



1 October 2026

FOI Ref 23438

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

I am writing to request information from your force on spiking incidents.

Please provide me with the following information:

1. The number of spiking-related offences recorded by your force in the years 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026. For 2026, please provide me with data up to September (1 January 2026 to 1 September 2026), or if data is not held up to 1 September, the most recent available data. Please break this data down by year and, if possible, by month.
2. For each year, please also provide me a summary of the outcome of each offence (e.g., in 2026, 100 offences led to a charge, 200 led to a caution, etc.).
3. If this falls within the time/cost limit, please provide me with information on the nature of spiking incidents in each year, offering a description of what was spiked (for example, in 2026, 100 offences involved vape spiking; 60 involved spiking of prescription medication; 200 involved spiking of drinks; etc. I appreciate the descriptive categories held by your force may be different - these are simply illustrative examples. But if the offences can be categorised in any way to clarify what item was spiked, that'd be great).

For your reference, the Met Police appears to collate data in this way:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cqzez9p7wd0ro>

Please treat each question as a separate request - hence, if one question is subject to an exemption, please do not disregard the remaining questions.

SP received your request on 28/09/2026 and have processed this under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

SP'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 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 SP can readily retrieve information from local police systems to answer parts of this request. Although there is an offence tag (or label) that can be used to identify crimes that are recorded where 'spiking' has been involved in the commission of the offence, this tag was not brought into use by SP until late 2025 and therefore does not cover the requested period. Additionally, when recorded as a crime, offences that would likely involve spiking would involve one of several offences under the

statistics classification of either 'Administering poison etc with intent to injure or annoy', 'Administering poison etc so as to endanger life or inflict GBH' or 'Administering a substance with intent'.

For the period requested, there have been more than 750 occurrences recorded against one of the above offence types. To ascertain both whether spiking was involved and 'the information on the nature of spiking incidents in each year, offering a description of what was spiked,' by searching purely on the aforementioned offence types, the record for each such offence would require a manual review. To extract this data would therefore require a very labour-intensive manual trawl through each record.

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 50 hours. To achieve this task would therefore exceed the 18-hour time and cost threshold of the FOI Act by a considerable margin.

Advice and assistance

To comply with our obligations under Section 16 of the Act, the obligation to provide advice and assistance, please see below:

If you were to refine your request, such that question 1 asked for a keyword search of the term, 'SPIKING' against the M.O. field for the below listed crimes, then data could be provided for these offences occurring within the period requested, broken down by year:

- Administering poison etc so as to endanger life or inflict GBH
- Administering poison etc with intent to injure or annoy
- Administering a substance with intent

If you were to refine question 2 such that it related to the aforementioned crimes, then this could be accomplished.

If you were to refine question 3 such that it related to the aforementioned crimes, and limiting the search period to one 12-month period of your choosing, then this could be accomplished.

Alternatively, if you were instead to refine the period of your original request to the last 12 months, then by making use of the more recently created tag for 'spiking', SP could provide answer all the original questions of this request.

Finally, please find below links to previously published FOI requests about 'spiking'.

- [Published items - spiking | Staffordshire Police](#)

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:

IAT@staffordshire.police.uk

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