



# Department of Health & Social Care

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

[www.gov.uk/dhsc](http://www.gov.uk/dhsc)

Ms Amanda Hart  
[request-687845-3ab42ac4@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-687845-3ab42ac4@whatdotheyknow.com)

22 September 2020

Dear Ms Hart,

## **Freedom of Information Request Reference FOI-1256419**

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

*“Dear Department of Health and Social Care,*

*Background: With reference to FOI 1251418 where you refuse to release PPE contracts over £10,000 stating the reason for refusal is 'because you plan to release them in future'. Since the Government has a legal obligation to release all its contracts over £10,000 WITHOUT UNDUE DELAY to sites such as [www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk](http://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk) there will therefore be a reason why they are not there RIGHT NOW. Therefore our new Fol request is as follows:-*

*New request: Please supply copies of the relevant letter(s) or memo(s) which explain why these PPE contracts over £10,000 have been kept from the public view. Note: We are not asking you to create this information or provide an opinion.”*

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

DHSC holds no letter, memo, policy, guidance, or other document instructing any official to breach legal obligations, withhold information from the public or otherwise depart from the Government's transparency principles.

As stated in our earlier reply, procurement regulations require the publication of Contract Award Notices in the Official Journal of the European Union, and we publish certain information on Contracts Finder about the actual contracts awarded following Government transparency guidelines.

A search of Contracts Finder for awarded opportunity notices (Contract Award Notices) between 1 March 2020 and 18 September 2020 containing both 'Department of Health and Social Care' and 'Personal Protective Equipment' returns information relating to 169 contracts worth over £3.4bn. Since 1 September 2020, the Department has published 62 notices worth over £1.1bn.

In the extraordinary circumstances of the current crisis, it has taken longer to publish information than usual. Officials are continuing to publish information and the relevant PPE contracts will be published as soon as is practical.

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](mailto: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,

Lauren Der  
Freedom of Information Officer  
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