

Our Ref: IM-FOI-2022-0919
Date: 16 May 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.

1. How many reports of child abuse or neglect did police attend in the following years: 2018 to 2021 incl.?

Police Scotland's national incident recording (Storm) provides the number of recorded Child Protection incidents where officers attended at the scene:

**Table 1: Child Protection incidents where a unit attended
Period: 1st January 2018 - 31st December 2021 (Calendar Years)**

Storm Incident	2018	2019	2020	2021
Child Protection	10 678	11 875	11 230	10 388

All statistics are provisional and should be treated as management information. All data have been extracted from Police Scotland internal systems and are correct as at 27th April 2022.

1. The data was extracted using the incident's raised date and by selecting the final incident type "PW-76" (Child Protection).
2. Out of force, duplicate and linked incidents have been excluded.
3. Storm Incidents where the 'At Scene' variable has a time stamp have been selected.

On a note of caution, the question you posed would also *potentially* capture those incidents where police attended and there was any element of concern for a child, but where the category of 'Child Protection' was not recorded as the final incident type.

Clearly it would not be possible to provide you with this information as to establish this level of detail would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations. As such Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) will apply.

2. How many reports of child abuse or neglect involved the death of a child in the following years? If so, please provide the number you hold.

In relation to deaths generally, and the information held by Police Scotland (which would be sudden death reports to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service), I regret to advise 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.

OFFICIAL

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. Unfortunately, it is not possible to search these reports based on the alleged cause of death.

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.

You may also wish to consult the relevant National Records of Scotland publications:

www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths

3. How many reports of child abuse or neglect involved the serious injury of a child (as defined as a fracture, deep cut, deep laceration or injury causing damage to an internal organ or the impairment of any bodily function) in the following years: 2018 to 2021 incl.?

Having considered your request in terms of the above Act, 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.

By way of explanation, the crime recording systems used by Police Scotland have no facility whereby the specific circumstances of an assault can be automatically identified, nor is there a facility which allows for a search to be carried out by age of the victim.

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.

As such, case by case assessment of all assaults for the time period specified, would be required to allow us to establish the circumstances and age of the victim. This would involve individually examining thousands of crime reports, which is an exercise that I estimate would far exceed the cost limit set out in the Fees Regulations.

To be of further assistance, Police Scotland publish quarterly recorded crime statistics online, including e.g. '*cruel and unnatural treatment*' (see Group 1, page 4 in the example below):

[Force Quarterly Bulletin Q3 2018 19 OFFICIAL 1.pdf \(scotland.police.uk\)](#)

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.

OFFICIAL

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.