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## SL5

**Title of parent legislation:** The Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992, the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 & the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022

**Title of Statutory Rules:** The Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (Miscarriage) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026

**Name of rule-making authority:** Department for the Economy

I enclose for laying before the Assembly a draft copy of the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (Miscarriage) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2026, and the associated Explanatory Memorandum. This Statutory Rule fulfils a statutory requirement under both the Social Security Contributions and Benefits (Northern Ireland) Act 1992 (section 167ZZ19) and the Employment Rights (Northern Ireland) Order 1996 (Article 112EF), to extend the rights available under the existing Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay legislation to workers and employees who have experienced a miscarriage as well as those workers and employees who are in a specified relationship with a woman who has experienced a miscarriage.

These draft Regulations extend Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay to include cases of miscarriage, ensuring that eligible workers and employees who experience a miscarriage on or after 6 April 2026, as well as those who meet the qualifying relationship criteria, are entitled to the same rights and protections currently available following child death or stillbirth. The entitlement will then apply to spontaneous miscarriages and to cases involving specified medical interventions, with eligibility linked to the date of the miscarriage or when it

became known. By amending the Parental Bereavement Leave (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 and Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (General) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023, the legislation provides for statutory paid leave to support bereaved employees.

The content of the policy and the draft Regulations remain unchanged since the related SL1 and the submission of the draft Regulations to the Committee.

These draft Regulations are subject to the draft affirmative procedure and thus require debate and approval by the Assembly before they can be made. A motion for approval accompanies this letter, and the debate will be arranged in accordance with regular business scheduling protocols. Please note that there is a statutory deadline of 6 April 2026 for implementing the new entitlement.

An associated set of Regulations, subject to the confirmatory procedure, can only be made once these draft Regulations have been debated and approved, and are contingent upon their approval.

Officials from the Department for the Economy will attend if requested, in order to give any further information required by the Committee.

Yours faithfully,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the official.

20 February 2026