



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 Natasha Phillips

<mailto:request-492539-53b2612a@whatdotheyknow.com>

19 July 2018

Dear Ms Phillips

Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1138301

Thank you for your request dated 21 June 2018 in which you asked the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC):

“Subject: Freedom of Information request - Financial Interests Inside The Child Protection Sector

Please could you offer a breakdown of the financial interests in children's homes or fostering agencies, whether private or public, held by every member at the DHSC.”

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

We have interpreted your reference to ‘every member at the DHSC’ to be referring to all DHSC employees.

I can neither confirm nor deny that DHSC holds information relevant to your request.

Section 12(2) of the FOIA means public authorities are not obliged to comply with a request for information if it estimates the cost of complying would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit for DHSC is set at £600, which represents the cost of one person spending 3.5 days determining whether we hold the information.

It may help if I explain that employees’ declarations of interest are held on our BMS (Business Management System) database. However, because we are unable to search the BMS database by type of declaration, to process your request would require that we search each employee’s record to determine if any relevant information had been declared.

Taking into account that as of May 2018 there are 1,522 employees in DHSC, to undertake this task would substantially exceed the cost limit, and consequently we will not be answering your request.

If you were to narrow your request by identifying a particular group of employees (for example, Senior Civil Servants (SCSs)), we may be able to process it. However, please be aware that we cannot guarantee at this stage that a refined request would fall within the FOIA cost limit, or that other exemptions will not apply.

Outside of the scope of the FOIA, you may be aware of the Civil Service Code, which sets out the standards of behaviour expected of Civil Servants. Civil Servants are expected to carry out their roles with dedication and a commitment to the Civil Service and its core values: integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality. Further information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code>

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 receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the address at the top of this letter, or the email address at the end of this letter.

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

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may complain directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) who may decide to investigate your concerns. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have already appealed our original response, and received our internal review response. The ICO will not usually investigate concerns where there has been an undue delay in bringing it to their attention. You should raise your concerns with them 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,

Dorothy Crowe

Freedom of Information Officer

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