

7 November 2024

FOI Ref 17407

Request - You asked us the following:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act.

1. How many arrests were made for stalking and harassment in the past five years?
 - 1a. Please break this figure down by year, from April 1st to March 31st (e.g. 2019/20, 2020/21, etc.)
2. Of those arrested, how many had a prior arrest for stalking and/or harassment?
 - 2a. Please again break this figure down by financial year.
3. What were the ages of offenders? Please break this down by age group (e.g. Under 18, 18-24, 25-30, etc)
4. How many offenders were male, female, non-binary or other/unspecified?

We received your request on 25/10/2024 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Staffordshire Police's response to your enquiry is as follows:

In accordance with Section 17(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter represents a refusal notice for this particular request.

The following exemptions have been applied:

- Section 12(1) where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit.
- Section 12(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the prescribed limit'.

The above information has been withheld for the following reasons:

There is no method by which we can readily retrieve information from our systems to answer this request. For the time period requested, there have been in excess of 2,900 arrests for offences involving stalking or harassment. In order to determine whether an individual had been previously arrested for a similar offence, the custody record of each individual would require manual review. From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 3 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 145 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the Freedom of Information Act by some considerable margin.

In addition, it is not possible to retrieve arrest data prior to 2020. This is because on 20th May 2020 Staffordshire Police implemented a new case management system. This system brought data from a number of legacy systems into one to provide a single nominal record, including the custody system. The old custody system has now been decommissioned and as a result there is no search facility to be able to retrieve the requested data. It would entail searching thousands of records to establish if it fitted the criteria of the request.



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Advice and assistance

Section 16 of the Act places an obligation upon the Authority to provide advice and assistance, in order to comply with this obligation please see below.

If questions 2 and 2a were withdrawn, Staffordshire Police would be able to provide the number of arrests made for stalking and harassment in the last 4 full financial years, from 2020/21 to 2023/24, broken down by financial year, age of detainee and gender of detainee.

Next steps

You can ask us to review our response.

If you would like us to carry out a review of our response, please let us know within two months of the date of receipt of this email, review requests should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

Central Disclosure Unit
Staffordshire Police HQ
PO Box 3167
Stafford
ST16 9JZ

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit