

FOI DOF/2022-0500

Request

Following a request to the Executive Office under the 2000 Freedom of Information Act on the 24th November, I was informed on 19th December that the information requested is not held by the Executive Office and that I should contact the Department of Finance.

I therefore request the following information.

Following the resignation of the First Minister in February 2022 and the Assembly Election on 5 May 2022:

1. The number of Principal Private Secretaries, Private Secretaries, Assistant Private Secretaries within the Executive Office still being paid a Private Secretary Allowance.
2. The total amount of Private Secretary Allowance that has been paid between 5 May 2022 and 5 December 2022.
3. If the allowance is no longer being received, the date at which the Principal Private Secretaries, Private Secretaries, Assistant Private Secretaries stopped receiving the allowance.
4. The number of Private Office staff that have been moved to alternative posts within the department (ie. staff now working in an alternative branch), split by grade.
5. The number of vacant posts within the Executive Office, split by grade.

DoF Response

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

1. There are no staff in receipt of the Private Secretary Allowance as at December 2022.
2. A total of £9,170.22 was paid in respect of the period 5 May 2022 to 5 December 2022.
3. The last payments made were in respect of October 2022.
4. Between 1 May 2022 and 30 November 2022, a total of six general service grade staff are recorded as having transferred out of TEO FM Private Office, TEO DFM Private Office and Head of Civil Service Private Office Divisions to other business areas within TEO. Information is based on staff movement records held at end of November 2022 and reflect staff movements updated

at a point in time and as such are subject to change. The table below provides the general service grade of the six staff.

General Service Grade	Number of Staff
Grade 7	1
Deputy Principal	2
Executive Officer 2	1
Administrative Officer	2

5. Details of the total vacancies in each department are not held centrally by Department of Finance. Each Civil Service Department is responsible for managing its resources – both financial and staff. Each department determines its individual workforce needs and is responsible for ensuring that any additional staffing resources are affordable.

When a Department identifies a vacancy it needs filled, the request is referred to NICSHR to initiate the process to fill the post. NICSHR liaises with all Departments on an ongoing basis to seek to prioritise recruitment activity within allocated financial and staff resources.

As at the end of November 2022, NICSHR was managing a caseload of 69 general service grade and 18 non general service grade vacancies within TEO. The table below provides the detail requested.

Grade	General Service	Non General Service	Total
G5	1		1
G7	9	1	10
DP	19	7	26
SO	15	5	20
EO1	12		12
EO2	6	5	11
AO	7		7
Total	69	18	87