

# An Garda Síochána

Oifig Saorála Faisnéise  
An Garda Síochána  
Teach áth Luimnigh  
Lárionad Gnó Udáras Forbartha Tionscail  
Baile Sheáin  
An Uaimh  
Contae na Mí  
C15 DR90



Freedom of Information Office  
An Garda Síochána  
Athlumney House  
IDA Business Park  
Johnstown  
Navan  
Co Meath  
C15 DR90

Teileafón/Tel: (046) 9036350

Bí linn/Join us



Láithreán Gréasain/Website: [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)

Ríomh-phoist:/Email: [foi@garda.ie](mailto:foi@garda.ie)

## Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000351-2016

Dear

I refer to the Freedom of Information Act 2014 and your submission to An Garda Síochána dated 28<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and received on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

Part 1(n) of Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 states that An Garda Síochána is listed as a partially included agency “insofar as it relates to administrative records relating to human resources, or finance or procurement matters”. Therefore, only administrative records that relate to human resources, finance or procurement shall be considered.

Your request is shown below:

*I would like to find out how many Gardai from the Cork divisions requested counselling in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and to date in 2016, and how many of these then went on to receive counselling.*

*I would also like to find out the cost of this counselling for each of the years listed above, specifically in relation to the Cork divisions.*

I am now to advise you that I have decided to refuse your request on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

### 1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions to deny access

A number of searches for administrative records were conducted within the Human Resources & People Development (HR&PD) section and the Finance Directorate of An Garda Síochána in respect of your request.

I am to inform you that it has been determined that the records do not exist in the format as you have requested. An Garda Síochána Finance Directorate have advised that there is no unique expenditure code in place on the Financial Management System which identifies individual claims made by members of the Garda Organisation for counselling

services. Claims for counselling services are recorded in a “catch-all” generic heading for all medical expenses and therefore are included with all other medical expenses. The use of counselling services is not uniquely identified under its own financial sub-head code and therefore cannot be extracted from the Financial Management System on a disaggregated basis.

In the absence of a specific financial sub-head code for counselling, it is not possible to identify the number of individual requests received for counselling services as outlined in your request. In addition, the Financial Shared Services Centre (FSSC) in the Department of Justice and Equality process all payments in relation to medical expenses for An Garda Síochána. An Garda Síochána is one of nine clients of the FSSC.

I am therefore refusing your request under Section 15(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 which states:

*A head to whom an FOI request is made may refuse to grant the request where –  
(a) The record does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken*

Requests for counseling services by members can be sought after a traumatic incident dealt with by an individual member or a number of members of An Garda Síochána. Counselling services are available for local management to utilize at their discretion to ensure the health and welfare of their staff. Members dealing with traumatic incidents, such as fatal road traffic collisions or sudden deaths and other such events will on occasion require the expertise of a professional counseling service to reduce the possible impact of dealing with an upsetting event.

An Garda Síochána is very mindful to the significant occupational demands placed on its members and the exposure to very stressful and traumatic situations. In this content, a 24/7 Helpline and Independent counselling service was launched on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and is being delivered by EAP Consultant/Carecall. The service is designed to support Garda members, Reserves and Civilian staff of the organisation in resolving work and personal difficulties. The service will complement the existing critical support already provided by the Chief Medical Officer, the Employee Assistance Service and the Peer Support Network.

## **2. Rights of appeal**

In the event that you are not happy with this decision, you may seek an Internal Review of the matter by writing to the address below and quoting reference number **FOI-000351-2016**.

Freedom of Information Office,  
An Garda Síochána,  
Athlumney House,  
IDA Business Park,  
Johnstown,  
Navan,  
Co. Meath  
C15 DR90

Please note that a fee applies. This fee has been set at €30 (€10 for a Medical Card holder). Payment should be made by way of bank draft, money order, postal order or



personal cheque, and made payable to Accountant, Garda Finance Directorate, Garda Headquarters, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8.

Payment can be made by electronic means, using the following details:

**Account Name:** Garda Síochána Finance Section Public Bank Account

**Account Number:** 10026896

**Sort Code:** 900017

**IBAN:** IE86BOF190001710026896

**BIC:** BOFIIE2D

You must ensure that your FOI reference number is included in the payment details.

You should submit your request for an Internal Review within 4 weeks from the date of this notification. The review will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of An Garda Síochána and the decision will be communicated to you within 3 weeks. The making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances.

Please be advised that An Garda Síochána replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website at [www.garda.ie](http://www.garda.ie)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact me by telephone at (046) 9036350.

Yours sincerely,

 **SUPERINTENDENT**  
**HELEN DEELY**  
**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER**

**24<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2016**