

FOI DOF/2025-0690

Request

1. A complete copy of the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) disciplinary and appeal procedures that were in force on 11 November 2025. This should include any of the following where applicable:

- policy documents
- procedural guidance
- instructions for managers, HR, or independent appeal panels
- any annexes, appendices, templates, or internal guidance notes

2. Specifically, I request all sections relating to:

- the requirements for taking minutes/notes during disciplinary or appeal hearings
- the requirement (if any) to provide a factual accuracy version of the minutes to the employee
- rules governing recording devices at hearings
- the procedural expectations for external/independent appeal boards

3. Where multiple versions of the procedure existed, please provide the version that was operational and applied to staff disciplinary or appeal hearings on 11 November 2025.

If any part of this request is considered exempt, please:

- state the exemption relied upon,
- provide the reasoning, and
- release any remaining non-exempt material.

I am requesting this information for personal reasons and I am happy to receive it electronically by email.

DoF response

I can confirm the department holds some of the information requested.

From the information you have requested policy documents are exempt under section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 exempts information if this information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption, and the Department is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information.

The NICS discipline policy is available on the Department of Finance's website:

[6.03 Discipline policy](#)

Section 4 of this document deals with the formal discipline procedure.

Also available is:

[2.07 Civil Service Appeal Board](#)

[6.11 Use of Electronic Communications](#)

Request 1

- Documents held by the Department outlining internal guidance for discipline are attached at Annexes C – G and R - S
- Templates held by the Department are attached at Annexes H - Q

Request 2

Paragraph 6.4 of the Discipline policy deals with:

- the requirements for taking minutes/notes during disciplinary or appeal hearings;
- the requirement (if any) to provide a factual accuracy version of the minutes to the employee; and
- rules governing recording devices at hearings.

Paragraph 5.4 of 2.07 Civil Service Appeal Board deals with procedure for the board.

Request 3

All documents listed were in operation on 11 November 2025.