

28 February 2023

Reference: FOI 453 Freedom of Information request

Thank you for your email, which we received on 20 February 2023. Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked us:

To provide the following information for the years 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22:

- The number of individuals who were the subject of a fatal incident investigation started that year, where it was known (or discovered) that they had been formerly looked after / in the care of a local authority as a child.
- The age of the individuals who were the subject of a fatal incident investigation started that year, where it was known (or discovered) that they had been formerly looked after / in the care of a local authority as a child (under 18 when they died; aged 18-25 when they died; aged 26-30 when they died; aged 31-40 when they died; aged 41-50 when they died; aged 51-60 when they died; aged 61-70 when they died; over the age of 70 when they died).
- The ethnic origin of the individuals who were the subject of a fatal incident investigation started that year, where it was known (or discovered) that they had been formerly looked after / in the care of a local authority as a child.

Our response:

Your request for information will not be processed. This is because the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the appropriate limit of 24 hours of staff time as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004. In accordance with section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act, this letter acts as a refusal notice.

We have determined that it would take approximately 200 hours to process your request.

You may wish to refine and resubmit your request so that it reduces staff time to within the appropriate limit. For example, agreeing to a shorter time period or reducing the number of questions in your request. One approach could be to refine your request so that we check cases between 2017 and 2022 where the deceased was aged under 30 when they died. Within this narrower range, it keeps the request within the appropriate limit of 24 hours.

Could you let us know how you wish to proceed.

You have the right to appeal against our response if you think it is incorrect. Details can be found in the 'How to Appeal' section attached at the end of this letter.

Email: PPOMailFreedomofInformationRequests@ppo.gov.uk

The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman (PPO) carries out **independent investigations** into complaints and deaths in custody. The detailed role and responsibilities of the PPO are set out in our office's Terms of Reference. The PPO has three main duties:

- to **investigate complaints** made by prisoners, young people in detention (prisons and secure training centres), offenders under probation supervision and individuals detained under immigration powers (detained individuals)
- to **investigate deaths** of prisoners, young people in detention, approved premises' residents and detained individuals due to any cause, including any apparent suicides and natural causes
- to **investigate deaths** of **recently released prisoners** that occur within 14 days of release from prison (except homicide)

The purpose of these investigations is **to understand what happened, to correct injustices** and **to identify learning** for the organisations whose actions we oversee so that the PPO makes a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and offender supervision.

How to Appeal

Internal Review

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to an internal review. The handling of your request will be looked at by someone who was not responsible for the original case, and they will make a decision as to whether we answered your request correctly.

If you would like to request a review, please write or send an email to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman's office **within two months of the date of this letter**, at the following address:

Prisons and Probation Ombudsman
Third Floor
10 South Colonnade
Canary Wharf
London
E14 4PU
E-mail: Mail@ppo.gov.uk

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If you remain dissatisfied after an internal review decision, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner's Office. The Commissioner is an independent regulator who has the power to direct us to respond to your request differently, if he considers that we have handled it incorrectly.

You can contact the ICO at the following address:

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

Internet address: <https://ico.org.uk/>