



## **Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 001561-19**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 25 April 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

1. *“Over the last five years, how many reported incidents of stalking have there been?”*
2. *Of those who reported this, how many complaints were made by the same individuals?*
3. *Where any of these individuals fined for wasting police time? If so, how many?”*

### **Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 11 March 2019

Suffolk Constabulary has considered your request for information and the response is below.

The Constabulary is unable to establish the number of complaints that were made by the same individuals, without manually reviewing all offences to establish whether offences have been reported by the same people. This is further complicated as a result in a change in crime recording system during October 2015. The victim details on the legacy system will have to be reviewed individually to establish whether any of the victim’s details on the current system are the same.

Considering there are over 800 offences recorded for the time frame requested, the Constabulary would take in excess of 40 hours to extract the data.

In relation to your request for information and in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), this response serves as a formal notification of refusal for your request. Suffolk Constabulary does not hold, for the purposes of FOIA, the information you require in a retrievable format.

It is estimated that to attempt to retrieve all of the information you require would take a considerable amount of retrieval time, which would exceed 18 hours. This would exceed the appropriate limit for dealing with Freedom of Information requests, in terms of costs and therefore Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 states that a Public Authority is not obliged to: *“...comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.”* The Freedom of Information (Appropriate



Limit and Fees) Regulations, defines the 'appropriate limit' for the Suffolk Constabulary as £450 and specifies that this sum equates to 18 hours work at a standard rate of £25 per hour.

In accordance with Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter serves as a refusal notice for this part of your request.

By requesting *all* information your request is too broad to be complied with within the £450 limit imposed on Freedom of Information requests.

Although excess cost removes the Force's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, as a gesture of goodwill, I have supplied information, relative to your request, retrieved or available before it was realised that the fees limit would be exceeded. I trust this is helpful, but it does not affect our legal right to rely on the fees regulations for the remainder of your request.

A search has been completed of Stalking offences of the Constabularies our current crime management system Athena and legacy system CIS.

The total number of offences of stalking recorded by the Constabulary from 2014 to 2018 is provided within the table below. None of the victims were reported for wasting police time.

| Full Offence Title   | 2014      | 2015      | 2016       | 2017       | 2018       |
|--|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|
| Attempted - Harassment - Pursue course of conduct in breach of Sec 1 (1) which amounts to stalking |           |           |            | 1          |            |
| Harassment - Pursue course of conduct in breach of Sec 1 (1) which amounts to stalking             |           | 4         | 34         | 168        | 131        |
| Harassment - Stalking involving fear of violence   |           |           | 18         | 17         | 22         |
| Harassment - Stalking involving serious alarm/distress   |           | 6         | 48         | 46         | 79         |
| Racially or religiously aggravated Harassment or stalking with fear of violence                    |           | 1         | 1          | 3          | 1          |
| Racially or religiously aggravated Harassment or stalking without violence                         |           | 1         | 20         | 12         | 13         |
| Stalking - cause fear of violence  | 5         | 5         |            |            |            |
| Stalking - cause serious alarm or distress   | 8         | 5         |            |            |            |
| Stalking - pursue course of conduct  | 49        | 59        |            |            |            |
| <b>Grand Total</b>   | <b>62</b> | <b>81</b> | <b>121</b> | <b>247</b> | <b>246</b> |

Should you have any further queries concerning this request, please contact Clair Pack, FOI Decision Maker, quoting the reference number shown above.

A full copy of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) can be viewed on the 'Office of Public Sector Information' web-site;  
<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/>



Suffolk Constabulary is not responsible for the content, or the reliability, of the website referenced. The Constabulary cannot guarantee that this link will work all of the time, and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.



Your Right to Request a Review of Decisions Made Under the Terms of the  
Freedom of Information Act (2000).

If you are unhappy with how your request has been handled, or if you think the decision is incorrect, you have the right to ask Suffolk Constabulary to review their decision.

Ask Suffolk Constabulary to look at the decision again.

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by Suffolk Constabulary under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), regarding access to information, you must notify Suffolk Constabulary that you are requesting a review within 40 working days of the date of its response to your Freedom of Information request. Requests for a review should be made in writing and addressed to:

*Freedom of Information Decision Maker  
Information Management Department  
Suffolk Constabulary  
Police Headquarters  
Martlesham Heath  
Ipswich  
Suffolk  
IP5 3QS  
OR  
Email: [information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:information@suffolk.pnn.police.uk)*

In all possible circumstances Suffolk Constabulary will aim to respond to your request for us to look at our decision again within 20 working days of receipt of your request for an internal review.

The Information Commissioner.

After lodging a request for a review with Suffolk Constabulary, if you are still dissatisfied with the decision, you can apply to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk) or contact them at the address shown below:

The Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
Telephone: 01625 545 700