

5 March 2026

FOI Ref 22528

Request - You asked Staffordshire Police (SP) the following:

1. Has this force implemented the NPCC draft interim search guidance (published on 22nd May 2025 Police search guidance following Supreme Court decision).
2. If so, what date was the draft interim search guidance implemented in this force.
3. Provide a copy of any communication (from chief officer team, legal dept, training dept, force lead for searching, HR dept or Equalities dept) given to staff with regard to the implementation of this guidance and include date circulated/sent.
4. If not, what policy/guidance is being followed by this force in relation to searches exceeding those of the most basic type*? Please provide a copy of the policy/guidance with regard to such searches. Stipulate whether these are only being undertaken by an officer of the same sex** as the person being searched. If not, please provide details of the circumstances in which a search of this nature may be undertaken by an officer not of the same sex.

*Searches involving the removal of jacket, outer clothing and gloves, more normally termed as 'more thorough searches' **Same sex meaning the same biological sex as determined and observed at conception/birth.

SP received your request on 13/02/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP's response to your enquiry is as follows:

SP holds the requested information.

- 1. Has this force implemented the NPCC draft interim search guidance (published on 22nd May 2025 Police search guidance following Supreme Court decision). – **Disclosed, yes.**
- 2. If so, what date was the draft interim search guidance implemented in this force. – **Disclosed, 30th May 2025.**
- 3. Provide a copy of any communication (from chief officer team, legal dept, training dept, force lead for searching, HR dept or Equalities dept) given to staff with regard to the implementation of this guidance and include date circulated/sent. – **Partially disclosed, please see the accompanying file titled 'FOI 22528 Interim Transgender Search Guidance Introduced'. This was circulated on the 18th August 2025.**
- 4. If not, what policy/guidance is being followed by this force in relation to searches exceeding those of the most basic type*? Please provide a copy of the policy/guidance with regard to such searches. Stipulate whether these are only being undertaken by an officer of the same sex** as the person being searched. If not, please provide details of the circumstances in which a search of this nature may be undertaken by an officer not of the same sex. – **Not applicable.**

*Searches involving the removal of jacket, outer clothing and gloves, more normally termed as 'more thorough searches' **Same sex meaning the same biological sex as determined and observed at conception/birth.

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

The following exemption has been applied:

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

- Section 40(2) Personal Information

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption which means that there is no need to quantify the harm that may arise from the disclosure; neither is it subject to a public interest test.

To release personal or third-party information held by SP, would breach the data protection principles; namely –

- Data is lawfully and fairly processed.
- Processed in line with an individual's rights.
- Data is secure.

Personal and third-party information cannot be released under the Freedom of Information Act.

Disclosure under Freedom of Information is a release of information to the world in general and not an individual applicant.

Freedom of Information Request Appeals Procedure

1. Who Can Ask for a Review

Any person who has requested information from SP, 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:

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 SP 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 twenty working days. In more complex cases the review may take up to forty 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, considering 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