

Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

The Department of Justice.

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

Consultation on whether to require court approval of compensation settlements for children for personal injuries which are agreed without legal proceedings issuing.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

Court approval of minor settlements (Compensation settlements reached for personal injuries in respect of children where legal proceedings have not issued): A consultation

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

The overall aim of the policy is to ensure, by proportionate means, the fair compensation of children and the proper protection of their awards.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

Not applicable

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

Not applicable

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

Not applicable

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

An analysis of the data indicates that there may be approximately 100 minor settlements per annum which are not submitted for court approval. However, evidence of the demographic profile of those children is unavailable. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that such children are disproportionately resident in rural areas.

That said, mandatory court approval of all minor settlements may have an impact on people in rural areas if a court hearing for such approval is required.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

It may be that requiring all minor settlements to be approved by the court may present more difficulty for some children and their parents living in rural areas in terms of access to courthouses, caused by greater distance and less public transport availability when compared to those in urban areas. However this may be offset by the option of introducing a new paper-based procedure or a financial threshold.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text" value="Persons living in rural areas"/>

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

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3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

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If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

Given the small numbers involved (c 100 children per annum) and the option of a paper-based procedure for obtaining court approval and/or a financial threshold being explored in the consultation paper, it was not considered that it was necessary to take any specific steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

This impact assessment will be published alongside the consultation paper and, therefore, respondents will have the opportunity to comment on it if they wish. A further impact assessment will be carried out if legislation is required to implement the outcome of the consultation.

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

It has been noted that requiring court approval for all minor settlements may impact persons in rural areas if they have difficulties travelling to court.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes No If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **5C**.

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

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If the response to Section **5A** was **YES** GO TO Section **6A**.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

Given the small number of cases anticipated and the potential option of a paper-based procedure and/or a financial threshold, it was not considered that the impact of the policy would have a significant adverse impact on persons in rural areas.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled.



Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Norma Dempster
Position/Grade:	DP
Division/Branch	Civil Justice Policy Division
Signature:	Signed: Norma Dempster
Date:	09/06/21
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Martin Moore
Position/Grade:	Grade 7
Division/Branch:	Civil Justice Policy Division
Signature:	Signed: Martin Moore
Date:	11/06/21