

FOI DOF/2026-0080

Request

1. The number of Northern Ireland Prison Service employees that have been suspended in the last two years, broken down by month

DoF response

I can confirm the department holds the information requested.

The total number of Northern Ireland Prison Service employees on disciplinary suspensions for the period 17 February 2024 to 17 February 2026 is 22.

In relation to the monthly breakdown, I can confirm the department holds the information requested, however where the numbers are less than ten, the exact figures cannot be provided as it may identify specific individuals. This is being withheld as it is exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act due to the low number individuals involved. Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would contravene one of the data protection principles in the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (or certain other provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018).

In this case, I believe disclosure would contravene the first data protection principle, which provides that personal data must be processed lawfully and fairly. Having considered all the information contained within the Legitimate Interest Test – lawful, fairness and transparency test (attached as a separate document – Annex C), the department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of third-party personal data falling within the scope of the request of which the requester is not the data subject.