

4th May 2020

**Freedom of Information Request - Reference No: 20201055**

**REQUEST**

*I would like to know how many Police Officers and Police Staff reported sick for depression, anxiety, stress or post-traumatic stress between the financial year April 2019 to April 2020, including where the terms 'depression', 'anxiety', 'stress' or 'post-traumatic stress' appear in the description of the illness.*

*Please could the figure include a split by gender please (e.g Male 110, Female 110, other 110) including a breakdown listing the specific illnesses, where possible and total number of working days lost through sickness*

**RESPONSE**

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires South Yorkshire Police, when refusing to provide such information (because the information is exempt), to provide you the applicant with a notice which:

- a. states that fact,
- b. specifies the exemption in question and
- c. states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

The following exemptions apply to the disclosure of the information:

**Section 40(2) Personal Information.**

This is an absolute exemption and therefore a Public Interest Test is not relevant. However, for clarity, I will explain my rationale for engaging this exemption.

Section 40(2) provides that information is exempt if it is the personal data of someone other than the applicant and disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles. The term 'personal data' means data that relates to a living individual who can be identified.

Information disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act is disclosed into the public domain, effectively to the world, not just to one individual. Although not explicitly naming individuals, the effect of releasing Absence Reasons alongside the and length of Absences may potentially lead to the identification of those involved. On another point the requested data is also for a relatively recent time scales which may again allow a person seeing this data to relate an Absence Reason to specific situations and therefore potentially identify those involved. This would be breaching the right to privacy afforded to persons under the Data Protection Act 1998.

With this in mind, I am prepared to disclose some details without triggering the above exemption.

I approached our HR Department for assistance with your request, please see the attached spreadsheet.