



Request

For each of the past three calendar years (2022, 2023 and 2024). If your records are held by financial year rather than calendar year, please provide data for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 instead.

Could you please provide the number of complaints received by your authority in relation to the breeding and/or sale of dogs over period above?

Response

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) relieves a public authority from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the estimated time required to locate, review and extract the information exceeds a certain threshold set out in Regulations.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3244) set out the rules in relation to the cost limit (otherwise called the “appropriate limit”). These Regulations are published by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) and are viewable on their web site from this link: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf

The Regulations set out the cost limit for Government departments and for other public authorities. For local government, Regulation 3 states that the cost limit is £450 and Regulation 4(4) states that the prescribed hourly rate is £25. Regulation 4(4) further provides that where the local authority estimates the time taken to gather the information would exceed this limit (which based on the prescribed hourly rate, equates to 18 officer hours), it may refuse the request under section 12 of FoIA.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case

The figures below relate to the number of complaints across all areas of animal licensing.

- 2021/22 = 100
- 2022/23 = 121
- 2023/24 = 111

Complaints are coded against ‘animal licensing’ and not specifically to dog breeding. To break this down further, would entail an investigation of the 332 complaints. Based on a minimum 5 minutes per complaint – this would far exceed the 18 officer hours stipulated in the Freedom of Information Act.