

Request Reference: FOI/006/24
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Information requested:

Can I please have data on sick days taken by employees within your organisation for the last 5 years. I'm aware you are unable to provide personal information so please just refer to each person as Person1, Person2 etc.

Please provide the information below in CSV file format in the following order of preference:

[Authority name],
Calendar Year,
Anonymised Person data,
Department,
Number of days off sick,
Approx cost of sickness absence,
Reason (if available)

Please could you provide the information in a CSV file format in this order:

[Authority name], Year, Person XX, Department, Number of Days off sick, Cost, Reason

If any fields are not available or you are not able to provide for whatever reason, please just leave the space between the comma blank.

Response:

We have enclosed a csv file with most of the information requested.

The information provided is not wholly accurate. Please see advice and guidance below.

We have not provided 'department' as the system that holds the absence information does not record this. Please see advice and guidance below.

The approximate cost of each absence would require to be manually calculated and as such would be the creation of new information. FOISA only applies to information held at the time of make a request and therefore we give notice under FOISA section 17 that we do not hold the information requested.

Advice and Guidance

Accuracy

The system that we use to record absence contains entries that have return to work dates that are or were in the future. In some cases the individuals are no longer employed by us, but we are required to maintain a record.

Whilst these records are accurate for the purposes that they are held for, they are not wholly accurate in relation to this request.

To check that each of the 783 individuals and each absence entry we estimate it would take 66 hours (5 minutes x 783 = 65.25 x £15 per hour = £978.75). This is in excess of the £600 maximum cost permitted for an FOI request.

Department

We are a very small organisation and the provision of individual level details over a large date range brings confidentiality concerns. The removal of an individual's name alone does not guarantee their anonymity, particularly if they are the only individual in a department.

In addition, a response to a FOI request is a publication that anyone can access and read. This means that although an applicant making a FOI may not be able to identify an individual from the information, other people, such as our staff, may be able to identify individuals.

We do hold the departmental information requested in other systems and did consider cross-reference these systems to populate the field. However, we estimate that cross reference each of the 3533 lines would take approximately 118 hours ($2 \text{ minutes} \times 3533 = 117.77 \times £15 \text{ per hour} = £1766.50$) to complete. This is in excess of the £600 maximum cost permitted for an FOI request.