



Request

This is a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

For the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2025, please provide the total number of complaints recorded where:

The recorded service area is Children's Services; and

The complaint category recorded includes data protection, confidentiality, or inaccurate records.

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

For the period 01/01/2022 to 31/03/2024 complaint records are not categorised in a way that identifies whether a complaint related to data protection, breaches of confidentiality, or inaccurate records.

To identify this information each individual record would need to be reviewed manually. Based on a minimum review time of 10 minutes per case, it would take more than the 18-hour appropriate limit set out under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (227 records x 10 mins = 37+ hours).

A new recording system introduced on 01/04/2025 now captures this information. Between 01/04/2025 – 31/12/2025 the department recorded 6 complaints involving issues relating to data protection, breaches of confidentiality and/or inaccurate records.