



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

[Redacted]

By email: [Redacted]

Our ref: FOI2018/27568
15 March 2019

Dear [Redacted]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Sexual harrassment NDA's

Thank you for your request for information of 16 October 2018 about sexual harrassment non-disclosure agreements. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

The information you requested and our response is detailed below.

1. *For each of the last five financial years, and the current financial year to 15.10.18. please provide:*
 - a) *The total number of Non-Disclosure Agreements agreed with staff members working for your department*
 - b) *Of these, please specify how many involved an allegation or complaint of sexual harassment.*
 - c) *For the sexual harassment complaints, please provide the 5 longest and average time period from complaint to resolution.*

Defra has completed its searches and can confirm that the Department have not signed any non-disclosure agreements with staff members in the year 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. It is not departmental practice to sign non-disclosure agreements as a means of settling matters relating to inappropriate behaviours.

Defra is committed to creating an environment where no-one suffers from harassment, discrimination, bullying and victimisation, either directly or indirectly. We support the right of employees to be treated with dignity and respect at work, and our HR policies and procedures make it clear that the Department will not accept inappropriate behaviours.

We raise awareness of our policies, procedures and support via campaigns which also aim at encouraging employees to report anything that does not feel right, whether this relates to whistleblowing concerns, breaches of the Civil Service code, bullying, harassment and discrimination, or fraud. We've assured employees that their concerns will be taken seriously, they will be protected and the matter will be investigated promptly.



2. *For the period specified above, please provide:*

- a) *Total departmental spend by year to settle sexual harassment allegations. Please break down the settlement spend; 1) as part of an NDA 2) without an NDA*
- b) *Where possible, please include if any of the NDAs signed including a provision not to report the incident, including to the police*
- c) *The total number of settlements made per year to settle sexual harassment allegations?*

We are writing to inform you that the information you have requested here is not held by Defra as there has been no such spend.

3. *The number of staff who left a role before a sexual harassment complaint was resolved*

Following a search of our paper and electronic records, we have established that the information is not held by Defra.

We attach Annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]

Information Rights Team

InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Nick Teall, Head of Information Rights, Area 4a, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

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