



LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Introduction

Lancashire Constabulary is committed to delivering an open, transparent and accountable service whenever possible and it is our intention to commit to the principles of openness embodied in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act). The Constabulary will endeavour to meet its obligations duties under the Act, and its associated Codes of Practice, respond to all applicants who request information in a helpful and timely manner.

We will release information to the greatest extent possible, consistent with the public interest, but we may withhold information if we consider its release would subsequently cause significant harm. We, therefore, recognise that there might be occasions when an applicant is not content with the Constabulary's response or the content of our Publication Scheme.

What Can I Complain About?

The complaint may concern any aspect of the way in which your request has been dealt with. If you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request, with the fee we have charged, or with the reasons we have given for refusing to provide information, you have the right to appeal.

How Do I Complain?

Any dissatisfaction expressed in writing with regards to the way in which your request has been handled will be treated as a complaint and an internal review of the response will be conducted. In order that your complaint will be dealt with as quickly as possible, it will help if you can give us as much information as you can about the original request made and the reason for your complaint. It should detail:

- What the original request was
- The nature of the complaint
- Why you feel you should have received more information - should that be the case

Please forward details of your complaint to:

Information Assurance Manager, Professional Standards Department, Lancashire Constabulary Headquarters, PO Box 77, Hutton, PRESTON, PR4 5SB

Email: information@lancashire.pnn.police.uk

If you have any further questions about the complaints process, please contact the Disclosure Unit on 01772 413324.

What Happens to My Complaint?

Once the complaint has been received, you will receive an acknowledgement confirming receipt of your appeal.

The complaint will be passed to the Data Protection and Information Manager for attention. Arrangements will then be made for the complaint to be considered by a Panel comprising of at least two of the following persons:

Information Assurance Manager
Information Compliance and Data Protection Advisor
Information Compliance Team Leader

At least one member of the Panel will not have been party to the original decision.

In reviewing the response, the Panel will consider the information relating to the decision, what/if any information has been provided, and the grounds of the complaint(s). Where necessary the Panel may seek information/ clarification from the decision taker/ information holder.

The final decision will be recorded and the applicant will be notified of the outcome in writing. If the original decision is reversed, or an issue is identified with regard to how the request was dealt with, appropriate consideration will be given to request handling procedures.

How Will I Be Notified?

You should normally receive a final response within 20 working days. If it is not possible to meet this deadline, you will be notified of the new deadline, usually not longer than 40 days.

If our original decision to withhold information is over-turned on appeal we will send you the additional information immediately. If we believe that our original response was correct we will let you know, and inform you of your options.

What If I'm Still Not Satisfied?

If you are dissatisfied with the results of your complaint you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. He can be contacted at:

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

Tel: 08456 306060

Website: <http://www.ico.gov.uk>