

BRIEFING NOTE

For Elected Representatives

Date Confirmed for Safe Access Zones

Safe Access Zones will be introduced at health service locations across Northern Ireland on September 29, 2023.

Five NI Health and Social Care Trusts will introduce the Zones tomorrow.

Safe Access Zones are being established under NI Assembly legislation to protect women and girls accessing abortion services, information, advice and counselling, and protect staff working at these locations. It will be illegal for them to be impeded, recorded, influenced or to be caused harassment, alarm or distress within the Zones.

Under the legislation, Safe Access Zones can be established in the vicinity of health care premises providing lawful abortions, as well as at premises where information, advice or counselling about abortion services are provided. The Zones will include the protected premises where these services are provided, as well as adjoining public space between 100m-250m from entrances or exits of the protected premises.

Information on the location of each Safe Access Zone will be displayed at all protected premises and published on the Department of Health and HSC Trust websites. Public signage will highlight the legal requirements at each Zone.

The Zones will only apply to the strictly designated public space areas. They do not apply to private properties.

The legislation enabling their establishment is the Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) Act (Northern Ireland) 2023.

Click here for
more info
& maps