

25 March 2026

FOI Ref 22699

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

For the period of 1 year (including start and end date) 1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025:

* The total number of reported alleged (sexual offences / sexual assaults / rapes) that mention a (vape / e-cig / electronic cigarette / e-cigarette) was used as a method of (drugging / administering a drug / spiking / incapacitating) the alleged victim.

If your force does not record any of the terms specified above as a unique field but allows free-text searches of incident reports, please indicate the search words used. If any items cannot be provided, please provide as much aggregated information as you can and indicate which items are refused/absent and the reasons.

Clarification requested:

Your request would engage Section 12 of the FOI Act as it would involve the manual review of all sexual offences to determine whether a vape etc was used as a method of spiking the victim.

SP are able to conduct a free-text search of the MOs for sexual offences for specific key words, however, the reliability of these searches cannot be guaranteed as only the MO / summary field of the report is searched. If this term is mentioned elsewhere (i.e. within the call log, crime report, statements etc) these will not be returned in the results. Additionally, if the term is misspelt within the MO / summary field, this will not be returned.

If you would like SP to conduct a free-text search of the MOs for sexual offences, please provide a list of specific key words you would like us to search for.

Clarification received:

I have reviewed your email and understand the issues described. As such, and on your advise I would like to revise the request:

For the period of 1 year (including start and end date) 1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025 :-

Please conduct a keyword search of the free text field within your crime system for all sexual offences/ sexual assaults/ rape offences, with the following key terms:

"vape",
"e-cig"
"electronic cigarette"
"e-cigarette"

Please provide the total number of results.

I do not require information on the "drugging / administering / spiking / incapacitating the alleged victim", purely the acknowledgement of the above specified key terms related to vape products in the MO/Summary fields of the specified crimes.

SP received your request on 24/03/2026 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.

- For the period of 1 year (including start and end date) 1 January 2025 - 31 December 2025 :-
Please conduct a keyword search of the free text field within your crime system for all sexual offences/ sexual assaults/ rape offences, with the following key terms:
"vape",
"e-cig"
"electronic cigarette"
"e-cigarette"
Please provide the total number of results. – **Disclosed, 3.**

Please note that this data has been provided to the best of the ability of SP, subject to the limitation of current recording protocols and systems/software. Additional offences 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.

Consequently, care should be taken in the interpretation and presentation of this data, to not misrepresent the whole or any part of the data disclosed.

Please be advised that all Freedom of Information request responses are published on the SP 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 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:



STAFFORDSHIRE
POLICE

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