

22 April 2022

## Handling of FOI Requests

1. For the period 16th March – 17th July 2020 (i.e., when ICO had indicated a sympathetic approach to delay), provide precise data if available e.g., 15 out of 30 requests, and if not, provide an estimate e.g., 10%, for these questions:

a) how many responses to FOI requests were issued within 20 working days of receipt by your organisation?

Response: 105 out of 160.

b) how many responses to FOI review requests were issued within 20 working days of receipt of the request for an internal review?

Response: 0 out of 2.

c) how many responses to FOI requests were issued within 21 and 60 working days of receipt by your organisation?

Response: 42 out of 160.

d) how many responses to FOI review requests were issued within 21 and 60 working days of receipt of the request for an internal review?

Response: 2 out of 2.

2. For the period 18th July – 8th October 2020 (i.e., during the ‘preparing for recovery’ phase), provide precise data if available e.g., 15 out of 30 requests, and if not, provide an estimate e.g., 10%, for these questions:

a) how many responses to FOI requests were issued within 20 working days of receipt by your organisation?

Response: 113 out of 141.

b) how many responses to FOI review requests were issued within 20 working days of receipt of the request for an internal review?

Response: 0.

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- c) how many responses to FOI requests were issued within 21 and 60 working days of receipt by your organisation?**

Response: 27 out of 141.

- d) how many responses to FOI review requests were issued within 21 and 60 working days of receipt of the request for an internal review?**

Response: 1 out of 2.

- 3. During the period 1st March to 30th October 2020, provide precise data if available e.g., 15 out of 30 requests, and if not, provide an estimate e.g., 10%, for these questions:**

- a) how many responses to FOI requests were issued more than 60 working days after receipt of the request?**

Response: 17 out of 356.

- b) how many responses to FOI review requests were issued more than 60 working days after receipt of a request for an internal review?**

Response: 1 out of 4.

- 4. When FOI request or review responses were issued more than 21 working days after receipt during the period 1st March and 30th October 2020, what were the main reasons for the delay? e.g., closure of premises due to Covid-19, reallocation of resources due to Covid-19, staff shortages due to Covid-19, absence of key staff due to Covid-19, limited access to necessary systems due to Covid-19, other issue related/unrelated to Covid19.**

Due to the significant impact of the Coronavirus situation, Trust staff needed to prioritise their duties as front line health and social care workers and also there was staff shortages due to Covid-19.

- 5. In relation to the FOI requests received by your organisation between 1st March and 30th October 2020, what proportion related directly to Covid-19, your organisation's Covid-19 response or impact of the pandemic on your organisation? (Provide precise data if available e.g., 15 out of 30 requests, and if not, provide an estimate e.g., 10%)**

28 out of 356.

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6. **On 17th July 2020 the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) launched a self-assessment Freedom of Information toolkit (FOI self-assessment toolkit | ICO) to help public authorities respond to FOI requests as they prepared to recover from the coronavirus pandemic.**

**- Does, or has your organisation ever, use/d the toolkit? If so, please explain whether it has it had any positive outcomes.**

No

**- If your organisation has not/does not make use of the toolkit, please explain why not.**

Information not held.

7. **In response to Covid19, has the volume of information your organisation publishes:**

- **not changed**
- **significantly increased**
- **significantly decreased**
- **don't know**

Significantly increased.

8. **Has your organisation taken steps to proactively publish information relating to Covid-19, your organisation's Covid-19 response or the impact of the pandemic on your organisation? If it includes a dedicated webpage, please provide a link to the webpage.**

During the pandemic we introduced our FOI disclosure log and began to publish responses to all FOI requests on our website: [Freedom of Information | Belfast Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](#).

Belfast Trust proactively publishes information relating to Covid-19 on the website: [www.belfasttrust.co.uk](http://www.belfasttrust.co.uk). For example: [Covid-19 vaccination | Belfast Health & Social Care Trust \(hscni.net\)](#).

Belfast Trust contributes to the proactive publication of regional information: [COVID-19 Daily Dashboard Updates | Department of Health \(health-ni.gov.uk\)](#)