



Treasury Solicitor's Department

Bona Vacantia Division (BVD)
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Our reference: BVFOI/326/13

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Request

You asked for the following information from the Crown Solicitor's Office of Northern Ireland:

1. Since January 2013, how many deaths have been referred to the Crown Solicitor?
2. Of these deaths reported, how many of have no known next of kin?
3. Please provide name, address, telephone and email of person(s), organisations who provide you with details where the death reported to you have no known next of kin.
4. What efforts are made to trace the next of kin?
5. Are these efforts made by the Crown Solicitor or external body?
6. If the Crown Solicitor is responsible for tracing the next of kin please provide
 - 1) Name of officer
 - 2) Department he/she works in
 - 3) Job title
 - 4) Postal address
 - 5) Email address
 - 6) Telephone
7. If the Crown Solicitor is not responsible for tracing the next of kin please provide details of whom/which organisation is responsible for tracing the next of kin? Please provide:
 - 1) Name of person(s)
 - 2) Department he/she works in
 - 3) Job title
 - 4) Postal address
 - 5) Email address
 - 6) Telephone
8. When a death is reported to the Crown Solicitor, is there a notice placed online or in the newspaper if the next of kin need to be traced?
9. If yes, where is the notice placed? (Provide name of website or newspaper)
10. If no, why is there no notice placed?
11. Is there a notice placed somewhere else, please state where.
12. Of the deaths reported to the Crown Solicitor since January 2013 (where there have been no known next of kin identified), please provide:

Name of the deceased
Date of death
Date of birth



Last known residence

Name of person(s) and organisation who referred these details to you. (Include name, address, telephone number, email).

Have the next of kin been traced?

13. Has the information been referred to any organisation/governmental body?

14. If yes, please state the name and address of organisation/governmental body.

Your request was made to the Crown Solicitor's Office of Northern Ireland in relation to bona vacantia estates. The Crown Solicitor is the agent of the Treasury Solicitor in dealing with bona vacantia estates, and as such the information held by him is held on behalf of the Treasury Solicitor. Your request will therefore be dealt with by the Bona Vacantia Division of the Treasury Solicitor's Department ("the Division") under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In examining your request the Crown Solicitor sought clarification from you as to the exact meaning of points 13 and 14 above, on 3 October. You clarified the position in a response on 10 October to say that you required:

Of the deaths reported to the Crown Solicitor since January 2013 (where there have been no next of kin identified), please provide details in each case if such information had been referred to any councils, hospitals, and government departments (the latter government departments being any of those listed in this list: <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/contacts/government-departments-in-northern-ireland.htm>).

The Division holds some of the information that you have requested. I will deal with the points as numbered above:

1. Nine deaths have been referred;

2. Kin have been located in one case;

3. I have interpreted this part of your request to mean that you require the informants in relation to the nine deaths referred to the Division in 2013. If this is not the information that you require please let me know and I will deal with any further request for information as a fresh request under the Act.

Where the informant was a private individual or organisation I have withheld their details from disclosure under section 41 of the Act on the basis that the disclosure of this information would constitute an actionable breach of confidence.

In considering whether disclosure would be an actionable breach of confidence the Division has considered whether there is a public interest in disclosing the information that would outweigh the public interest in keeping the information confidential.

There is a strong public interest in keeping confidential information that has been disclosed in confidence, and in this case there is no specific reason in favour of disclosure of the information. Disclosure would not protect public safety, nor would it expose wrongdoing such as misfeasance, maladministration, negligence or other iniquity on the part of the Division. In this case the Division considers that the public interest in keeping the information confidential outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

Where the informant is an individual I have withheld their details from disclosure as they are exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the Act. The information is exempt from disclosure because it constitutes the personal data of a living individual as defined in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 and disclosure of the information would be in breach of the data protection principles set out in Schedule 1 of that Act. In particular, disclosure of the information would contravene the first data protection principle, which requires that personal data be processed fairly and lawfully.

Subject to the above exemptions I can say that estates have been referred to the Division by:

Muckamore Abbey Hospital, 1 Abbey Road, Muckamore, Antrim BT41 4SH
Waterside Health Centre, Spencer Road, Waterside Londonderry BT47 6 AQ
Tyrone & Fermanagh Hospital, 1 Donaghane Road, Omagh BT79 0NS

Mental Health Co-Ordination Centre, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH

4. The Division makes inquiries of the informant and other individuals or organisations who may have information about the deceased including asset holders, creditors, public bodies such as hospitals, local authorities and private organisations connected to the deceased, as well as their friends and associates. Newspaper advertisements are also issued.

5. The Crown Solicitor undertakes these efforts.

6. The contact details for the Crown Solicitor are as follows:

Crown Solicitor's Office
PO Box 410
Royal Courts of Justice
Belfast
BT1 3JY

I have withheld the details of the individual officer or officers responsible for these activities as they are exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the Act. The information is exempt from disclosure because it constitutes the personal data of a living individual as defined in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 and disclosure of the information would be in breach of the data protection principles set out in Schedule 1 of that Act. In particular, disclosure of the information would contravene the first data protection principle, which requires that personal data be processed fairly and lawfully.

7. Not applicable.

8. Newspaper advertisements are issued. No online advertisements are issued in relation to Northern Irish estates.

9. Estates are advertised in the Belfast Telegraph and a local newspaper in circulation at the place of birth of the deceased individual.

10. Not applicable.

11. Only newspaper advertisements are issued.

12. The details of the individual estates where no kin have been located are as follows:

James Toner:	Date of death 30 January 2012.
Geraldine Woods:	Date of death 6 February 2013.
Margaret Rogers:	Date of death 5 February 2013.
Kathleen McLaughlin:	Date of death 23 August 2012.
Martin Donnelly:	Date of death 16 March 2012.
Charles Michael Collins:	Date of death 27 December 2012.
John Carpenter:	Date of death 25 May 2013.
Elizabeth Graham:	Date of death 26 February 1973.

Information in relation to the date of birth and last known residence of the individuals concerned is available on their respective death certificates.

Certificates can be obtained from the local Registrar where the event took place or from the General Registrar Office (GRO), PO Box 2, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 2JD, or by telephoning 0845 603 7788. Further details can be obtained from the GRO's website at www.direct.gov.uk/gro. In regard to Northern Ireland, this information can be obtained from the General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL. For the Republic of Ireland, this information can be obtained from the General Register Office, Government Offices, Convent Road, Roscommon, or by telephoning +353 (0) 90 6632900.

The information is thus reasonably accessible to you by other means and is therefore exempt from disclosure under s. 21 of the Act. This exemption confers absolute exemption from the requirement to provide information pursuant to s. 1(1)(b) of the Act.

Kin have not been located in any of the above cases.

You asked for details of the informants on the above cases. Where the informant was a private individual or organisation I have withheld their details from disclosure under section 41 of the Act on the basis that the disclosure of this information would constitute an actionable breach of confidence.

In considering whether disclosure would be an actionable breach of confidence the Division has considered whether there is a public interest in disclosing the information that would outweigh the public interest in keeping the information confidential.

There is a strong public interest in keeping confidential information that has been disclosed in confidence, and in this case there is no specific reason in favour of disclosure of the information. Disclosure would not protect public safety, nor would it expose wrongdoing such as misfeasance, maladministration, negligence or other iniquity on the part of the Division. In this case the Division considers that the public interest in keeping the information confidential outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

Where the informant is an individual I have withheld their details from disclosure as they are exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the Act. The information is exempt from disclosure because it constitutes the personal data of a living individual as defined in section 1(1) of the Data Protection Act 1998 and disclosure of the information would be in breach of the data protection principles set out in Schedule 1 of that Act. In particular, disclosure of the information would contravene the first data protection principle, which requires that personal data be processed fairly and lawfully.

Subject to the above I can provide the following information:

Geraldine Woods – referred by Muckamore Abbey Hospital, 1 Abbey Road, Muckamore, Antrim BT41 4SH

Kathleen McLaughlin – referred by Waterside Health Centre, Spencer Road, Waterside Londonderry BT47 6 AQ

Charles Collins – referred by Tyrone & Fermanagh Hospital, 1 Donaghane Road, Omagh BT79 0NS

John Carpenter – referred by Mental Health Co-Ordination Centre, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast BT8 8BH

13/14.

Margaret Rodgers:

Social Security Agency, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ
Northern Health and Social Care Trust, Trust Headquarters, The Cottage, 5 Greenmount Estate, Ballymena, Co Antrim, BT43 6DA
General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL

Geraldine Woods:

Social Security Agency, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ
Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Trust Headquarters, A Floor, Belfast City Hospital, Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7AB
General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL

James Toner:

Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Trust Headquarters, A Floor, Belfast City Hospital, Lisburn Road, Belfast BT9 7AB
Social Security Agency, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ
General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL

Kathleen McLaughlin:

Social Security Agency, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SJ

Western Health and Social Care Trust, MDEC Building, Altnagelvin Area Hospital site, Glenshane Road, Londonderry BT47 6SB.
General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL.

Martin Donnelly:

None

Charles Collins:

Western Health and Social Care Trust, MDEC Building, Altnagelvin Area Hospital site, Glenshane Road, Londonderry BT47 6SB
General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL

John Carpenter:

General Register Office, Oxford House, 49-55 Oxford Street, Belfast BT1 4HL

Elizabeth Graham:

None