Appointment of Guardian under Part XV	24
Contribution and other Financial	0
Non-Molestation Order	0
Occupation Articles	0
Article 56 Investigations	0
Exclusion Requirement	0
Other orders, applications etc	129
Total	486

Table 4: Total interim orders

	Interim orders
Parental Responsibility	4
Contact: Permission	1757
Contact: Refusal	4
Residence	293
Prohibited Steps	115
Specific Issues	15
Family Assistance	0
Care	1341
Supervision	81
Education Supervision	0
Child Assessment	0
Emergency Protection	0
Extension of EPO	0
Recovery	0
Secure Accommodation	63
Article 53 Contract	0
Appointment of Guardian under Part XV	0
Contribution and other Financial	0
Non-Molestation Order	1
Occupation Articles	0
Article 56 Investigations	0
Exclusion Requirement	0
Other orders, applications etc	0
Total	3674

Table 5: Sitting times and applications disposed of by venue

		Total sitting time	Average sitting time	Total sittings
Family Proceedings Court	Antrim	13:10	4:23	3
	Ballymena	41:35	3:28	12
	Banbridge@Newry	0:05	0:05	1
	Belfast	193:25	3:43	52
	Coleraine	18:50	2:41	7
	Craigavon	31:35	2:52	11
	Dungannon	48:25	4:02	12
	Larne	11:00	2:45	4
	Lisburn	35:50	2:45	13
	Londonderry	97:00	4:25	22
	Newry	49:15	3:17	15
	Newtownards	94:00	2:28	38
	Omagh	58:25	4:52	12
	Venue total	692:35	3:26	202
Family Care Centre	Ballymena	0:40	0:40	1
	Belfast	169:57	2:01	84
	Craigavon	52:38	3:17	16
	Dungannon	2:04	0:21	6
	Londonderry	43:19	1:14	35
	Lisburn	1:00	1:00	1
	Magherafelt	1:15	1:15	1
	Omagh	4:45	4:45	1
	Venue total	275:38	1:54	145
High Court	Matrimonial	0:00	0:00	0
	Office of Care & Protection	148:45	1:45	85
	Venue total	148:45	1:45	85

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

	Total sitting time	Average sitting time	Total sittings
Northern Ireland	1116:58	2:35	432

[1] Total sittings include both minority and majority sittings

Table 6: Orders Made

		Orders Made		Total
		By Consent	Other	
Orders Made	ADJOURN GENERALLY	0	12	12
	ARTICLE 20 NON-MOLESTATION ORDER	0	7	7
	ARTICLE 53 CONTACT WITH A CHILD IN CARE	0	9	9
	C18 - FINAL ORDER	111	186	297
	CARE ORDER	33	34	67
	CASE WITHDRAWN	1	52	53
	CONTACT ORDER	468	153	621
	DECLARATION OF PARENTAGE	23	7	30
	DISCHARGING A CARE ORDER	7	0	7
	DISMISS ORDER (CHILDREN ORDER)	0	47	47
	EDUCATION SUPERVISION ORDER	0	3	3
	EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDER	7	10	17
	EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDER - OUT OF HOURS	0	8	8
	EXTENSION OF AN EMERGENCY PROTECTION ORDER	2	5	7
	FAMILY ASSISTANCE ORDER	6	0	6
	FINANCIAL PROVISION	3	2	5
	LEAVE TO CHANGE SURNAME BY WHICH CHILD IS KNOWN	1	5	6
	LEAVE TO WITHDRAW	0	53	53
	ORDER FOR LEAVE OF COURT	0	17	17
	ORDER FOR RECOVERY OF A CHILD	0	3	3
	ORDER OR DIRECTIONS FINAL	48	23	71
	ORDER TERMINATING APPOINTMENT OF GAL	84	19	103
	OTHER ORDER	2	56	58
	PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY ORDER	47	17	64
	PROHIBITED STEPS ORDER	17	31	48
	REFUSAL OF ARTICLE 3 CERTIFICATION	0	0	0
	RESIDENCE ORDER	256	102	358
SECURE ACCOMMODATION ORDER	6	5	11	
SPECIFIC ISSUES ORDER	17	10	27	
STRIKE OUT	0	39	39	
SUPERVISION ORDER	6	2	8	
Total	1145	917	2062	

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		0	47.3	1
	Armagh		0	3.6	1
	Ballymena	30.8	5	22.9	66
	Banbridge		0	2.6	1
	Belfast	15.6	13	26.7	182
	Coleraine	0.1	2	7.4	1
	Craigavon	42.5	5	21.4	48
	Dungannon	30.0	14	33.9	50
	Larne			0.0	1
	Lisburn	48.3	5	20.4	79
	Londonderry	12.1	2	29.9	85
	Newry	19.0	10	22.9	67
	Newtownards	4.2	7	21.4	115
	Total	23.4	63	24.8	697
Family Care Centre	Belfast	46.8	9	58.3	20
	Craigavon	74.4	5	21.3	17
	Dungannon		0	51.3	4
	Londonderry	98.6	5	107.7	13
	Total	67.7	19	58.0	54
High Court	Laganside Courts		0	113.8	2
	Matrimonial		0	122.1	1
	Office of Care & Protection	80.6	19	42.0	41
	Total	80.6	19	47.1	44

Nb 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	42.5	101	28.3	795

Nb 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	206	177	132	78	593
Female	219	161	158	71	609
Unknown	2	2	0	0	4
Total	427	340	290	149	1206

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	Ballymena	23.0	3
	Belfast	42.4	3
	Craigavon	37.3	3
	Dungannon	72.0	4
	Lisburn	80.4	3
	Newry	48.1	2
	Total	51.8	18
Family Care Centre	Belfast	33.5	3
	Craigavon	74.4	5
	Londonderry	118.8	4
	Total	79.0	12
High Court	Office of Care & Protection	78.7	10
	Total	78.7	10

Nb 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	66.7	40

Nb 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	0	47.3
	Armagh	0	3.6
	Ballymena	30.8	22.6
	Banbridge	0	2.6
	Belfast	15.3	25.8
	Coleraine	0.1	7.4
	Craigavon	41.8	21.2
	Dungannon	30.0	33.1
	Larne	0	0
	Lisburn	48.3	20.1
	Londonderry	12.1	29.9
	Newry	19.0	22.9
	Newtownards	4.2	21.4
	Total	23.3	24.4
Family Care Centre	Belfast	44.5	36.7
	Craigavon	45.8	16.7
	Dungannon	0	47.7
	Londonderry	72.8	76.0
	Total	52.3	40.7
High Court	Matrimonial	0	64.1
	Office of Care & Protection	56.9	33.7
	Total	56.9	33.1

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

	Public Law	Private Law
Northern Ireland	35.1	26.0