

Mark Fairhurst
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data.access@justice.gov.uk

26th November 2019

Dear Mr Fairhurst

Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request – 191029009

Thank you for your request dated 29 October 2019 in which you asked for the following information from the Ministry of Justice (MoJ):

The number of vetting applications submitted to work within the HMPPS public sector prisons estate who already have,

- i) a criminal conviction,**
- ii) and have been considered for employment,**
- iii) what percentage of these candidates succeeded in their application and are employed as Prison Officers.**

Your request has been handled under the FOIA.

I can confirm that the MoJ holds the information that you have requested and I have provided it below:

Data available to HMPPS began to be broken down and collated in the way requested as of the **4 July 2019**, so it is from this date that the data can be provided in relation to your questions -

Taking your questions in turn, the number of vetting applications submitted to work within the HMPPS public sector prisons estate,

- i) 1038 vetting applications were submitted to work for HMPPS with a criminal conviction, caution, warning or reprimand. Data cannot be provided only for those with a criminal conviction alone.
- ii) All 1038 of those vetting applications which were submitted, were considered for employment within HMPPS.
- iii) Of those 1038 applications, 75% passed the vetting process for a variety of positions, with 158 currently employed as Prison Officers (within public sector prisons) and 46 as Prison Custody Officers (within private sector prisons).

To note – as this data has only been broken down by job role and recorded in this way by HMPPS as of 4 July 2019, this is the only data which can be provided to you. Prior to 4 July 2019, data has been collated on the number of individuals that have been subject to security vetting within HMPPS with a criminal record history (conviction, caution, warning or reprimand), though a distinction cannot be provided as to the specific criminal outcome someone received, nor can this data be linked to any specific job type.

As part of the security vetting process, a criminal records check is carried out on all HMPPS applicants, covering all job roles. Where any adverse information is identified as a result of the criminal records check, the Approvals and Compliance Team (ACT) carefully study the full facts of a case when evaluating suitability, and consider each case on its individual merits before a conclusion is reached, including the job role they are applying for.

The ACT is a unit of experienced operational and non-operational staff responsible for decision making on the suitability of all staff and contractor personnel working in HMPPS who are subject to security vetting.

The unique nature of the organisation and the settings in which individuals may work, means the security of prison establishments is a fundamental consideration. As part of an application for employment within HMPPS, an evaluation is made to decide if an individual is suitable for work in a prison environment, taking into consideration safety and security issues, as well as our duty of care to prisoners, staff and the individual.

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with this response you have the right to request an internal review by responding in writing to one of the addresses below within two months of the date of this response.

data.access@justice.gov.uk

Disclosure Team, Ministry of Justice, 10.38, 102 Petty France, London, SW1H 9AJ

You do have the right to ask the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) to investigate any aspect of your complaint. However, please note that the ICO is likely to expect internal complaints procedures to have been exhausted before beginning their investigation.

Yours sincerely

Operational Security Group
HM Prison and Probation Service