

Reference: 2025-021

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

- 1. The number of employees currently suspended on full pay within your agency/department.**
- 2. The total duration (in days) of each of these suspensions.**
- 3. The estimated total cost to the public purse for these suspensions.**

Response

We confirm that we hold this information. However, this is exempt from release under section 40(2) 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”.

How the exemption is engaged

In the context of your request, the number of employees is very small, and our concern centres on the fact that releasing this data would risk revealing the identity of those employees. This would constitute a breach of the first data protection principle outlined in the GDPR.

We maintain that releasing information about individual members of staff to the world at large could not reasonably be interpreted as “fair” processing because the Data Subject would 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. However, some information responsive to this request may be found in our Annual Report and Accounts here: [SFO Annual Report and Accounts 2023-24 - GOV.UK](#)