

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0782
Date: 27 April 2022



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002

I refer to your recent request for information which has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

For ease of reference, your request is replicated below together with the response.

Police Scotland aims to provide the best possible service to the people of Scotland however recognises that on occasion the service received falls short of the standards expected by the public and the police themselves.

Details of our Standards of Professional Behaviour can be found at the following link:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/2r3p0bsx/standards-of-professional-behaviour.pdf>

In addition I have attached a link to the Police Scotland's Conduct Regulations - can I please draw your attention to Section 8 of these regulations, which outlines our Suspension Policy.

[The Police Service of Scotland \(Conduct\) Regulations 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/1220/contents/part/1/section/8)

The questions have been slightly adjusted to reflect that officer and police staff data is recorded separately.

1. The total number of police officers currently suspended by Police Scotland, and suspended in 2020 and 2021.

The number of Police Officers currently suspended, as at 08/04/2022, has been provided in the table below. Also provided are the number of officers who were serving a suspension at any point within the 2021 calendar year, as well as any point within the 2020 calendar year.

Please note that the initial date of suspension may precede the specified periods below and suspensions may continue to be served beyond those same date periods. Suspension may also have been removed during the same period.

Table 1: Police Officers serving suspension, by Date Category ¹

Date Category	Number
Police Officers currently suspended (at 08/04/2022)	38
Police Officers serving suspension during 2021	47
Police Officers serving suspension during 2020	46

1. Data is based on officers serving suspension at any point during the specified date periods above. The initial date of suspension may precede the specified periods.
2. Please note that these officers were suspended for matters that are a combination of both on and off duty offences.

For your convenience I have included a hyperlink below to our Complaints about the Police Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Please see section 5 in the link below that differentiates between what is considered to be on duty or off duty matter:

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/fifhh5vo/complaints-about-the-police-sop.pdf>

2. The total number of police staff (civilian) currently suspended by Police Scotland, and suspended in 2020 and 2021.

Table 2: Civilian Police Staff serving suspension, by Date Category ¹

Date category	Number
Total number of Police Staff currently suspended	13
Of the above, those whose suspension date was in 2020	3
Of the above, those whose suspension date was in 2021	5

1. The information has been collated using data from the SCoPE database.

3. A breakdown of the ranks/roles suspended and the number within each rank (i.e. 10 constables, 11 sergeants, 12 DCs, 13 civilian role 1, 14 civilian role 2 etc.) currently, in 2021, and in 2020.

This is interpreted as a continuation of the previous question and grouped accordingly. Data on the rank of officers involved has been provided below, broken down in each specified date period.

Table 3: Police Officers serving suspension, by Rank and Date Category ^{1,2}

Rank	Current	During 2021	During 2020
Constable / Special Constable	35	43	39
Sergeant	3	4	6
Inspector and above	0	0	1
Grand Total	38	47	46

1. The term 'current' again reflects data collated and is correct at 08/04/2022

2. Data is based on officers serving suspension at any point during the specified date periods above. The initial date of suspension may precede the specified periods.

Table 4: Civilian Police Staff serving suspension, by Grade^{1,2}

Grade / Group	Number
Staff in Grades 1-5 who are currently suspended	9
Of the above, those whose suspension date was in 2020	0
Of the above, those whose suspension date was in 2021	5
Staff in Grades 6-10 who are currently suspended	4
Of the above, those whose suspension date was in 2020	3
Of the above, those whose suspension date was in 2021	0

1. The information has been collated using data from the SCoPE database.
2. Please note, due to low numbers and to avoid those suspended being identified, we have provided the response to question 3 in grouped grades.

4. The total paid in salaries to suspended workers in 2021 and 2020.

5. The total paid in other expenses to suspended workers in 2021 and 2020.

Q4 and Q5 have been answered together for ease of response.

In response, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

To first explain, payments to suspended individuals are not specifically marked and would be calculated by payroll in the normal manner and paid directly. As there is no automated method of identifying the relevant expenditure, any undertaking to identify such payments would require us to interrogate our payroll system for details relating to every relevant officer and member of staff, in each of the time periods requested.

In summary, without a largely manual exercise we would have no way of answering this question, and this is true even across a much reduced timescale.

As the details requested are not held in a retrievable format identifying the requested information would take a significant period of time. Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and so your request would breach the cost threshold.

To be of some assistance, the current salary scales for police officers and police staff are available via the links below:

[Pay and Grading Structure - Police Scotland](#)

[21-0669 - Staff Pay Scales by role - 5yrs - Police Scotland](#)

6. The total paid in pensions to suspended workers in 2021 and 2020.

I must advise you that Police Pensions IDRP is managed by the Scheme Manager, Scottish Police Pension Agency (SPPA). As such, in terms of Section 17 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, this represents a notice that the information you seek is not held by Police Scotland.

You may wish to direct your request to the Scottish Police Pension Agency (SPPA) via the following email address:- SPPACommunications@gov.scot.

OFFICIAL

If you require further assistance or are dissatisfied with the way in which Police Scotland has dealt with your request, you are entitled, in the first instance, to request a review of our actions and decisions.

Your request must specify the matter which gives rise to your dissatisfaction and it must be submitted within 40 working days of receiving this response - either by email to foi@scotland.pnn.police.uk or by post to Information Management (Disclosure), Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH.

If you remain dissatisfied following the outcome of that review, you are thereafter entitled to apply to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner within six months for a decision. You can apply [online](#), by email to enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info or by post to Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife, KY16 9DS.

Should you wish to appeal against the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner's decision, there is an appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

As part of our commitment to demonstrate openness and transparency in respect of the information we hold, an anonymised version of this response will be posted to the Police Scotland Freedom of Information [Disclosure Log](#) in seven days' time.