

Reference: 2024-028

Thank you for your email in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

- **How many staff have been disciplined since the start of 2019?**
- **How were they disciplined - including but not limited to sackings, final written warnings, warnings, suspensions etc.**
- **Reason for discipline, including but not limited to dishonesty, falsifying timesheets, serious wrongdoing, sexual harassment etc.**

Response

I can confirm that the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) holds the information you have requested in each of your questions.

Questions

The SFO holds the information that you have requested; however this information is exempt from release pursuant to section 40 of the FOIA.

Section 40(2) states that personal data which is not the personal data of the requester (i.e. third-party personal data) should not be disclosed if this would contravene the data protection principles. This would constitute a breach of the first data protection principle outlined in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which states that *“personal data shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner in relation to the data subject”*.

Releasing information about individual members of staff could not reasonably be interpreted as “fair” processing because it has the potential (even without any names being included) to identify the Data Subject. The Data Subject would also have a reasonable expectation that their personal data would not be disclosed in this way.

Section 40(2) of the FOIA is an absolute exemption and we are therefore not required to consider the public interest in releasing the information requested.