

N. R. 3.

Government Circular No. 157.

G.O. 6271.

*For Issue to Clerks of
Towns, Village Districts,
and Parish Districts.*



NATIONAL REGISTRATION ACT (ISLE OF MAN), 1915.

SIR,

1. I am directed by His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor to draw your attention to the National Registration Act, 1915, which has been extended to the Isle of Man, with adaptations, under the Isle of Man (War Legislation) Act, 1914. Three copies of the Act are enclosed.

2. The Act provides that a Register shall be formed of all persons in the Isle of Man between the ages of 15 and 65 not being members of His Majesty's naval forces or of His Majesty's regular or territorial forces, subject to certain exceptions which will be referred to later.

3. The Register will be compiled and maintained locally by the Local Registration Authorities, which, under the Act, are the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Douglas, and the Commissioners of any district under the Local Government Act, 1886, and any Act amending the same. The Central Registration Authority is the Registrar-General, acting under the direction of the Lieutenant-Governor.

4. By Section 8 of the Act the Lieutenant-Governor is empowered to issue such instructions as appear to him to be necessary for carrying the Act into effect, and may by such instructions prescribe amongst other things the manner in which the register is to be compiled and the nature of the forms to be issued and the duties of Registration Authorities and persons employed by them under the Act. In pursuance of these powers he has issued an Order prescribing the form to be filled up by persons required to register, under the Act, hereinafter referred to as the "Registration Form," and containing some preliminary instructions necessary for carrying the Act into effect. Copies of the Order are enclosed.

5. Under the Act and the Order enclosed, it becomes the immediate duty of each Local Registration Authority to divide their district into suitable and convenient areas for the purpose of carrying the Act into effect and to arrange for the distribution and collection of the registration forms. When the initial compilation of the Register has taken place they will have to arrange for the supply to each registered person of a certificate of registration. It is made the duty of the Clerk to the Local Registration Authority to assist the Authority, and generally to provide for and supervise the carrying out of all duties required to be performed by the Authority.

6. The Register for each district will be compiled in the following way. The registration forms prescribed by the Order and set out in the Schedule to the Order contain the particulars which each person to be registered is required to furnish. These will be issued by the Registrar-General to each Local Registration Authority as soon as they are received from the printers, and it is anticipated that they will be in the hands of all Authorities early in August. It is provided by the Order that the ordinary date of registration shall be Sunday the 15th August. The registration forms will have to be distributed at every dwelling-house in the course of the six days immediately preceding that date and collected on the days immediately following. It is hoped that they may be all collected by the succeeding Wednesday. Public notice must be given by the Local Registration Authority of places within their district where forms can be obtained, in order that any person who may not have received a form, or who may have lost or destroyed it, or has been otherwise prevented from filling up the form within the prescribed time, can procure one. Save in exceptional cases forms should not be supplied in this way before Monday, the 16th August. The process, it will be seen, resembles in many respects the taking of the Census, but in the present case, instead of there being one schedule to be filled up for each household by the head of the household, there will be a separate form to be filled up and signed by each person within the ages mentioned in the Act.

7. The Local Registration Authority will cause the forms as received to be examined. Some of them will no doubt be incomplete or incorrect. The Act provides that the Authority may take such steps as appear to them to be necessary to enable completion and correction to be effected. It is hoped that the persons who collect the forms will be able generally to secure that they are completely filled up, but in special cases, in which either no form has been returned or the form as returned cannot be completed or corrected without the personal attendance of the person concerned, the Authority may require his attendance at such place and time as they may appoint. It is not intended that personal attendance should be required save in the last resort, and it is suggested that in wide areas it would be possible that the interview with the person whose attendance is required might be conveniently arranged at or near his dwelling or his place of employment rather than that he should be compelled to travel a long distance for the purpose. It is the duty of any person whose attendance is so required to attend and answer such questions as may be addressed to him for the purpose of enabling the form to be filled up, completed, or corrected.

8. It is intended that each local register shall comprise the forms of those persons whose permanent postal address is in the local registration district. The registration form requires each person to enter his permanent postal address, and if he should be staying temporarily at some other address when he fills up the form, that address also. In cases such as these the forms must be sent by the Registration Authority of the area where the person is temporarily residing to the Registration Authority of the area containing the permanent postal address. In case of doubt they can be sent to the Registrar-General, Government Office, Isle of Man.

9. After the return of his form duly filled up and signed, every person is to receive a Certificate of Registration in the form prescribed in the Order. This must be signed and preserved by him. The possession of the Certificate will serve

as a proof that he has been duly registered under the Act. The Local Registration Authority will receive from the Registrar-General forms of certificate. These should be stamped or signed on behalf of the Authority, and transmitted to the registered person through the post, or otherwise delivered.

10. The Registration Forms when collected will constitute the local register of each registration district, and directions will be issued by the Registrar-General as to the manner in which these forms are to be arranged, tabulated, and generally dealt with, and as to the subsequent maintenance of the Register.

11. The first business of the Local Registration Authority, it will be observed, will be to sub-divide their district into convenient areas and to engage a sufficient number of persons who will distribute the forms and collect them afterwards. These persons are in this letter and in His Excellency's Order referred to as "enumerators." So many offers of voluntary help have been made that the Lieutenant-Governor feels justified in believing that the whole of the task of distribution and collection will be done gratuitously by persons willing and anxious to take a part in a work of national importance. If a notice is issued by the Local Registration Authority intimating that they are willing to receive offers of voluntary help, His Excellency has no doubt that plenty of offers will be received both from men and women. In making a selection of these offers care must of course be taken to engage those persons who are best fitted for the work, which will require both intelligence and tact. Knowledge of the district and of its industries will also be a valuable qualification. The selection of males of military age should be avoided. If in any district it should be found that the supply of voluntary help is insufficient, the fact should at once be reported to the Registrar-General.

12. A small staff may be needed for the arrangement of the forms, their tabulation, the issue of certificates, and other work connected with the Register, including its subsequent maintenance. The Act provides that there shall be paid out of the General Revenue of the Island to the Local Registration Authorities towards their expenses under the Act, allowances on such scale as the Lieutenant-Governor may approve, and that the expenses of the Authorities so far as not covered by such allowances shall be paid out of the fund or rate out of which the general expenses of the Authority are payable. The intention is that the allowances shall be sufficient to cover all reasonable expenses of the Local Registration Authorities.

13. It is very important that each enumerator should clearly understand the exact limits of the area for which he will be responsible, and the duties which he is expected to perform. These duties will be found stated in the Schedule to the Order which accompanies this letter, and they will be printed in the Memorandum books which will be supplied for the use of each enumerator. As soon as the Local Registration Authority have fixed the number of enumerators to be employed in their area, they should inform the Registrar-General in order that a sufficient number of memorandum books may be sent to them.

14. Besides drawing the attention of each enumerator to the exact area in which he will distribute and collect the forms and to the duties expected of him and the time during which those duties will be performed, it must also be explained to him that the information he obtains in the course of his work is to be treated by him as confidential, and his attention should be drawn to Section 14 (2) of the Act,

which provides that if any person employed in collecting, correcting, or completing forms, or otherwise acting in the compilation of the register or the tabulation of the contents thereof, or any person using the register, communicates without lawful authority any information acquired in the course of his employment, he renders himself liable on conviction to fine or imprisonment or both.

15. Section 13 of the Act provides that the duty of registering under the Act shall not, except to such extent as may be prescribed, apply to any prisoner in a prison, certified lunatic or defective or inmate of any Poor Relief institution, hospital, or other prescribed institution, nor to a prisoner of war or a person who is interned.

The Lieutenant-Governor, by his Order, has provided that any industrial school, or any institution for the care of persons suffering from physical or mental infirmity, shall be a prescribed institution for the purposes of this section.

The inmates of these institutions are to be exempt from registration while they remain there, but on their discharge they will require to be registered.

16. Save as is mentioned above in paragraph 11, correspondence on the subject of this letter or of the registration should be addressed to the Registrar-General, Government Office, Isle of Man.

17. His Excellency is aware that the National Registration Act imposes novel and onerous responsibilities upon local authorities, but he feels that, in the exceptional circumstances of the present crisis, he can confidently rely upon the cordial co-operation of local authorities and their officers throughout the Island in the prompt and efficient discharge of their duties under the Act.

18. It is requested that the enclosed Requisition (N.R. 10) for the necessary forms may be completed and returned to this Office as early as possible.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

B. E. SARGEAUNT,
Government Secretary.

Government Office,
Isle of Man.
31st July, 1915.