

20 August 2025

FOI Ref 21757

Request - You asked us the following:

Please may I request a list of which actions (made by/on behalf of Restrained Parties) constitute breaches of Restraining Orders and Non-Molestation Orders. And, please may I also request information in relation to which actions fall under direct and indirect breaches respectively.

I query this, as I have recently learned that actions which both Police Forces and Legal Professionals have - initially - believed to be (indirect) breaches of Restraining Orders, have later been identified as non-breaches (not a breach of the Order). One such example includes:

At present, a Restrained Party/Perpetrator will NOT be in breach of a Restraining Order if he chooses to view a Protected Party's LinkedIn Profile. This is despite the fact that viewing leaves a notification for the protected party that the Restrained Party/The Perpetrator/The Abuser/Offender has viewed their profile (terrifying the protected party, making them fear for safety). By viewing the Profile: The Perpetrator will NOT have breached the Restraining Order - It matters not that the victim has changed their name, and has created a brand new account: In such a case, the viewing of a profile in this way is NOT a breach. This is also despite the fact that Restraining Orders are often written to cover indirect contact and social media in the following way:

"Not to Contact [REDACTED] either directly or indirectly in anyway including, by telephone, text, or social media platforms."

At present, the reporting of such to a Police Force will ensure a Domestic Violence Incident is recorded, alongside a screenshot taken, but it will NOT be deemed a breach. Another way in which such conduct may occur, but isn't necessarily clear whether or not it constitutes a breach includes: A Restrained Party views (but doesn't interact with) a Protected Party's Instagram Story - This shows the Protected Party that their story has been viewed by the Restrained Party, and puts them in fear for their safety. The Protected Party is left feeling harassed and unsafe.

For transparency, should you need it, I am a party protected by a Restraining Order, and my Abuser recently viewed my profile in the way mentioned above (LinkedIn example). I mention here it is NOT advice I am seeking here, and neither is this a complaint of any kind (in fact, Met Police were incredibly sensitive and kind when recording the incident). Rather, it is a list of actions which amount to (direct and indirect) breaches of Restraining Orders/Non-Molestation Orders I am requesting. I also support victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence, some of whom are protected by Restraining Orders and Non-Molestation Orders: Having an idea of exactly which actions constitute breaches will assist with how I may manage expectations of those protected by Restraining Orders/Non-Molestation Orders.

We received your request on 18/08/2025 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Staffordshire Police does not hold the requested information.

Please may I request a list of which actions (made by/on behalf of Restrained Parties) constitute breaches of Restraining Orders and Non-Molestation Orders. And, please may I also request information in relation to which actions fall under direct and indirect breaches respectively.

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Please note that this data has been provided to the best of our ability, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional offences/incidents may have been recorded during these timescales but are awaiting finalisation and input onto these systems and would not be present within this dataset.

Every effort is made to ensure that the data presented is accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that this has been extracted from multiple sources, developed for specific policing purposes, for which data extraction methods have not been specifically designed to directly correlate with the terminology of this request. Therefore, the data presented is subject to the inaccuracies and idiosyncrasies inherent in any large-scale recording system. – **No information held.**

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the Staffordshire Police website although personal details are not included.

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.

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

Please note that the FOI Act 2000 only extends to requests for recorded information. It does not require public authorities to create information to answer questions generally; only if the information is already held in recorded form. The Act does not extend to requests for information about policies or their implementation, or the merits or demerits of any proposal or action - unless, of course, the answer to any such request is already held in recorded form.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from Staffordshire Police, which has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act, is entitled to complain and request an internal review, if they are dissatisfied with the response they received.

2. How to Request a Review

Requests for review of a Freedom of Information request must be made in writing within two months of the date of receipt of this email, and should be addressed to:

foi@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:

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

The reference number, date of the request and details of why the review is being requested must be included. Requests for review should be brought to the attention of the Central Disclosure Unit within two months of the Force's response to the original FOI request.

3. Review Procedure

Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged in writing. The review will be conducted by another Decision Maker who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Central Disclosure Unit will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to



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complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Decision Maker will conduct a review of the handling of the request for information and of decisions taken, including decisions taken about where the public interest lies in respect of exempt information where applicable. The review enables a re-evaluation of the case, taking into account the matters raised by the complaint.

4. Conclusion of the Appeal

On completion of the review the Independent Decision maker will reply to the complainant with the result of the review. If the complainant is still dissatisfied following the review they should contact the Information Commissioner to make an appeal. The Information Commissioner can be contacted via the following details:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

ICO Website for complaints link: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Central Disclosure Unit