Re: Freedom of Information Request FOI-000378-2020
Request Part Granted

Dear [Name],

I refer to your request, dated 18th October, 2020 and received on 19th October, 2020 which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 (FOI Act) for records held by An Garda Síochána.

Part 1(n) of Schedule 1 of the FOI Act 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 sought:

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 I am seeking the following information:

- The number of gardaí who have taken sick days due to mental health issues in 2019.
- The total number of sick days taken by gardaí due to mental health issues in 2019.
- The number of gardaí granted early retirement on the basis of mental ill-health in 2019.
- The number of gardaí referred for medical care e.g. psychological assessment as a result of mental health issues in 2019 and the type of care they were referred for.
- The number of gardaí who have taken sick days due to mental health issues to this date in 2020.

An Garda Síochána
Ag Coinneáil Sábháilte – Keeping People Safe
The number of gardaí who have taken sick days due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020.

The total number of sick days taken by gardaí due to mental health issues to this date to this date in 2020.

The total number of sick days taken by gardaí due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020.

The number of gardaí granted early retirement on the basis of mental ill-health to this date in 2020.

The number of gardaí referred for medical care eg. psychological assessment as a result of mental health issues to this date in 2020 and the type of care they were referred for.

Please break these figures down by month. Eg. In January 2019, 3 gardaí took sick leave as a result of mental ill health resulting in 20 sick days being taken by gardaí in January 2019 as a result of mental ill health.

I wish to inform you that I have decided to part-grant your request on 13th November 2020.

The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision.

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decision

Upon receipt, your request was forwarded to the relevant sections of An Garda Síochána and a number of records have been provided to this Office. I have numbered your queries for ease of reference.

Having reviewed the records provided, I am granting your request for the records sought in questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10. The details sought by you in questions 1, 2, 5 and 7 are listed hereunder:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>No. of Gardaí absent due to Mental Health Issues 2019</th>
<th>No. of days absent due to Mental Health Issues 2019</th>
<th>No. of Gardaí absent due to Mental Health Issues 2020</th>
<th>No. of days absent due to Mental Health Issues 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>473.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>265</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>338</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>322</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>414</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In respect of questions 3 and 9, seeking the “number of gardai granted early retirement on the basis of mental ill-health”, the following table is a breakdown on the numbers of Gardaí who were medically discharged in the years 2019 and 2020* (includes 3 applications awaiting the Commissioner approval for medical discharge date).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Discharge</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infirmitity of the Body</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infirmitity of the Mind</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Infirmitity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Questions 4 and 10 sought the “number of gardai referred for medical care eg. psychological assessment as a result of mental health issues”. I am advised that 216 Garda personnel where referred for psychological assessment/opinion by the Garda Occupational Health Service in 2019. The number of Garda personnel referred for psychological assessment/opinion by the Garda Occupational Health Service as of 30/09/2020 stands at 173 personnel.

Questions 6 and 8 of your request sought “The number of gardai who have taken sick days due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020” and “The total number of sick days taken by gardai due to mental ill-health as a result of Covid-19 to this date in 2020.” I have been advised that the Sick Absences Management System (SAMS) does not have the facility to capture numbers of members who have availed of sick leave due to mental ill-health specifically as a result of Covid-19. Therefore I am refusing this aspect of your request on the basis of Section 15(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014.

**Refusal on administrative grounds to grant FOI requests**

15(1)(a) the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken.

Since June 2016, a 24/7, 365 Independent Helpline and Counselling Service is available to all staff within An Garda Síochána. This service is available for both work and personal difficulties. Over 1433 staff members of An Garda Síochána have accessed face to face Counselling service since its fruition. The service is not mandatory and is self-referral. It is provided by Inspire Wellbeing (formally EAO Consultants / Care call). Each member of the Organisation may avail of six (6) free sessions of counselling per year, an additional two (2) will be provided if clinically approved. All appointments and consultants are arranged directly between the Service Provider and the staff member.
Should a member present to this service with a mental health emergency, they will be automatically referred to a general practitioner or accident and emergency department of a nearby hospital for treatment.

In conjunction with the aforementioned service, the Garda Employee Assistance Service (GEAS) is available to provide a confidential, professional, support and assistance service to:

- Serving members of An Garda Síochána and their families.
- Garda Trainees and Probationers
- Retired members of An Garda Síochána and their families.
- Reserve Gardaí
- Retired Members of External Police Service resident in the State.

The service is available to help resolve work and/or personal issues that are causing stress, worry or disruption to an individual’s life.

2. Right 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-000378-2020.


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: An Garda Síochána Imprest Account
Account Number: 30000302
Sort Code: 951599
IBAN: IE28DABA95159930000302
BIC: DABAIEIE2D

You must ensure that your FOI reference number (FOI-000378-2020) 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 in to the public domain via our website at 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 the FOI Office by telephone at (046) 9036350.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
PAUL BASSETT
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION OFFICER