| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1945  Responded to: 3rd July 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

## Police Scotland’s current policy or guidance on use of the term “appropriate adult” - specifically when and why it is used, including whether it is ever applied to individuals not under arrest or investigation.

The information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

However, to be of assistance, I can advise that the information sought is publicly available on the Police Scotland website. I can thus refer you to our Appropriate Adults Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for further details:

[Appropriate Adults SOP - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/zvvpbczl/appropriate-adults-sop.pdf)

## A copy of any policy, training material, or internal guidance related to conducting interviews or investigations involving autistic individuals or individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions.

The information sought is not held by Police Scotland and section 17 of the Act applies.

By way of explanation, I can advise that there are no Standard Operating Procedures, training material etc. which are specific to Autism.

This would be covered under various, more general SOPs all accessible on our website:

[Standard Operating Procedures - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/policies-and-procedures/standard-operating-procedures/)

## Any official criteria or guidance used by Police Scotland when determining whether a person is considered a vulnerable adult, particularly in non-criminal matters

Again, the information sought is held by Police Scotland, but I am refusing to provide it in terms of section 16(1) of the Act on the basis that the section 25(1) exemption applies:

“Information which the applicant can reasonably obtain other than by requesting it […] is exempt information”.

The information sought is publicly available:

[Adult Support & Protection SOP - Police Scotland](https://www.scotland.police.uk/spa-media/dl1px33z/adult-support-and-protection-sop.pdf)

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.