

[REDACTED]
FOI 102/25-269 July 2025
[REDACTED]

We refer to your email dated 18 June 2025 in which you requested information. Your request has been dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Freedom of Information Act creates rights of access for any person making a request for information to a public authority. The rights of access are twofold. First, to be informed by the public authority if it holds information of the description specified in the request, and if that is the case, secondly, to be provided with that information. These rights are subject to important limitations, which are designed to achieve a proper balance between the right to know and considerations of law and policy in the broader public interest.

You had asked the following:

“How many criminal cases collapsed in NI in the 2024 calendar year due to a lack of evidence? Please break the answer down by:

- types of criminal cases e.g. sexual offences, murder etc.*
- types of evidence e.g. physical, digital, witness statements, key evidence not gathered from the crime scene etc”.*

In response, please be advised that information of this kind is not recorded in a way which is easily extracted from the PPS Case Management System (CMS). Therefore, to answer your question accurately would require a manual search of all cases on CMS to determine what (if any) relevant case notes are held. This would easily exceed the cost limit as defined in Section 12 of the Act which makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit; for the PPS as a Government Department the limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days

in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review in accordance with our review procedure. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of this response and you can do so by writing to the Head of Policy and Information, Public Prosecution Service, Belfast Chambers, 93 Chichester Street, BELFAST, BT1 3JR or alternatively by sending an e-mail to info@ppsni.gov.uk. You should state the grounds on which you are requesting the review.

Alternatively, you may wish to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Information Management Team
Public Prosecution Service