



Department of Health & Social Care

Freedom of Information Team
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0EU

www.gov.uk/dhsc

Ms Amanda Hart
request-727882-370951bd@whatdotheyknow.com

17 June 2021

Dear Ms Hart,

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1306043

Thank you for your request dated 16 February, in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

“From files and records please kindly provide documents showing your Covid-19 action plan/ action taken against Covid-19 by your department from 1st January 2020 to 31st January 2020.”

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Please accept my apologies for the delay in our response.

DHSC holds information relevant to your request. However, to comply with your request as it is currently framed would exceed the cost limit as set out in section 12(1) of the FOIA. Section 12(1) states that a public authority can refuse a request if complying with it would exceed the appropriate limit of £600 (which represents 24 working hours). This represents the estimated cost of one person spending this time in determining where the information is held and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

It may help if I explain that in order to comply with your request, we would be required to read through, determine the relevance of and extract information from a large number of files. In this instance, we would have to contact a number of different teams within DHSC, and search over 5000 files to determine their relevance. We therefore consider that locating and extracting the full extent of the information within scope of your request would exceed the section 12 cost limit.

You may wish to refine your request for information by reducing the timeframe you have given. You may also wish to specify a particular topic or area of response to further reduce the scope of your request. However, we cannot guarantee that Section 12, or any other exemptions, will not apply to a reframed request.

If you are not satisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to appeal by asking for an internal review. This should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter and sent to FreedomOfInformation@dhsc.gov.uk, or to the address at the top of this letter.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communication.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response and received our internal review decision. You should raise your concerns with the ICO within three months of your last meaningful contact with us.

The ICO can be contacted at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

<https://ico.org.uk/concerns/>

Yours sincerely,

Piper Hewitt-Dudding
Freedom of Information Officer
FreedomOfInformation@dhsc.gov.uk