



Victoria Soeder  
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**Your ref: CAF 19-048**  
**Our ref: Gov/CAF 19-048**

Cafcass National Office  
3rd Floor  
21 Bloomsbury Street  
London  
WC1B 3HF

Tel 0300 456 4000

27 February 2019

Dear Ms Soeder,

**Re: Freedom of Information Request**

Thank you for your email of 11 February 2019. You made the following requests for information:

Clicking on one of the links I note Cafcass state : examples of triggers for situational supervision, Private Law:

“ presence of the “toxic trio” (domestic abuse, mental health, substance abuse )”

There are over 300 classified mental health diagnosis' In the DSM 5. Discriminatory language in the workplace demonstrates prejudices of organisations sometimes that the organisation isn't even aware that they are doing it. With language such as “Toxic Trio where 'Mental health is included in this cluster it can etch negative connotations in the workforce minds and enable workers to foster negative views about mental health which may frequent them to 'behave in accordance' . Discriminatory language can begin at such a point as the above.

1. Have Cafcass had external scrutiny from any organisation who represents who you classify the 'toxic trio' to ensure people with protected characteristics are not caused offence by such negative language ?

Cafcass has not had external scrutiny on the use of the term 'toxic trio'. Please note that the term 'toxic trio' to refer to the matters of domestic abuse, mental health substance abuse is a widely used term in the social work sector in regards to safeguarding and is used by academics, researchers, and other organisations and professionals. It is not a Cafcass term.

Edward Timpson CBE Chair  
Anthony Douglas CBE Chief Executive





## 2. Can Cafcass provide information of the author of this excerpt?

The excerpt 'presence of the "toxic trio" (domestic abuse, mental health, substance abuse)' in the context of 'examples of triggers for situational supervision, Private Law' is within our [Supervision Policy](#).

As stated in response to question 1, the term 'toxic trio' is a widely used term in the social work and safeguarding sectors. It is not a unique Cafcass term and so the term was not authored by a member of Cafcass.

The Supervision Policy was produced by colleagues across of a number of departments including NIS, Policy and HR.

Cafcass is unable to provide you with personal information belonging to individual staff members. The information you have requested is personal data relating to a member of staff to whom Cafcass owes a duty of confidence.

Disclosure is therefore exempt under Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The exemption from the duty to disclose third party personal data where to do so would breach a data protection principle is an absolute exemption.

[Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act](#) provides that:

1. Any information to which a request for information relates is exempt information if it constitutes personal data of which the applicant is the data subject.
2. Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if-
  - a. it constitutes personal data which do not fall within subsection (1), and
  - b. either the first or the second condition below is satisfied.
1. The first condition is-
  - a. in a case where the information falls within any of paragraphs (a) to (d) of the definition of "data" in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998, that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene-
    - (i) any of the data protection principles, or
    - (ii) section 10 of that Act (right to prevent processing likely to cause damage or distress), and
  - b. in any other case, that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene any of the data protection principles if the exemptions in section 33A(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 (which relate to manual data held by public authorities) were disregarded.

Edward Timpson CBE Chair  
Anthony Douglas CBE Chief Executive





3. Have Cafcass any plans to remove what could be construed as discriminatory language like this ?

The [Supervision Policy](#) is reviewed annually but does not currently have plans to remove the term 'toxic trio', as this is a recognised term used widely in the social work sector by professionals and organisations.

4. Have Cafcass any training other than e-learning by qualified external training providers i.e groups where staff have 'human contact' by professionally trained experts to ensure staff working with people understand in real terms the meaning and impact of disability discrimination from subtle to extreme or how policy is put into practice i.e precisely how discrimination occurs with such language ?

Cafcass does not have training by qualified external training providers on disability discrimination, diversity or discrimination.

5. Which experts within Cafcass approved this type of language i.e rubberstamped it as fit to incorporate into a policy which over 15,000 social work staff have access to sight of ?

The Supervision Policy and its wording was approved by the Operation Management Team.

As stated in response to question 1, the term 'toxic trio' is a widely used term in the social work sector and is not a unique Cafcass term.

We hope that you feel your question has been answered effectively. If you are unhappy with the decisions made in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review to be undertaken. If you are dissatisfied with the way the internal review is handled or with the final decision made at that review about the information released, you are free to contact the Information Commissioner's Office (<https://ico.org.uk/>):

**Post**

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

**Fax**

01625 524 510

**Tel**

0303 123 1113

**E-mail**

[casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

Edward Timpson CBE Chair  
Anthony Douglas CBE Chief Executive





Yours sincerely,

Governance Team

Cafcass

[Governance@cafcass.gov.uk](mailto:Governance@cafcass.gov.uk)

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Anthony Douglas CBE Chief Executive



Cafcass, the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, is a non-departmental body of the Ministry of Justice  
Cafcass National Office, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3HF



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