

## PRACTICE DIRECTION 6C

# DISCLOSURE OF ADDRESSES BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

**13 February 1989 [as amended by Practice Direction 20 July 1995]**

The arrangements set out in the Registrar's Direction, *Disclosure of Addresses by Government Departments* of 26 April 1988 ([1988] 2 FLR 183; [1988] Fam. Law 360; [1988] 2 All ER 573; [1988] 1 WLR 638), whereby the court may request the disclosure of addresses by government departments have been further extended.

These arrangements will now cover –

- (a) tracing the address of a person in proceedings against whom another person is seeking to obtain or enforce an order for financial provision either for himself or herself or for the children of the former marriage; and,
- (b) tracing the whereabouts of a child, or the person with whom the child is said to be, in proceedings under the Child Abduction and Custody Act 1985 or in which a custody order, as defined in Part I of the Family Law Act 1986, is being sought or enforced.

Requests for such information will be made officially by the registrar. The request, in addition to giving the information mentioned below, should certify –

- (1) *In financial provision applications* either (a) that a financial provision order is in existence, but cannot be enforced because the person against whom the order has been made cannot be traced; or (b) that the applicant has filed or issued a notice, petition or originating summons containing an application for financial provision which cannot be served because the respondent cannot be traced.

A 'financial provision order' means any order made under ss. 23, 24, 24A and 27 of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 or the variations of any order made under s. 31 of the 1973 Act, and any periodical payments or lump sum order made under s. 6 of the Family Law Reform Act 1969, the Guardianship of Minors Act 1971, s. 34 of the Children Act 1975 and any order registered in the High Court under the Maintenance Orders (Facilities for Enforcement) Act 1920, the Maintenance Orders Act 1950 and the Maintenance Orders Act 1958, and any order made under s. 17 of the Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984.

- (2) *In wardship proceedings* that the child is the subject of wardship proceedings and cannot be traced, and is believed to be with the person whose address is sought.
- (3) *In custody proceedings* that the child is the subject of custody proceedings and cannot be traced, and is believed to be with the person whose address is sought.

The following notes set out the information required by those departments which are likely to be of the greatest assistance to an applicant.

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

- 1 The department most likely to be able to assist is the Department of Social Security, whose records are the most comprehensive and complete. The possibility of identifying one person amongst so many will depend on the particulars given. An address will not be supplied by the department unless it is satisfied from the particulars given that the record of the person has been reliably identified.

The applicant or his solicitor should therefore be asked to supply as much as possible of the following information about the person sought –

- (i) National Insurance number;
- (ii) surname;
- (iii) forenames in full;
- (iv) date of birth (or, if not known, approximate age);
- (v) last known address, with date when living there;
- (vi) any other known address(es) with dates;
- (vii) if the person sought is a war pensioner, his war pension and service particulars (if known); and in applications for financial provision –
- (viii) the exact date of the marriage and the wife's forenames.

Enquiries should be sent by the registrar to:

Department of Social Security

N1CB

Special Section A

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE98 1YU

The department will be prepared to search if given full particulars of the person's name and date of birth, but the chances of accurate identification are increased by the provision of more identifying information. Second requests for records to be searched, provided that a reasonable interval has elapsed, will be met by the Department of Social Security.

### **Supplementary Benefit/Income Support**

Where, in the case of applications for financial provision, the wife is or has been in receipt of supplementary benefit income support, it would be advisable in the first instance to make enquiries of the manager of the local Social Security office for the area in which she resides in order to avoid possible duplication of enquiries.

## **OFFICE OF POPULATION CENSUSES AND SURVEYS NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CENTRAL REGISTER**

- 2** The Office of Population Censuses and Surveys administers the National Health Service Central Register for the Department of Health. The records held in the Central Register include individuals' names, with dates of birth and National Health Service number, against a record of the Family Practitioner Committee area where the patient is currently registered with a National Health Service doctor. The Central Register does not hold individual patients' addresses, but can advise courts of the last Family Practitioner Committee area registration. Courts can then apply for information about addresses to the appropriate Family Practitioner Committee for independent action.

When application is made for the disclosure of Family Practitioner Committee area registrations from these records the applicant or his solicitor should supply as much as possible of the following information about the person sought –

- (i) National Health Service number;
- (ii) surname;
- (iii) forenames in full;
- (iv) date of birth (or, if not known, approximate age);
- (v) last known address;

- (vi) mother's maiden name.

Enquiries should be sent by the registrar to:  
Office of Population Censuses and Surveys  
National Health Service Central Register  
Smedley Hydro  
Trafalgar Road  
Southport  
Merseyside  
PR 8 2HH

## PASSPORT OFFICE

- 3** If all reasonable enquiries, including the aforesaid methods, have failed to reveal an address, or if there are strong grounds for believing that the person sought may have made a recent application for a passport, enquiries may be made to the Passport Office. The applicant or his solicitor should provide as much of the following information about the person as possible –
- (i) surname;
  - (ii) forenames in full;
  - (iii) date of birth (or, if not known, approximate age);
  - (iv) place of birth
  - (v) occupation;
  - (vi) whether known to have travelled abroad, and, if so, the destination and dates;
  - (vii) last known address, with date living there;
  - (viii) any other known address(es), with dates.

The applicant or his solicitor must also undertake in writing that information given in response to the enquiry will be used solely for the purpose for which it was requested, i.e. to assist in tracing the husband in connection with the making or enforcement of a financial provision order or in tracing a child in connection with custody or wardship proceedings, as the case may be.

Enquiries should be sent to:  
The Chief Passport Officer  
Passport Department  
Home Office  
Clive House  
Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9HD

## MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

- 4** In cases where the person sought is known to be serving or to have recently served in any branch of H.M. Forces, the solicitor representing the applicant may obtain the address for service of financial provision or custody and wardship proceedings direct from the appropriate service department.

In the case of army servicemen, the solicitor can obtain a list of regiments and of the various manning and record offices from the Officer in Charge, Central Manning Support Office, Higher Barracks, Exeter, EC4 4ND.

The solicitor's request should be accompanied by a written undertaking that the address will be used for the purpose of service of process in those proceedings and that so far as is possible the solicitor will disclose the address only to the court and not to the applicant or any other person, except in the normal course of the proceedings.

Alternatively, if the solicitor wishes to serve process on the person's commanding officer under the provisions contained in s. 101 of the Naval Act 1957, s. 153 of the Army Act 1955 and s. 153 of the Air Force Act 1955 (all of which as amended by s. 62 of the Armed Forces Act 1971) he may obtain that officer's address in the same way.

Where the applicant is acting in person the appropriate service department is prepared to disclose the address of the person sought, or that of his commanding officer, to a registrar on receipt of an assurance that the applicant has given an undertaking that the information will be used solely for the purpose of serving process in the proceedings.

In all cases, the request should include details of the person's full name, service number, rank or rating, and his ship, arm or trade, corps regiment or unit or as much of this information as is available. The request should also include details of his date of birth, or, if not known, his age, his date of entry into the service and, if no longer serving, the date of discharge, and any other information, such as his last known address. Failure to quote the service number and the rank or rating may result in failure to identify the serviceman or at least in considerable delay. Enquiries should be addressed as follows –

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(a)

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| ● Officers of Royal Navy and Women's Royal Naval Service       | ● The Naval Secretary<br>Room 161<br>Victory Building<br>HM Naval Base<br>Hants<br>PO1 3LS                                   |
| ● Ratings in the Royal Navy<br>WRNS Ratings<br>QUARNNS Ratings | ● Captain<br>Naval Drafting<br>Centurion Building<br>Grange Road<br>Gosport, Hants<br>PO13 9XA                               |
| ● RN Medical and Dental Officers                               | ● The Medical Director<br>General (Naval)<br>Room 114<br>Victory Building<br>HM Naval Base<br>Portsmouth<br>Hants<br>PO1 3LS |
| ● Officers of Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service    | ● The Matron-in-Chief<br>QARNNS<br>Room 129<br>Victory Building<br>HM Naval Base<br>Portsmouth<br>Hants<br>PO1 3LS           |
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- Naval Chaplains

- Director General  
Naval Chaplaincy Service  
Room 201  
Victory Building  
HM Naval Base  
Portsmouth  
Hants  
PO1 3LS

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(b)

- Royal Marine Officers

- The Naval Secretary  
Room 161  
Victory Building  
HM Naval Base  
Portsmouth  
Hants  
PO1 3LS

- Royal Marine Ranks

- HQRM  
(DRORM)  
West Battery  
Whale Island  
Portsmouth  
Hants  
PO2 8DX

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(c)

- Army Officers (including WRAC and QARANC)

- Army Officer  
Documentation Office  
Index Department  
Room F7  
Government Buildings  
Stanmore  
Middlesex

- Other Ranks, Army

- The Manning and Record Office which is appropriate to the Regiment or Corps.

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(d)

- Royal Air Force Officers and other Ranks
- Women's Royal Air Force Officers and Other Ranks (including PMRAFNS)

- Ministry of Defence  
RAF Personnel  
Management 2b1 (a)  
(RAF)  
Building 248  
RAF Innsworth  
Gloucester  
GL3 1EZ

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## General Notes

Records held by other departments are less likely to be of use, either because of their limited scope or because individual records cannot readily be identified. If, however, the circumstances

suggest that the address may be known to another department, application may be made to it by the registrar, all relevant particulars available being given.

When the department is able to supply the address of the person sought to the registrar, it will be passed on by him to the applicant's solicitor (or, in proper cases, direct to the applicant if acting in person) on an understanding to use it only for the purpose of the proceedings.

Nothing in this practice direction affects the service in matrimonial causes of petitions which do not contain any application for financial provision, etc. The existing arrangements whereby the Department of Social Security will at the request of the solicitor forward a letter by ordinary post to a party's last known address remain in force in such cases.

The Registrar's Direction *Disclosure of Addresses by Government Department*, of 26 April 1988, is hereby revoked.

Issued [in its original form] with the concurrence of the Lord Chancellor

C. F. Tuner

*Senior Registrar*