



**SUFFOLK  
CONSTABULARY**  
*Taking pride in keeping Suffolk safe*

## **Freedom of Information Request Reference N°: FOI 003210-19**

I write in connection with your request for information received by Suffolk Constabulary on the 6 September 2019 in which you sought access to the following information:

*“This request concerns details of attacks on police officers.*

1. *Please state the number on assaults on police officers of your force recorded in each of the following calendar years:*
  - i) 2014
  - ii) 2015
  - iii) 2016
  - iv) 2017
  - v) 2018
  - vi) 2019 to 05.09.19
  
2. *Please state the number of assaults on police officers of your force recorded that led to:*
  - a) *The police officer’s death*
  - b) *The police officer’s hospitalisation*
  - c) *The police officer’s discharge from the force due to injuries sustained**In each of the following calendar years:*
  - i) 2014
  - ii) 2015
  - iii) 2016
  - iv) 2017
  - v) 2018
  - vi) 2019 to 05.09.19
  
3. *For incidents that occurred between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 and 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019, please provide all disclosable fields in your recording database, including the anonymised free text description of the incident, and any details recorded of the injuries suffered by the officer, if held.*
  
4. *For each assault recorded in question 1, please state whether this case led to a charge. If multiple assailants were charged in response to an incident, please provide the number.”*

## **Response to your Request**

The response provided below is correct as of 17 September 2019

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

Since April 2017, there have been offence codes relating to assaults on Police Officers which have resulted in either an injury or no injury. Prior to this there was only an offence category for assaults on officers with no injury. However, if an injury had occurred, this would have been



recorded under the specific violent offence category, for example ABH, GBH, etc. Whilst there is a field on crime reports for the victim occupation, this is not a mandatory field and many are not completed.

To identify whether any of these reports relate to an assault on a Police Officer, it would be necessary to case read the details of each one. This equates to over 1000 records per year to review and would take well in excess of 18 hours.

Additionally, with regards to question 4, extracting charge data from Athena does not take into consideration the number of persons charged. The information would relate solely to the main outcome for the investigation, therefore we can only provide the number of cases that resulted in a charge. To confirm the number of persons that equated to would not be possible within the time parameters.

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.



The total number of assaults against police officers, is as follows:

Year	Total
2017	360
2018	430
2019 (To end of August)	313

For the 2019 calendar year to date, the offence categories were as follows:

Offence Type	2019
<b>VIOLENCE WITH INJURY</b>	<b>52</b>
Assault Police - Assault with Injury - Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	43
Assault Police - Assault with Injury - Malicious wounding: wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm (Minor wound or equivalent)	6
Assault Police - Wounding with intent to resist/prevent arrest	2
Attempted - Assault Police - Cause GBH with intent to resist/prevent arrest.	1
<b>VIOLENCE WITHOUT INJURY</b>	<b>261</b>
Assault or assault by beating of a constable	189
Assault without injury on a constable (Police Act offence)	71
Attempted - Assault or assault by beating of a constable	1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>313</b>

The total number of the offence that resulted in a charge, is as follows:

Year	Charge Total
2017	279
2018	321
2019 (To end of August)	226

***Police forces in the United Kingdom are routinely required to provide crime statistics to government bodies and the recording criteria is set nationally. However, the systems used for recording these figures are not generic, nor are the procedures used locally in capturing the crime data. It should be noted that for these reasons this force's response to your questions should not be used for comparison purposes with any other response you may receive.***



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.



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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