



M M Simmons

Reference: FOICR 43200/17

10 April 2017

Dear M M Simmons

## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 10 March, in which you ask for information regarding errors on adoption certificates.

Questions four and five of your request have been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act). Questions one, two and three are general enquiries and have been answered outside of the FOI Act. Their responses are provided in the annex below.

**4. With recorded information, how many times in the last 12 months has it come to the general registry office's attention that an error was made on an adoption order where a child's name details (concerning their name either in part or full) and who could be traced on the said register for England & Wales, then can i ask the same where ones could not be traced if the latter is applicable.**

The General Register Office (GRO), which is part of Her Majesty's Passport Office, holds the information requested, however, to provide you with this information would exceed the cost limit. Each year GRO receives around 5,300 court orders relating to a new adoption. Any amended court orders received correcting an error to a child's name within these court orders is also stored along with the original court order. It is not possible, however, to identify these amended court orders separately, as it would require a manual search of all court orders. Although the time taken to analyse each court order would vary, due to the number of records held it would not be possible to conduct this search within the cost limit.

Under section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, HM Passport Office is not required to provide information where to do so would exceed the cost limit. We have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004, and are therefore unable to comply with it.

The £600 limit is based on work being carried out at a rate of £25 per hour, which equates to 24 hours of work per request. The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting information can be included in the costs for these purposes. The costs do not include considering whether any information is exempt from disclosure, overheads such as heating or lighting, or items such as photocopying or postage.

If you refine your request, so that it is more likely to fall under the cost limit, we will consider it again. Unfortunately due to the specific nature of your request it is not possible on the occasion for me to provide you with advice on how to refine your request. Please note that if you simply break your request down into a series of similar smaller requests, we might still decline to answer it if the total cost exceeds £600.

**5. With recorded information, where can i see what information shows if a child is in long term foster care (in relation to which type of certificate would be applicable in this situation) and then how many times in the last 12 months has it come to the general registry office's attention that a child first thought/believed to be adopted (as in believed by either the parent(s) or the adoptive parent(s)) was discovered to in fact be in long term foster care.**

GRO does not hold information or records relating to children in foster care.

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference FOICR 43200/17. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

Information Rights Team  
Home Office  
Third Floor, Peel Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
email: [foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foirequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act

Yours sincerely

**P Feakins**  
**Parliamentary Correspondence Unit**

Freedom of Information request from M M Simmons (reference 43200/17)

- 1. With recorded information, where can it be seen what constitutes towards either a misinterpretation or misrepresentation on an adoption certificate. (What is the difference with regard to how the General Registry Office ascertains this).**
- 2. With recorded information in mind, i would like to ask at what age would a child be expected to be informed or told or have their permission sought first prior to 'correcting/changing' any part of their details on their adoption certificate such as any of their name's (and therefore their identity in part) and when would this not apply.**
- 3. With recorded information, can i be provided with the procedure as detailed at question number 2 and have this considered from potential parent(s) perspective with potentially parental responsibility then ask the same considered from adoptive parent(s) perspective.**

GRO does not hold any information regarding the preliminaries to an adoption, therefore no information other than that supplied by the court is held. GRO does not ascertain whether an error exists in an adoption entry nor are they involved in establishing the true facts, all amendments can only be made by an alteration to the original court order and would be at the discretion of the court.

An entry is created by GRO in the Adopted Children Register (ACR) upon receipt of an adoption order from the courts. This entry is created using the information provided from the court order. If an error has been made, the adoptive parent(s) or adopted person (over the age of 18) would need to apply to the court for an amended order and if the court is satisfied that an error has occurred, they will send an amended adoption order to GRO. Any certificates produced after an amendment will not show that an amendment has been made. Only the amended details will be shown on the certificate.