| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1949  Responded to: 30 June 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

**4. How many sex offenders have notified Police Scotland about them changing their names in each of the last five years, with a breakdown per year?**

Protecting the public is a top priority for Police Scotland.

In Scotland, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), provides a comprehensive response to a complex issue, using professional assessment and management to properly target resources at those who pose a risk to the public.

Police Scotland works in partnership with a number of agencies through MAPPA to ensure that all Registered Sex Offenders are robustly managed within the community. While we can never eliminate risk entirely, we want to reassure communities that all reasonable steps are being taken to protect them.

An individual who has received a conviction or finding in respect of a specified offence under Schedule 3 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 is automatically subject to the Notification Requirements of Part 2 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

The Violent & Sex Offender Register (ViSOR) is the UK database used to record information concerning the management of Registered Sex Offenders (RSOs), including information obtained from their notification requirements.

One of these notification requirements is in respect of the offender’s name, it should be noted this requirement not only applies to the individuals name but can be other names used by the offender and include usernames, email addresses etc.

The number of notifications Police Scotland recorded on ViSOR in respect of notifications concerning an offender’s name for last five years were.

| **Year** | **No. of notifications** |
| --- | --- |
| 2020-2021 | 161 |
| 2021-2022 | 198 |
| 2022-2023 | 241 |
| 2023-2024 | 263 |
| 2024-2025 | 256 |
| **Total** | **1119** |

It should be noted that we would need to manually interrogate each of these notifications to establish what each notification specifically related to, as the ViSOR system is not designed to breakdown notifications around change of name notifications into subcategories. Unfortunately, to do this I would estimate it would cost well in excess of the current FOI cost threshold of £600 to process any such request given the number of notifications. I am therefore refusing to provide the information sought in terms of section 12(1) of the Act - Excessive Cost of Compliance.

We would also like to reiterate that our focus is on the protection of those at risk of harm through prevention and early intervention and includes the robust investigation of those who pose such a risk. We fulfil our role as a Responsible Authority in the delivery of MAPPA and provide effective and efficient management of registered sex offenders and other risk of serious harm offenders. This is achieved through each of Police Scotland’s 13 local policing divisions having dedicated Sex Offender Policing Units. Each unit has specialist officers working in partnership with other Responsible Authorities to manage and reduce the risk posed by offenders, with each RSO having dedicated officers assigned to manage and monitor that offender which includes compliance and oversight of their notification requirements.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.