

30 October 2025

FOI Ref 21978

Request - You asked us the following:

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

For each calendar year from 2019, including 2025 to date:

1) The number of offences that were categorised as an acid attack or corrosive fluid attack against the person as per the Home Office/NPCC definition here:

"All notifiable violence against the person and robbery, involving the throwing, spraying or pouring of acid or a similarly corrosive substance onto the body of another with the intention to disfigure, torture, kill or otherwise incapacitate for criminal purposes."

2) For each calendar year, the gender of victim(s) of attacks as specified in question one - ie how many of the victims were male, female or otherwise specified.

3) For each calendar year, the gender of attacker(s)/suspect(s) (where known) in attacks as specified in question one.

4) For each calendar year, the ethnicity of victim(s) of attacks as specified in question one.

5) For each calendar year, the ethnicity of attacker(s)/suspect(s) (where known) in attacks as specified in question one.

6) The outcome of offences specified in question one - ie the number of arrests and convictions.

Please provide this information by email.

We received your request on 16/10/2025 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 exemption has 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. From 1st January 2020, there have been in excess of 66,150 occurrences which would need to be reviewed. This is due to there being no defined offence for acid attacks or corrosive fluid attacks. Therefore, all violence against the person and robbery offences would need to be reviewed to determine if this conformed with your request.

From dip sampling, it has been estimated that it would take approximately 4 minutes to review each record to answer this request, this would equate to over 4,410 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by some considerable margin.

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.

To assist in refining your request, data could be provided from 20/05/2020 to 29/10/2025, broken down by year. This would only include cases where 'Acid/other corrosive substance' has been recorded in the Weapon used field within the occurrence MO. However, please note that this field is not mandatory and many relevant occurrence may have been recorded where this field has not been completed. Furthermore, please note that these results may include occurrences where this substance has been used to damage property and not to cause injury.

Results could be broken down by the ethnicity and gender of both suspects and victims and the recorded outcome provided.

Please note that the data will be disaggregated to prevent the identification of individuals. Additionally, it's important to be aware that further relevant occurrences may exist that are not captured under the MO category 'Acid/other corrosive substance'.

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

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:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

Or by Post to:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

Information Access Team
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 Information Access Team 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 a Supervisor who is independent from the original Decision Maker. The Information Access Team will set a target date for a response. The response will be made as soon as is practicable with the intention to complete the review within 20 working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to 40 working days.

The independent Supervisor 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 Supervisor will reply to the appellant with the result of the review. If the appellant 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 link:
<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/foi-and-eir-complaints/foi-and-eir-complaints/>

Freedom of Information
Information Access Team