



Our Ref: 001734/21

Your Ref:

Address Correspondence to: Information Management

Date 28 May 2021

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I write further to your request for information received 20/05/2021.

I note you seek access to the following information:

How many missing persons incidents resulted in a public appeal issued by the police force during the following periods:

- April 1st, 2020 - March 31st, 2021
- April 1st, 2019 - March 31st, 2020
- April 1st, 2018 - March 31st, 2019
- April 1st, 2017 - March 31st, 2018

Please provide the figures for each of these periods broken down by ethnicity of the missing person who is the subject of the appeal, eg White, Black, Asian, South East Asian, Chinese, Japanese, Middle Eastern, mixed race, other, unknown.

By the term 'public appeal', I mean any method of publicity employed by the force to ask members of the public to come forward with information or raise awareness, such as posters, online adverts, posts on social media, press releases, etc.

Please provide that information in an excel format.

Can you please also tell me if the police force has any formal guidelines or policy to decide when a missing persons case should result in a public appeal?

Following receipt of your request, searches were conducted within Leicestershire Police to locate information relevant to your request.

Your request for information has now been considered and the information asked for is as follows: -

The following details how Leicestershire Police deal with missing persons:

Missing People.

If a person is missing and believed to be at risk, a missing person's appeal, delivered through traditional outlets and digital channels, is an effective way of harnessing the help of the public in locating that individual.

At the earliest opportunity, the Media Relations Team should be supplied with all the relevant information about the missing person for whom the publicity is required. This

should be done in consultation with the family, relatives or legal guardians of the person concerned.

Copies of a contemporaneous, clear and ideally full-profile photograph of the missing person, together with a detailed description of their appearance and the clothing they are believed to be wearing, should be supplied where possible. Custody photographs should only be used where no alternative picture can be sourced and where the risk to the individual outweighs the risk of releasing an image clearly taken in police custody. Care should be taken in outlining the person's circumstances in any appeal, such as if a person is ill or depressed. Brief details may be appropriate and help provide context in order to encourage media outlets to share an appeal. However, an intrusion of privacy (for example any precise medical condition from which the missing person may be suffering from) should be avoided.

To enhance appeals for information, media interviews with family members may be considered and facilitated by the Media Relations Team.

Whilst each individual case will be considered on its own merits, public appeals for missing people will normally only be issued in cases of those deemed at "high" risk, and some of those categorised as "medium" risk.

If a request has been made by the Senior Investigating Officer to action a Child Rescue Alert, please refer to the [national protocol and criteria](#) for use of such an alert.

The detail relating to public appeals in the time periods requested are considered exempt by virtue of Section 12.

Section 12 – Cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit.

Leicestershire Police do not record the information you have requested in a single place. We publish missing persons on the web and then they are removed as soon as they are found. There are a number of systems that missing person appeals may be recorded on and we would have to cross reference these in order to identify those which resulted in public appeals and gain the detailed information you have requested. This would take in excess of 18 hours.

In order to retrieve the information you have requested would therefore be in excess of the 18 hours specified by the Home Office as the time period for which a police force should allocate to a request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004, the current regulatory limit which has been set by the Secretary of State for public authorities, which includes the police service, is £450 for the marginal costs which are the costs of finding, sorting, editing or redacting information and disbursements (printing, photocopying etc). The Association of Chief Police Officers have agreed a national standard of an hourly rate of £25 is to be charged for the time taken. In essence therefore, the costs equate to 18 hours work per request. It will be apparent therefore that within the time frame of 18 hours it will not be possible to extract the information to answer any of your questions.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice under s12(1) as the cost of providing you with the information is above the amount to which we are legally required to respond i.e. the cost of locating and retrieving the information exceeds the "appropriate level" as stated in the Freedom of Information (Fees and Appropriate Limit) Regulations 2004.

Leicestershire Police provides you the right to ask for a re-examination of your request under its review procedure. Letters should be addressed to Information Manager, Corporate Services Department at the above address. If you decide to request such a review and having followed the Force's full process you are still dissatisfied, then you have the right to direct your comments to the Information Commissioner who will give it consideration.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Officer
Leicestershire Police

Leicestershire Police in complying with their statutory duty under sections 1 and 11 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to release the enclosed information will not breach the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. However, the rights of the copyright owner of the enclosed information will continue to be protected by law.

Applications for the copyright owner's written permission to reproduce any part of the attached information should be addressed to The Information Manager, Leicestershire Police Headquarters, St. Johns, Enderby, Leicester LE19 2BX.